

# **Revelation Study Notes**

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## **Table of Contents**

### **Chapter**


<b>1</b>	<b>Understanding Revelation</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Jesus the Son of Man</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>The Seven Churches</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The Throne of God</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>The Kingdom of God</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>The Key to Revelation</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>The Sanctuary Supplement</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>The Seven Seals.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>The Seven Trumpets</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>The Angel with the Scroll.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>The Temple in Heaven</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>The Seventh Trumpet.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>A Persecuted Church</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>A Great Persecuting Power</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Earth's Last Citizens</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>The Three Angel's Messages</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>The Seven Last Plagues</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Armageddon</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>The Millennium</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>The Great Judgment</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>01</b>	<b>Appendix – The Bible &amp; Ancient Manuscripts</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>Appendix – A New World Order</b>	<b>104</b>

# Chapter 1

## Understanding Revelation

Many people feel they would like to understand the book of Revelation but its strange symbols and prophetic language seem to defy human comprehension. Of those who have tried, a number believe the book isn't relevant for Christians today as its message was for a bygone era; others put its meaning way off into a distant future. But God said several things about this remarkable book. Let's look at them.


**Rev. 22:10** "And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand."

 All of the verses of Scripture used, here, unless otherwise specified, have been taken from the King James Version of the Bible. For the reason this version has been chosen for these study notes see Appendix 1. Here are the rest of the verses in this section:-

**Rev. 22:7** "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

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

**Rev. 1:1** "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass;..."

 In the verses listed above John has told us that his book can be understood. In fact the word "Revelation" in verse 1 comes from the Greek word <602:apokalupsis> which means "a disclosure," something that has been revealed. Also it would not be a lot of use telling people the book contained things which were to come to pass and that they should read, hear and keep the "things which are written therein" if it were not possible to understand what those things were. So we can begin our study of the book of Revelation with the confidence that if we humbly ask God to clearly reveal these truths to us, He will.


**Understanding Scripture:** As these studies may be read by a new Christian who hasn't a great deal of experience in studying God's Word, here are a few pointers taken from the Bible on how we should approach the study of the Scriptures.

**2 Tim. 3:16** "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,"

**2 Pet. 1:21** "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

**Amos 3:7** "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."

**Dan. 2:28** "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days."

 God is the one responsible for the production of all Scripture; that's why its called His Word. Now this scripture is not only profitable for us to study but within its pages God reveals His purposes for our enlightenment. However, it would be unwise for us not to acknowledge that some parts of Scripture are hard to understand, yet this should not cause us


to give up as we have the promise of divine assistance.

**2 Pet. 3:16** " As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

**John 14:26** " But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

**1 Cor. 2:10** " But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."


**James 1:5** " If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and unbraideth not; and it shall be given him"

 Here is the promise of abundant help. Humanly speaking we can't understand a lot of what God is saying to us sometimes because He is speaking to us from the perspective of another world. Yet we are not left to despair. God has given us the Holy Spirit who understands all the mysteries of God to be our teacher. Then, as if that were not enough, he has offered wisdom to anyone of us who asks for His help. Finally we have in Scripture a couple of warnings.

**2 Pet. 1:20** " Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation"

**Isa. 8:20** "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them"

**1 Cor. 2:14** "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."

 When it comes to understanding scripture it is very important that any conclusions we draw are consistent with what all the Bible writers have to say on a particular topic. This is how we avoid the mistakes referred to in the two verses above.

Paul seems to approve of this practice when he says, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:13). This is exceptionally true when we are studying the book of Revelation. Author Taylor G. Bunch says, "Twenty-six of the thirty-nine Old Testament books are quoted from in Revelation, and of the 404 verses in the book, 276 are borrowed or copied from other Bible authors."

Someone once calculated that the first five chapters of the book of Revelation contain 27, 15, 13, 16 and 14 references to the Old Testament respectively. Clearly, if we want to understand this book, we need to consult what other Bible writers have said on the same theme. As one christian lady wrote: "In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end." and further she says that, "The study of the Revelation directs the mind to the prophecies of Daniel, and both present most important instruction ... concerning events to take place at the close of this world's history." (Acts of the Apostles, 585; Great Controversy, 341). So as we begin our journey into this wonderful book of Scripture lets us do so with the confidence that, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and what other Bible writers have said, Revelation is understandable and we will receive the blessing God has placed in this book for us.

**An Overview of Revelation:** It was while John was imprisoned on the isle of Patmos --

a small, barren island off the west coast of Asia Minor in the Aegean Sea, where he was destined to work in the mines as a punishment because of his preaching activities (Rev. 1:10) -- that the apostle wrote his manuscript for the book of Revelation. According to the most reliable sources, this banishment took place under the second traditional persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor Domitian in 95 A.D. It is thought that he produced the Revelation sometime between 95-96 A.D. The book was addressed to "the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:4). They form the subject matter of chapters two and three.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title of Contents</b>
<b>Chap 1:</b>	Introducing Jesus as the Son of Man
<b>Chap 2-3:</b>	Christ's Message to the Seven Churches
<b>Chap 4:</b>	The Throne Room in Heaven
<b>Chap 5:</b>	Opening the Sealed Book
<b>Chap 6-7:</b>	The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
<b>Chap 8-9:</b>	The Seven Trumpets
<b>Chap 10:</b>	Eating a Bitter-Sweet Book
<b>Chap 11:</b>	The Two Witnesses in Sackcloth
<b>Chap 12:</b>	A Mysterious Woman Standing on Moon
<b>Chap 13:</b>	The Mark of the Beast.
<b>Chap 14:</b>	A Message from Three Angels
<b>Chap 15-16:</b>	The Grapes of God's Wrath
<b>Chap 17-18:</b>	Babylon the Great Harlot
<b>Chap 19:</b>	King of Kings & Lord of Lords
<b>Chap 20:</b>	The Dragon Bound for 1000 Years
<b>Chap 21-22:</b>	A New Heaven and Earth


## Chapter 2

### Jesus the Son of Man

**Jesus' Exaltation:** Did you ever wonder what happened to Jesus after the book of Acts tells us that, "...when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." (Acts 1:9)? Let's see if the first chapter of Revelation will throw some light on that.

Jesus is the most wonderful person in all of Scripture; in fact He is the greatest of all the people that ever were, are, or will be on the face of our planet. Hence God the Father has highly exalted Him above all the creatures that are in heaven or on the earth.

**Phil. 2:5-11** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: <sup>7</sup>But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: <sup>8</sup>And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. <sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: <sup>10</sup>That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; <sup>11</sup>And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

 Human beings cannot possibly know what Jesus gave up when He "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." We only know what we read in the Gospels and what other Bible writers have said of Him; but what of that glory which He had with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5) we have no knowledge of how truly magnificent position of the Son of God when He reigned before sin was with His Father.

**For a Description of Jesus** as our exalted Lord read the following texts from Danile & Revelation and notice what they tell us about Him:-

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


**Dan 10:5** "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins *were* girded with fine gold of Uphaz:"

**Rev 1:16** "And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength."

**Dan 10:6** "His body also *was* like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."

**Rev 1:14** "His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire"

**Rev 1:15** “And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.”

 **Beryl:** is from the Hebrew <8658:tarshiyah> which according to the Brown-Driver Hebrew Lexicon, p. 1067 is, " a precious stone, perhaps yellow jasper, or other gold-coloured stone...." [used here] ..." in simile of resplendent body Dan. 10:6."


**Rev 1:15** “And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.”

**Dan 10:6** “His body also *was* like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude”

**Jesus Glorified:** What effect did seeing Jesus in His glorified state have on people?


**Dan. 10:8-9** " Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. <sup>9</sup>Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.”

**Rev. 1:17** “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: <sup>18</sup>I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore”

 Godly men, when confronted with the presence of their glorified Lord, were completely overpowered by His awesome appearance. How humble this should make us when we come before the throne of grace in prayer; and what a rebuke to the modern trend of making sacred things common. He is the Lord of glory, the Supreme Potentate of Time, the all-powerful One, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, with what awe and reverence we should approach Him and His word. Yet despite all this power and majesty He is gracious and tender; look how He deals with Daniel and John:

**Dan. 10:10,12** "And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.”

**Rev. 1:17** “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.”


 In times of distress physical contact and a reassuring voice can do a lot to calm a troubled soul. Here we see Jesus tender regard for the weakness of humanity, as He comforts Daniel and John. Surely He is a tender Shepherd to His sheep. Look how He and His Father have demonstrated their personal care for all of us:

**God's Love Demonstrated:** Look at how God has shown His love to us in these verses.

**Rom. 5:8** “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

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

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

 What a wonderful thing the grace of God does. Washing sinful human beings clean from all their unrighteousness through the blood of our Saviour and elevating them from being "children of disobedience" to the position of kings and priests in the kingdom of God. It really is undeserved divine favour. No wonder the hymn writer said, "Amazing love how can it be that Thou my God should die for me.!" Truly, this is love on a grand scale.

# Chapter 3

## The Seven Churches


**The Church's Counsellor:** After Jesus ascended to heaven from the little group of disciples gathered on the Mount Olives John tells us: "... [he] turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man..." [Rev. 1:12-13]. In verse 20 of this chapter the apostle says the angel told him, "... seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches." [Rev. 1:20]. After His resurrection, Jesus is pictured as standing among His churches. In our next lesson we will look at what it means to have Jesus standing in the midst of our churches as well as what counsel He gives to them and what He has to say regarding their condition.

In John's day the cities in which these churches were found lay along the imperial post road, a Roman highway built around 133 BC. The order in which they are listed reflects the sequence a messenger carrying a book from Patmos along this Roman road would encounter them.

Originally these letters were literal messages sent to seven literal churches in Asia. However, there is good reason to believe they were meant for a much wider audience than those early believers to which they were addressed in John's day. So let's begin by seeing what message they might hold for us. To do this read - Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 and notice one thing they all have in common:

 This direction repeated seven times to the Christian church in all ages to the end of time, regarding the Spirit was a response to a promise Jesus made to His disciples after He told them of His departure.

**John 14:16** "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

 Jesus understood that His followers would face difficulties in which they would need divine counsel. Therefore He promised them "another" Helper, that is another one like unto Himself, to assist them in handling perplexing situations. This Helper, who is the Holy Spirit, would: guide us in all truth (John 16:13); pray "for us with groaning which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26); teach us all things (John 14:26); give us gifts so we can do God's work (1 Cor. 12:4-11, see also Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11-12 for the mention of more gifts); and on top of all this He would produce in us the fruit of character by which we escape the condemnation of the law (see Gal. 5:22-23). Without a question, the Holy Spirit is a Christian's greatest friend on earth. **No wonder Jesus told us to "Hear what the Spirit says to the churches."**

**God's Intimate Knowledge and Counsel to His Church** Sometimes in the middle of all life's rush and bustle we are tempted to forget that God has His eye on all that happens down here on earth; look at the verses in Rev 2:2, 9, 13, 19. (See also Rev. 3:1, 8, 15) to see some of the things he observes.

**Rev.2:2** "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:"


**Rev.2:9** "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”

**Rev.2:13** “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan’s seat *is*: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”

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

 So much God knows about us. All our comings and goings are known to Him. Even the secret things which no other human eye can see He beholds (Eccl. 12:14); and He rightly evaluates everything according to His divine sense of Justice. This can be a comforting thought when we are struggling with injustice. Even in the hour of temptation, when we are pressed by the forces of evil, if we would remember, "Thou God seest me" (Gen. 16:13) we would escape many a fall. This seems to be what sustained Joseph, for when pressed by Potiphar's wife to sin, he said, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9).

However, just knowing that God is watching all that we do and all that happens to us isn't enough; we want to know what counsel He would give to us. Fortunately John includes this with his message to these churches. Lets begin by looking at what He encourages us to do, and for this we need to read Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, and 21.

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

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


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

**Rev.2:26** ”And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:”

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


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

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

 These are beautiful promises that Jesus has given to **all believers in all ages** to encourage them to overcome **all sin**. Unfortunately some Christians feel it doesn't matter how you live for sin won't keep you out of the kingdom of God. However that's not true. Notice something in these letters to the seven churches that Jesus says He hates:

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

**Rev. 2:15** “So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate”

 According to Irenaeus, the Nicolaitans taught that the deeds of the flesh have no bearing on the purity of the soul and therefore they can have no bearing on salvation. Hence it is not a problem for a person to practice idolatry, immorality, or any other form of indulgence.

This runs directly contrary to what Jesus taught. Notice how in Revelation Jesus says, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Then after this He lists a number of things that will keep people out of the kingdom of heaven. One of the things listed there is idolatry (see Rev. 21:7-8). Now if Jesus says idolatry will keep you out of heaven, and the Nicolaitans say its all right to commit idolatry as it won't affect your salvation -- then, Jesus and the Nicolaitans are teaching opposite things. So its no wonder He's angry with their teachings. They are contradicting His Gospel. Therefore, to encourage believers to overcome all sin, He places these beautiful promises in these messages to His church for those who overcome.

In summarising the messases Jesus gave to these seven churches and seeing how they might benefit us we should take special note of the following:

**Firstly:** God has given us His Holy Spirit to guide us through all the complexities and difficulties of life. He is our greatest friend on earth;

**Secondly:** There is nothing about our life that God doesn't know. He sees it all, and in divine love He offers us His counsel and help to a better way of life;

**Thirdly:** Jesus encourages us to forsake all sin offering us His assistance to do so.

**Christian Era:** Now lets see how these messages to the seven churches in Asia apply to the Christian church from the time of the apostles to the end of the world. As there were more than seven churches in Asia (See Col. 1:2; 4:13) at the time John was writing -- for example, Colossae was right next to Laodicea and Hierapolis lay between Philadelphia and Laodicea -- many Bible students began to ask why these seven were chosen. The consensus of their opinion is reflected in the following statement: "The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number seven indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world." (Acts of the Apostles, 585).

**Ephesus: Era of the Apostles, 31- 100 AD [Rev. 2:1-7]** The name of this church means "Desirable." In John's day it was the leading city of the Roman province of Asia being situated at the western terminus of a great highway that crossed Asia Minor from Syria. According to a fairly strong tradition, the apostle John spent many years of his life at Ephesus becoming the leader of the churches in western Asia Minor."

#### **Commendation:**

**Rev.2:2-3** " 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: <sup>3</sup>And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted."


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

 **History Sketch:** These people were a Gnostic sect who held the teaching that the deeds

of the flesh did not affect the purity of the soul, and as a consequence our fleshly actions have no bearing on our salvation.

### Reproof:


**Rev.2:4** “Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”

 The importance of the attribute of love within the Christian community cannot be overestimated.

### Counsel:

**Rev.2:5** “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.”


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

 **History Sketch:** This was the era of the Apostles; the first century AD. During this time the church grew with incredible speed. Gibbon, the historian, says there were about six million Christians in the empire when the century ended. The apostle Paul commented, the early disciples had taken the gospel to the entire world (Col. 1:23).

**Smyrna: Era of Persecution, 100- 323 AD** [Rev. 2:8-11] The name of this church means "myrrh" or "sweet-smelling" and reflects a period when the church was going through terrible persecution. Called the city of life due to surviving a large number of sieges, massacres and natural disasters.

### Commendation:

**Rev.2:9** “ 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.:

 **History Sketch:** The figure of Jews has its basis in history. The book of Acts reveals many of the troubles experienced by early believers came from slanderous accusations made by the Jews (see Acts 13:45; 14:2, 19; 17:5, 13; 18:5-6, 12; 21:27). In the 2nd century Jews are thought to have brought about the martyrdom of Polycarp, a bishop of Smyrna. In Rev. 12:10 Satan is called "the accuser of our brethren" and his name may be used here in this sense. The synagogue, as the center of Jewish life, was the place where many an evil plot against christianity was formed; Tertullian refers to the synagogues as, "fountains of persecution." The charge of "blasphemy" is due to the fact the Jews believed they did this in God's name.


### Reproof: None:

### Counsel:

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

**Rev. 2:11** “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that


overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

 **History Sketch:** The Roman emperor Trajan laid down the first official policy toward Christianity. They were not to be hunted down, but if they were brought before the courts for other crimes they were to be executed unless they recanted. Thus for two centuries Christians depended upon the favour of their pagan and Jewish neighbours who could accuse them to the authorities and bring about their death. At times however, the Roman government carried on aggressive persecution against christians. The "ten days" of v. 10 is thought to be 10 prophetic days, in which case the tribulation here would be that of Diocletian and Galerius which lasted 303- 313 AD. This was an attempt to wipe out christianity as the Romans, observing the extent to which this faith in Jesus had spread, felt their way of life and even the empire itself was under threat. It was a period of unmitigated persecution.

**Pergamos: Era of Compromise, 323- 538 AD [Rev. 2:12-17]** The city had been the capital of the Roman province of Asia since its last king, Attalus III gave it to the Romans in 133 BC. It was the headquarters of the Babylonian mystery religion which in earlier times had fled to this region from Babylon; the cult was later transferred to Rome. Because of this, and because it was the capital of the Roman province, John describes it as the place "where Satan's seat is" (v. 13).


### Commendation:

**Rev.2:13** “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan’s seat *is*: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”

 **History Sketch: Antipas:** A compound name of two Greek words *anti* meaning "in place of" and *pas*, an abbreviated form of *patēr*, "father." Tradition states he was an actual martyr who was slowly baked in a brass bull that was heated until it was red hot Figuratively, the name may stand for the thousands of martyrs who refused to accept the pagan Roman practice of emperor worship. However, John doesn't imply the name was a group.

### Reproof:

**Rev.2:14-15** “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. <sup>15</sup>So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate”


 **Balaam:** influenced Israel to commit "whoredom with the daughters of Moab," and these women "called the people unto the sacrifice of their gods: and the people did eat [presumably the meat sacrificed to these gods], and bowed down to their gods." (Num. 25:1-2; 31:16). This was a "stumblingblock" to Israel. Evidently this era would see some people introducing practices forbidden to Christians that would become a hindrance to the church.


According to Balaam's strategy the stumblingblock would be a mixture of paganism with true religion. One of the ways this happened was through converts to the faith; "...the teachings of heathen philosophers had received attention and exerted an influence in the church. Many who professed conversion still clung to the tenets of their pagan philosophy, and not only continued its study themselves, but urged it upon others as a means of extending their influence among the heathen. Serious errors were thus introduced into the Christian faith." (Great Controversy, 58). It is interesting, in regard to pagan philosophy, that Pergamos had an immense altar to Zeus, the chief of the Greek mythological gods.

**Nicolaitans:** Were a Gnostic sect; see under Ephesian church.

## Counsel:

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


 This manna was a type of Christ (John 6:31-41). In the legal system, a white stone indicated acquittal and a black one condemnation. White stones were also given to freed slaves with their names inscribed on the stone; sometimes they were given a new name.

 **History Sketch:** Christianity had grown so rapidly that Roman emperors felt insecure. In some places the Christians even outnumbered the pagan citizens. In an effort to unify his empire Constantine I adopted a version of Balaam's doctrine. IN 313 AD he proclaimed Christianity a legal religion in the Roman empire. Ten years later, in 323 AD, he established a state church. This church was a blend of paganism and Christianity. By artfully weaving pagan philosophies and customs in with Christian practices he achieved the same result Balaam did with ancient Israel. Accepting this blend the church displeased God; hence, the counsel: Repent! Those who wouldn't compromise their faith suffered reprisals. In 325 AD, two years after he established a state church, Constantine presided at the Council of Nicara, which condemned Arianism. Then later, at the first council of Constantinople he took a stand against Arianism (a doctrine that was opposing the state favoured religion). This struggle with Arianism continued until 538 AD when the state religion became supreme.

**Thyatira: Era of Apostasy, 538- 1517 AD [Rev. 2:18-28]** The name of this church means "sacrifice" or "contrition" and it represents that period in history when the church exchanged a simple faith in Jesus for outward works for salvation. The city was famous for the manufacture of brass and bronze instruments; which is interesting in as much as John describes Jesus as He, "who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass." Fire and brass being things that would appeal to those in a city of brass foundries.


## Commendation:

**Rev.2:19** "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first."

 The phrase, "the last to be more than the first" marks this church out as being different; it is the only one of the seven that contains a recognition of improvement. In spite of their difficulties, this church was experiencing spiritual growth. Perhaps that should not be so surprising as James says, "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." It requires a lot of patience to maintain a Christian deportment when living in an era of church apostasy, but this very act of quietly waiting and trusting in God develops in us "the patience of the saints" which we all need (see Rev. 13:10; 14:12).

## Reproof:


**Rev.2:20** "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."

 **History Sketch:** For an account of Jezebel see 1 Kgs. 16:31; 18:13; 19:1-2; 21:5-16, 23-25; 2 Kgs. 9:30-37. She was the heathen wife of Ahab, one of the Old Testament kings of Israel; a very powerful and wicked woman who tried to wipe out the worship of Jehovah and replace Him with the worship of Baal. To this end she imported into Israel 850 heathen priests and instituted an apostate system of religion. In John's day it is possible some woman may have been attempting this in the local church, but on the wider scene it represents that

great apostasy which began in the days of the apostles (see 2 Thess. 2:3, 7) and continued on down into the dark ages. The "space to repent of her fornication" (v. 21) came with the reformation which she refused. Her "children" (v. 23) are her adherents.


As the history of this era will be discussed in detail in a later section of Revelation the comment on Jezebel's apostasy has only been brief; however we will be looking into her activities again in Rev. 17.

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

 As a result of fornication judgment has come (see Rev. 17:1-2; 18:3) upon Jezebel and her children. It should be remembered that the relationship between Christ and His church is represented by marriage. Any unfaithfulness to Jesus or His teachings is referred to as spiritual adultery or fornication. The punishments threatened in Scripture for engaging in such a practice are real. Neither the church, state, or false teachers will escape God's punishment for spiritual adultery. However, as we have already noted, the history of this era will be discussed in detail in a later section of Revelation.

### Counsel:

**Rev.2:25** "But that which ye have *already* hold fast till I come."

 This is the first mention of the second coming of Christ in these letters to the churches. Jesus tells these believers to hold on to the light they have until He comes. We should observe this in the context of verse 24, "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." The compassion of Jesus is wonderful. Here He is saying to those who haven't the doctrine of Jezebel, that faithfulness to the light that they had would be sufficient.

**Rev. 2:26-28** "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: <sup>27</sup>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. <sup>28</sup>And I will give him the morning star."


 Power over the nations has been promised to God's people (Dan. 7:27). and they shall sit in judgment (Rev. 20:4; 1 Cor. 6:2-3). The Morning Star is Jesus (Rev. 22:16).

**History Sketch:** The church in Thyatira corresponds to the time when the church became firmly established not only as a religious entity, but also as a state. "Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman empire an Ecclesiastical state which was shaping itself upon the imperial model." Myers, General History for Colleges, p. 348. Thus the era sees the first pope, Gregory the great, come to the papal throne and continues to the greatest reformer, Martin Luther who heralded the Protestant Reformation.

**Sardis: Era of Reformation, 1517- 1798 AD [Rev.3:1-6]** The meaning of this name is uncertain; however some suggest it could mean "that which remains." It is a church era that began with much promise and has important lessons for us today.


### Commendation:

**Rev.3:4** "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

 There is a sense of terrible loss on the part of the church in the phrase, "even in Sardis." Its like Nathanael saying to Philip, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" There is a sense of incredibility about it. The reformers had done a good work leading people into truth; men like Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Knox, while not agreeing in all points of doctrine, they had led the church into a deeper understanding of God's word and out of the darkness apostacy had cast around the world. Their labours would not be forgotten. They shall walk with Jesus in white. However, under the era of Sardis the church would suffer loss. Let's look at what happened:

## Reproof:

**Rev.3:1** "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."


 Alive in the sense that God had given to the reformation church the teachings of the Bible; but, "dead" in the sense that the Church was failing to advance in the reformation. Here are some comments from the time:

**IN 1777 AD:** Letter from Rev. A Maddock, "The epistle to the church of Sardis is so strongly characteristic of the reformed churches at this day [letter is dated Oct. 4, 1777], that little more need be done than to read that epistle to see our own likeness. (Rev. 3:1)... We have the name of a purely reformed church, who protests against the errors of popery, doctrinal and practical; but are we not dead as to faith and good works?"

**IN 1748 AD:** Sermon by Dr. Thomas Gill, "If it should be asked, What time is it with us now? whereabouts we are? and what is yet to come out of the night? as a faithful watchman, I will give you the best account I can. I take it, we are in the Sardinian church state. In the last part of it, which brought on the reformation, and represents that. We are in the decline of that state, and there are and many things said of that church which agree with us, as that we have a name that we live, and are dead, etc. It sought of twilight with us, between clear and dark, between day and night."

## Counsel:

**Rev.3:2-3** "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. <sup>3</sup>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."

 **History Sketch:** The era of Sardis saw the Reformation, begun by Luther, begin to die as churches lost the spirit of fidelity to the word of God possessed by their pioneers and began to fall back into the paths of error. A Christian should never be so confident that they become complacent. The Scriptures should be our constant study and guide. There is no safety in "having a form of godliness" (2 Tim. 3:5). A revival was needed or the church would die.


The era of Sardis saw the Church splitting into fragments as different groups failed to accept the advancing revelations of Scripture. John Robinson, in his farewell address to the Pilgrims sailing for America counseled them saying, "I charge you, before God and His blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation.... I beseech you, remember it --'tis an article of your church covenant -- that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God."

What a great weakness all this division brought to the reformation. Compromise saw the development of the apostate Church; now, under Sardis, refusal to accept advancing light from the Scriptures saw the Reformed Churches ready to die. A revival was desperately needed.

**Philadelphia: Era of Revival, 1798- 1844 AD [Rev. 3:7- 13]** The name of this church means "brotherly love." Its founder apparently intended it to be a center for the spreading of the Greek language and manners. Historically it covers the great revival preachers like Wesley, Whitefield, etc were heralding a global revival of true religion. They would have trouble with the same group, the synagogue of Satan (v.9), who troubled the Smyrna church (Rev. 2:9).

### Commendation:

**Rev.3:10** "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."


 The "hour of temptation" isn't a specific time prophecy, but a reference to a short time of trouble which shall test the world before the second coming of Christ (see Dan. 12:1-3). This testing time would fall upon the Laodicean Church just before the second advent.

**Reproof: None.**


 There is no reproof to this church struggling to revive and spread the Gospel.

### Counsel:

**Rev.3:7-8** "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; <sup>8</sup>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."

 **Key of David:** This verse applies Isaiah's prophecy concerning Eliakim, to Christ (Isa. 22:20-23). Eliakim was appointed over the house of David as indicated by his possession of the "key." Christ's possession of this "key" indicates His jurisdiction over the Church (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22).

**Open Door:** The Philadelphia era saw a number of open doors. Note the history of the period:

 **History Sketch:** This era saw some amazing things happen. Firstly two revolutions changed the world. The French Revolution of 1798 saw the end of Papal supremacy and the dark ages when knowledge had been suppressed. Daniel's prophecies refer to this date as marking the time of the end; a time when knowledge would be increased (Dan. 7 and 12:4). The American Revolution of 1776 began a series of events that would see the political dominion of the old world move across to the new; this is predicted in Rev. 13.

Then a spiritual revolution took place. Prior to this time most missionary activity was conducted around established centers. However the Philadelphian era saw the opening up of world missions on a grand scale: In 1793 William Carey went to India, 1807 Robert Morrison went to China, 1817 Robert Moffat went to Africa, and 1841 David Livingstone went to Africa. On top of this the Bible was being circulated openly as never before partly



due to the formation of: the British & Foreign Bible Society in 1804 and in 1816 the American Bible Society commenced.

A third view of an open door around this era comes from the book of Daniel (Dan. 8:14) which speaks about a prophecy that would go for 2300 years ending in 1844. What this prophecy predicted was the beginning of an Investigative Judgment in heaven and, according to prophecy, Jesus would go through a door in heaven into the temple's Most Holy Place where exciting events would begin to transpire. Notice how the apostle John starts his next chapter of Revelation, "After this [the vision of the seven churches] I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven...." (Rev. 4:1). We'll save looking into this view until chapter four.

It is quite possible the open door embraces all of these views. What cannot be disputed is, the Philadelphian era was a period of global religious revivals involving the second advent of Christ. All churches seemed to be participating. As one writer put it, "We have no means of ascertaining the number of ministers, and others, who have embraced the advent faith. We only know that there are several hundred congregations, and a still larger number of ministers, who have publicly professed the faith.... Those who have espoused this cause have honestly believed in the coming of the Lord 'about A.D. 1843.'.... All peculiarities of creed or policy have been lost sight of, in the absorbing inquiry concerning the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom. Those who have engaged in this enterprise are from all the various sects in the land." *The Advent Shield and Review*, May, 1844 (Vol. 1, p. 90). Boston.

The writer names a number of denominations among which are: Protestant Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, Primitive Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, Close Communion Baptist, Open Communion Baptist, Calvinistic Baptists, Arminian Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutheran, and Dutch Reformed.

That the movement attracted a large amount of attention can be seen from the following notation taken from the "Bureau of the Census. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910." which says, "What is known of the 'Advent Movement' originated with William Miller, who was born at Pittsfield, Mass., Feb. 15, 1782.... For some years he was an avowed deist, but, as he said, 'found no spiritual rest,' until in 1816 he was converted and united with the Baptists.... At that time very little was heard from pulpit or press respecting the second coming of Christ, the general impression being that it must be preceded by the conversion of the world and the millennium, a long period of universal holiness and peace. As Mr Miller studied the prophetic portions of the Bible, however, he became convinced that the doctrine of the world's conversion was unscriptural.... His conclusion was that the coming of Christ in person, power, and glory must be premillennial. Moreover, as a result of his study of prophetic chronology, he believed not only that the advent was at hand, but that its date might be fixed with some definiteness." *Special Reports: Religious Bodies; 1906, part 2, p. 11.*

It is hard for us to ascertain the impact this must have had on a Church coming out of the Sardis era in which spirituality had rapidly diminished to the point where Jesus said His church was about to "die" (Rev. 3:1). It would be the equivalent of our age having good reason to believe an asteroid was on a collision course with earth and we were all in trouble. People, from all religious groups and those who professed no religion, were captivated by this Baptist's preaching and became caught up in this great revival; perhaps the greatest the world will ever see.

### **Laodicea: Era of Today, 1844 AD on to the end of the World [Rev. 3:14-22]**


Laodicea was a proud, wealthy city specialising in the production of woolen goods. It was known as a banking center and had a famous medical school; its luke-warm baths and mineral springs attracted visitors from both Europe and Asia. A Christian church existed there at the time Paul wrote Colossians (abt. 62 AD; see Col. 2:1). The name of the city means "judging of the people." However, this church is in a sad state.

## Commendation: None.

 There is nothing to commend in Laodicea due to an internal spiritual problem.

## Reproof:


**Rev.3:15-17** “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. <sup>16</sup>So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup>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:”

 This condition is alarming. It is bad enough to be in trouble. But how much worse to be in trouble and not know it? This city had a famous medical school as well as a banking system, yet it was totally oblivious to the poverty and blindness eating out the soul of this church. Yet how true this is today. We have churches with great centers of learning; we have church programs backed up with all kinds of music and hi-tech equipment; we have Bibles and books that would have been the envy of all past ages back to the apostles --- but, we have a Church that doesn't know that spiritually its almost dead. What does God say to us?

## Counsel:


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

**Rev. 3:18** “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

 **Gold:** A precious metal, reflecting a refined Christian character that has been made perfect through affliction (see Job 23:10); this gold includes God's Word (Ps. 19:7-11); both of which combine to produce in the Believer a true "faith which worketh by love." (Gal. 5:6).

**White Raiment:** The city manufacturing woolen goods needed garments not of their own making. This garment comes from God and it is the robe of Christ's righteousness (see Isa. 61:10). We receive this garment by faith alone (Rom. 1:16-17).

**Eyeslave:** Refers to the restoration of our spiritual eyesight by the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The Laodicean state caused the Church to focus on the things of this world; but eyeslave was to open our eyes to God's truths. This would be done by the Holy Spirit. (see Ps. 119:18; John 14:26; 16:7-13; Eph. 1:17-18).

 **History Sketch:** This reflects the state of the Church in the world today. As early as 1874 Professor J.P. Lange said, "The outwardly prosperous, but lukewarm church. Has not this period already begun? That this is a day of unequalled outward prosperity for the church is acknowledged by all. Is it not also a period of lukewarmness even in Protestant lands?" (A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, J.P. Lange. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1874). From his day to ours there has been a rapid decline in spirituality both in the world and the church --- Unfortunately, the sickness of Laodicea only deepens as the years go by.

# Chapter 4

## The Throne of God

**The Dwelling Place of God** To many people God is only the figment of a religious person's imagination. The idea that He might be a real Being living in real surroundings with real companions having His own home, never occurs to them. It seems as though a tangible God is beyond their ability to conceive. Yet Scripture teaches us that God has a home, where He lives with intelligent companions as He rules and makes decisions that impact upon our lives. Revelation chapter four tells the story.


**1 Kgs. 8:30** “And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.”

**Ps. 11:4** “The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD’S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.”

**Ps. 103:19** “The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.”

**John 14:2** “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.”

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


 Scripture tells us God has a house in heaven where He dwells. Jesus calls that home, "My Father's house." Here the Father sits on His throne ruling the universe. Some Bible students have indicated the open space in the Orion constellation is the region God's throne is located. Certainly the apostle John says the Holy city comes "down from God out of heaven." (Rev. 21"2).

**The Sides of the North** Another interesting piece of information about God's home comes to us from Lucifer's attempt at self-exaltation in heaven. Let's look at what Scripture says about that for a moment.

**Eze. 28:14** “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.”


**Eze. 28:16** “By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.”

**Isa. 14:12-13** “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! <sup>13</sup>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”.

 Lucifer was already "on the holy mountain of God" walking up and down in the midst of

the stones of fire. From here he wanted to ascend to the "mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north." The statement in Isaiah seems to indicate there is a place in heaven called the sides of the north to which Lucifer didn't have access. And further, to sit in the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north, was to share in God's secret councils and divine purposes. Lucifer craved this privilege. The sides of the north has an interesting history. The psalmist wrote:

**Ps. 48:2** "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, *on* the sides of the north, the city of the great King."

 **History Sketch:** The city of Jerusalem in Palestine was God's city; He even calls the heavenly holy city He has gone to prepare for His people the "New Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:2) such is His regard for the name. Now this city of the Jews sits on one of the highest ridges in the region. Originally, when it was captured from the Jebusites (2 Sam. 5:6-9), it occupied the ridge belonging to Mt. Zion; hence the name Zion being used as a synonym for Jerusalem. To the north of Zion hill lay Mt. Moriah and it was on this spot that both the temple and the palace of the king of Israel was built; (2 Chron. 3:1). After the completion of the temple building the ark of God was moved from Mt. Zion to Mt. Moriah to be housed in the temple (2 Chron. 5:2) making the hill a holy site. Geographically, these two hills form one single ridge, and because the temple was on Mt. Moriah, the whole ridge became known as Mt. Zion, God's holy mountain; (Joel 3:17).

Because of the prestige the presence of the temple and the palace brought to Mt. Moriah the northern slopes of this ridge appears to have acquired the name "the sides of the north." Then, by extension, this expression may have become a term to represent both the religious and civil seats of government at Jerusalem much as Australians use the name "Canberra" and Americans "Washington" for their office of government. If this is the case with the expression "sides of the north" then Isaiah's comment re Lucifer represents his attempt to take over God's government.

**The Mount of the Congregation:** This likewise has a story to tell. There are three Hebrew words which can be translated by the English word "congregation:" 'êdâh, "a stated assemblage, concourse, family, crowd, company, congregation;" qâhâl, "an assembly, company, multitude, congregation;" and môw'êd which is the one used here. Of môw'êd, "The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-etc., Hebrew Lexicon, p. 417 brings out the following interesting thought about its use here. It says of môw'êd, "appointed meeting:.... Isa. 14:13, mount of meeting or assembly (of the gods; the mountain of the gods in the extreme north, the oriental Olympus, Persian Alborg, Hindu Meru)." Now according to the Bible Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 171 "Anu, foremost of the early gods of Babylonia, was supposed to have his throne in the third heaven. His constellation was among the polar stars, around which all others revolved. Heathen mythology often represents the gods as meeting in council on a mountain far to the north." So it would appear there is a distinct place in heaven where the Father sits in council with His Son and plans the affairs of the universe.

**The Throne of God** The spaces for the answers are not in the order of the verses but have been grouped together under their subject matter to try and give the reader a clearer picture of the throne of God and its surroundings. The numbers in the verses will indicate where the answer should go.

**Rev. 4:2** "And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne".

**Rev. 4:3** "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."

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

behind.”


**Rev. 15:2** “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”


**Eze 1:5** “Also out of the midst thereof *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.”

**Eze. 1:22** “And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature *was* as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.”


**Eze. 1:26** “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.”


**Eze. 1:27** “And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.”

 **The Throne** was above the firmament that was over the heads of the four creatures; whether it was physically above or towered above is uncertain, but it had the appearance of a sapphire stone. This stone is the next in hardness to the diamond. It is a precious gem stone which, according to the dictionary, has a clear, deep-blue hue. The throne itself sounds immense.

 **The Person** sitting on this throne, according to John, appears like a jasper and a sardine stone. Gemstones possessed the most brilliant colours known to man in John's day and he uses them here to try and describe the brilliance of the One on the throne. What seems to have captured his attention that he should mention these two precious stones appears to be the emanation of colour. The Jasper is frequently purple, sometimes red; the Sardine stone is often blood-red. These are the colours of royalty. They imply a monarch, dressed in his royal-rich robes, sitting on the throne of his kingdom. For more information on these colours see under "The Sea of Glass" below.

Ezekiel gives us a slightly different picture. His attention seems to be drawn more to the Man's appearance. He tells how he saw the colour of amber, a brownish-yellow, as it would appear in the flames of a very bright fire, radiating from the Man's loins upward and downward. John uses a similar description when he says Jesus "countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" or, as we'd say, "the midday sun." (Rev. 1:16). The difference between the two is while the sun has a similar yellow hue to fire, it lacks that moving quality which Ezekiel wishes to portray here.

 **The Bow** over the throne reflects the bright colours in the rainbow. However, the rainbow isn't enough. To capture the full impact of the sight falling on John's senses he again refers to gemstones. This time it's the emerald. He tells us that only by adding the iridescent hue of the emerald to the rainbow can we appreciate what he is seeing.


 **The Sea of Glass** conveys the idea of a highly-polished mirror surface catching all the shapes and colours of the throne room. Similar to a lake capturing the surrounding snow-capped mountains in its deep dark-blue waters. In John's day, glass was a valuable substance, and here he sees a large glazed surface with the appearance of what looks like fire moving within its reflective form. What is this fire? The most likely answer is the fire is a reflection of something in the throne room, but what?

Fortunately the Bible gives us a clue. The appearance of God. When we looked at the person

of God we discovered He emanated the colours of fire: amber, brown-yellow and blood-red. John also referred to the gem jasper. Now one of the characteristics of jasper is it is sometimes translucent: that is, it lets light pass through but it is not transparent. In the throne room setting this fact might be important. Let's note what else John tells us.

He says the New Jerusalem was lighted in a most remarkable way. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. (Rev. 21:11). Then he adds, after describing certain aspects of the holy city, the city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it, and the Lamb is its light. (Rev. 21:23). We are accustomed to light coming from a star; in our case the Sun. But here is God emitting enough light from His person to illuminate a whole city.

Now putting this together: God is wearing a translucent robe the colour of Jasper (blood-red); His person radiates a fiery light the colour of amber (Brownish-yellow); Before His throne is a highly polished reflective surface, clear as Crystal: Then the appearance of fire would seem to be a reflection thrown around the room from God's Person as He moves about. What an impressive sight this must have been for human eyes to behold.

 **The Firmament** above the four living creatures had the colour of terrible crystal. The Hebrew word for "crystal" is qôrach and it is translated as "frost" and "ice" in Gen. 31:40; Job 6:16; 37:10; 38:29. Perhaps this firmament indicates a clear frosty sky above these creatures.

 The "four living creatures" will be discussed in a later lesson that deals with the attendants around God's throne.

# Chapter 5


## The Kingdom of God

To the Christian the prospect of heaven is a wonderful offer. This world, with all its difficulties and problems, has left many a saint scarred and bruised in the battle of life and how often we wish as we get older that we could start over. Well, here's an amazing offer; Jesus extends a new life in paradise to all who will give their lives to Him. It's a land of beginning again. Our old life, with all its mistakes and physical disabilities, is dropped like a worn out coat at the door when Jesus makes all things new, and with the knowledge we have gained in character development over the years, we can begin a new and wiser life in a world where nothing grows old. Let's look at it!

### God's Promise to Christians

**Dan. 2:44** “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 for ever.”

**Dan. 7:26-27** “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end.<sup>27</sup> 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.”


 God plans, at sometime in the future, to remove the control of this planet from the hands of Satan and sinful people and to establish here His own everlasting kingdom. To those who have faithfully served Him He made the following promise.

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

### God makes His People a Home

**Heb. 11:16** “But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”

**Heb. 11:10** “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.”


 The construction of this city takes place in heaven, for the apostle John sees it as a completed project coming down from God out of heaven to be sited on a new earth (Rev. 21:2, 10). The name of the place is the "New Jerusalem" (Rev. 3:12) and it would appear that, over the years, Jesus has been preparing a place in this city for His people (John 14:1-3).

**The Building Site:** No large construction, that is undertaken on this planet, begins without first preparing the site. So it is no surprise to read in the Bible that prior to the descent of the holy city the Son of God comes down to level out the ground.

**Zech 14:4** “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.”

**Zech. 14:10** “All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king’s winepresses.”

 Geba is a place about 9 km north east of Jerusalem. Rimmon, to the south of Jerusalem is a little harder to identify; it is thought to be En-rimmon about 14 km north east of Beersheba. In 2 Kgs. 23:8 Geba and Beersheba are used to designate the northern and southern extremities of Judah; here the cities Geba and Rimmon mark the extremities of the plain created when the mount of Olives splits north and south. An estimate of the width of this plain would be about 60 km. The holy city descends from heaven to this location.

**The City Area:** The Biblical description of this city stretches the imagination to the limit; and, unable to capture the full magnificence of the structure, the mind finds consolation in the words of Paul who wrote: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9). As Paul died before John wrote the Revelation, we can only surmise that contained therein are some of those unseen things Paul spoke of. Here's what Scripture says of its size.

**Rev. 21:16** “And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.”


 John uses the Greek word "stadios," Strong's <G:4712>, to give us the circumference of the holy city. Now according to Bullinger's lexicon, a "stadios" is an eighth of a Roman mile. Therefore the New Jerusalem would have a:

Circumference = 1500 mi. [2414 km]  
Length of a side = 375 mi. [603 km]  
Area = 90,000,000 acres [36,421,875 hectares]

This area is over a third of NSW, Australia. It could encompass both Victoria and Tasmania. There has never been such a great city. What an enormous population it could hold. On the floor-plan alone if everyone had a 100 sq. ft. it would hold 39, 204, 000,000 people. Many times the world's current population. Now while it is true some of this number would be reduced due to area taken up by streets, buildings etc., that would be more than compensated for, if the buildings in this city were high-rise as they are in many of our modern cities today. What we are seeing here is a metropolis of enormous proportions.

**The City Wall:** Ancient cities were surrounded by high walls; the holy city seems to follow this practice.

**Rev. 21:12-13** “And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: <sup>13</sup>On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates”.

 Unfortunately Scripture isn't always kind to tradition. Instead of Peter standing at the gate into the city of heaven, we find there are 12 gates, 3 on each side of the city wall, and guarding them are 12 angels. Not even the names on these gates list this apostle; they are the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. Everyone who enters this city goes in under one of the names given to these ancient tribes. These gates themselves are magnificent.

**Rev. 21:21** “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.”



☰ Pearls are a sea mussel; they are smooth, hard, and usually white or bluish-gray. These pearl-gates are set in a wall made from jasper (Rev. 21:18), a purple. The wall itself is quite high.

**Rev. 21:17** “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.”

☰ This works out at about 216 ft; if we were to allow a height of 15-20 ft per floor, this would give us a wall about the height of a 10-14 story building. A wall such as this would need a good foundation.

**Rev. 21:19-20** “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; <sup>20</sup>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.”

☰ These stones are not the little chips we see in a jewelers window. These are foundation stones, 125 miles [201 km] in length. Most are very hard gems chosen for their strength in supporting this massive wall. The colours in this list above are the best of what various commentators offer and may not be strictly correct; but try and imagine viewing such a wall. Scripture gives another detail about these stones.

“**Rev. 21:14** And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb”.

**The City:** Scripture gives us a number of details about the New Jerusalem.

**Rev. 21:18** “And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.”

**Rev. 21:21** “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”

**Rev. 21:23** “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.”

**Rev. 21:11** “Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal”.


**Zech. 14:6** “And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark”.

**Zech. 14:7** “ But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light.

**Rev. 22:1** “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

**Zech. 14:8** “And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.”

**Rev. 22:2** “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.”

 How do you describe such a place? A gigantic city, with golden buildings and streets, bathed in the purest light imaginable coming from God Himself. While from His throne flows a river of the purest water, clear as crystal, going east and west, possibly along the valley plain that Jesus created when the mount of Olives divided north and south. Beside this river grows the tree that is the antidote of all sickness and even death; producing a different crop of fruit each month for the health of the cities residents. What a precious privilege it would be to live here!


**Heaven's Citizens** The Bible makes it very clear that those who give their lives over into the hands of Jesus Christ and accept His free offer of salvation, will be rewarded with eternal life. However with too many this life is seen as being in the form of some unreal dimension. They fear to make it too real. But look at what Scripture says:

### Heaven's Citizens are Real People:

**1 John 3:2** “ Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

**Phil. 3:21** “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.”

**Luke 24:39** “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

 When God first created Adam and Eve in Eden in His own image they were real people having perfect, flawless, eternally-young bodies. All this health and energy possessed by our original two parents will be restored to us when we are changed into the likeness of the Son of God when this corruptible body shall put on incorruption (See 1 Cor. 15:52-58).

### Life in Paradise

Vast changes are to take place in the future when the earth comes under the rule of the Son of God. Here is a list of some of them.

**Isa. 65:19** “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.”

**Rev. 21:4** “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

**Isa. 60:18** “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”

**Isa. 33:24** “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”

**Isa. 35:5** “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.”


**Isa. 35:6** “Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”

**Isa. 65:21** “And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.”

**Isa. 35:1** “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”

**Isa. 65:25** “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.”

**Isa. 11:6** “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.”

 Tremendous changes are predicted for paradise. Changes that when brought into effect elevate the happiness of human beings beyond their wildest dreams. An earth experiencing the ecological and physiological transformations predicted here would be so different to what we are accustomed too as to be unimaginable. But, to live there would unquestionably be paradise. The only thing that can keep any of us out of experiencing this lifestyle is sin. Sin destroys our fitness for heaven. But, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9). Lets make sure we have no unconfessed or unforsaken sin blocking our pathway into this city: Jesus has promised, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Rev. 2:7.

# Chapter 6

## The Key to Revelation


While Revelation 1-3 and 21-22 are fairly easy to understand, the section between 4-20 has seen a variety of interpretations, each one proclaiming its merits. However, the real key to understanding what is going on in this book is Jesus. The book falls naturally into three divisions based on three views John has of his Lord. When we see these divisions and the sections they create, the book becomes much easier to understand.

Before we can begin discussing John's visions of Jesus in the Revelation we need to familiarise ourselves with the work Jesus does for human beings. All Christians, in order to become believers, are well-versed in the sacrifice of our Lord for the sins of the world. What some don't realise is Jesus does much more. And it is these additional tasks that feature in the Revelation.

### Jesus' Position

#### What two things did an angel say went together?

**Rev. 14:6-7** “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, <sup>7</sup>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”.


 The everlasting gospel is linked to a coming judgment. Many scriptures point to this judgment (Acts 17:30-31; 24:25; 2 Cor. 5:10 are examples).

#### What work will Jesus do in this judgment?

**John 5:22** “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son”

**Jude 1:14-15** “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

**1 John 2:1** “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”

 An Advocate is a Barrister, one who pleads a guilty persons case. Scripture tells us our Barrister is Jesus. However, our Judge is also Jesus; and when He comes He will give everyone a reward (good or bad) according to the deeds he has done. There is a legal word used here; the word "execute" (Jude 15). Now the execution of justice is the last phase to be carried out after a court has been in session; for it would be a travesty of justice to sentence a sinner before there was a trial and a judgment passed. Human justice has three stages through which it passes: The trial stage, where a jury hears the evidence; a sentencing stage, where the verdict is pronounced; and an execution stage, where the guilty person is punished.

Therefore, as Jesus comes to execute judgment on all, the stages involving the Barrister and Judge must have preceded this event for it to take place. This is what the sanctuary teaches (see the Sanctuary Supplement in Appendix, Item # 2) and what Revelation is all about.

The sanctuary reveals three stages to the gospel: The sacrifice; The Mediator (Barrister); The Judge. The New Testament reveals these same stages: The Gospels (sacrifice); Hebrews and the first part of Revelation (Mediator or Barrister) and Judge (last part of Revelation). In other words, the Gospels are about what Jesus was doing in the court of the sanctuary; Hebrews and Revelation tell us what He is doing in the tabernacle (Temple).

**Jesus' Work in the Sanctuary:** Here is a brief narrative on how Jesus carries out the work of the sanctuary in Revelation:

**Jesus as Mediator (Barrister):**

After hearing the sound of a voice like a trumpet John turns around to see his glorified Lord standing in the midst of seven candlesticks (Rev. 1:12-13). The candlesticks stood in the apartment of the sanctuary dealing with the mediation for sin. In which case, reflecting back to our lessons on the seven churches, what was Jesus message? "I know thy works" and I "counsel" you to .... This is what a Barrister does. He knows our works and gives us counsel to meet the situation. Look at the number of times He encourages the churches to overcome sin. Every single church got a promise for the overcomer (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). This is what Rev. 2-3 is all about; the messages to the seven churches are His messages to both Churches and Christians of all ages to prepare us for the judgment.

**Jesus as the Coming Judge:**

The last part of Revelation deals with Jesus coming on a white horse. John sees Him leading the armies of heaven and on His thigh is written the name "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:11-16). Notice how this last vision of Jesus begins: "Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war." [Rev. 19:11]. The armies of heaven are following Him (v. 14) and He is coming to fulfill all that Jude 15; Matt. 16:27 and Rev. 22:12 say He will do. Rev. 20 is the reward of the wicked (see Matt. 25:31-46) and Rev. 21-22 is the reward of the righteous.

**Jesus and Judgment:**

Revelation chapters 4-11:18 appear to take place in the throne room. Chapter 11:19 seems to indicate a shift into the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, also called the Most Holy Place. This second apartment is the one dealing with "Yom Kippur" or the "Day of Atonement." It is worth noting that the twenty-four elders (Rev. 4:4, 10-11; 5:6-8), who sit upon thrones surrounding God's throne, periodically fall at the feet of Jesus and give praise to God. The significance of this act is, every time they give praise, seems to mark the close of some action taking place in the chapters between 4-19. Below is an outline based on when these elders give praise.

**Part 1:** Chapter 4 opens with a view of God's throne around which a number of creatures are seen including the 24-elders. They are in a judgment setting as described in Dan. 7:9-10. The action spills over into chapter 5 where a Lamb is seen taking a book from God so that it can be opened (see also Dan. 7:10). This marks the introduction to the opening of the seven seals and at this point the elders give praise (Rev. 5:14)

**Part 2:** Now in chapter 6 the Lamb begins to open the seven seals revealing seven periods of Church apostasy.



It should be noted that the praise given by the elders in chap. 7:11-12 doesn't mark the

end of a section as it comes between the 6th (Rev. 6:12) and 7th (Rev. 8:1) seal. This little segment in chapter 7 is a parentheses answering the question of chap. 6:17. The 144000 spoken of here are in chap. 14:1-5 and these lessons will be dealing with them as a part of chap. 14 to maintain continuity.

Therefore, with the exception of the parentheses in chap 7, this section runs on into the seven trumpets. These trumpets are judgments that come upon the earth for the apostasy that has taken place. Thus the section, as a whole, deals with seven periods of apostasy and seven judgments for that apostasy. At the end of these trumpets (the seventh one sounds in Rev. 11:15) the 24-elders praise (chap. 11:16).


**Part 3:** The next verse after the elders praise is very significant. It reads: "Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail" [Rev. 11:19] The ark of the covenant was in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary. It was the area in the Hebrew tabernacle where once a year the high priest performed the act of cleansing the sanctuary on the day of atonement or "Yom Kippur." This phrase indicates that the book of Revelation is about to enter a stage of judgment. The section deals with the great controversy between Christ and Satan; it opens with the war in heaven between Michael and the dragon and it closes with the fall of Babylon.

**Rev. 12** This is a review of the war between good and evil from the beginning to the end. In the chapter nothing changes; the dragon fought against Michael in the beginning and he is making war against God's remnant at the end.

**Rev. 13** Portrays the development of the last war between the dragon, who has given his power to the beast, and the remnant. Here we see the last battle being fought over the issue of how to worship and the mark of the beast.

**Rev. 14** At the beginning of this chapter we are introduced to a group referred to as the 144,000. They are faultless before God. Then the chapter moves on to a warning about the hour of God's judgment. A clear warning is given that Babylon is fallen and this is followed by one of the strictest indictments in scripture for following a wrong system of worship.

**Rev. 15-16** Covers seven angels who have in their possession seven last plagues to pour out on the earth. The fact that these are "last" plagues indicates other judgments have preceded them. Perhaps the ones given under the trumpets.

 At this point in time Revelation has given us a legal brief against the forces of evil. We have been told Satan is the one behind all attempts to overcome good; first by starting war in heaven and then by continuing the process of war right down to the end where he is fighting against the remnant. Then we have a clear portrayal of an aggressive warfare near the close of time involving worship and the mark of the beast. The book states that God has warned the world that His judgment has come and this worship and mark will not be tolerated by Him. Finally a series of plagues fall on those who refuse to heed the warning of chapter 14 and when these plagues come we are told that "in them the wrath of God is complete" (15:1).


**Rev. 17-18** This is the closing section of the judgment, and as such, it is not surprising that it deals with the judgment of Babylon, both as a predicted sentence and as a prophecy, to be carried out. At the conclusion of this section the elders praise (19:4). This is the last time in the book of Revelation that the elders give praise.

# Chapter 7

## Sanctuary Supplement

For those Christians unfamiliar with the Hebrew sanctuary and its services a brief overview is given here. It is by no means a comprehensive study of the subject, as it only touches on those aspects of the sanctuary that have a bearing on Revelation. As this supplement is only intended as a source of information it has been presented in a narrative format.

**The Divine Command** After the Lord had led the Hebrews out from Egypt to Mt Sinai He began a process of national education designed to elevate Israel from a slave race to a holy nation. They were given basic laws relating to hygiene, civil code, moral code and religion. In addition to this, God desired to establish a close contact with these Israelites and so He commanded Moses to build a sanctuary that He might dwell among them (Ex. 25:8). In this regard Moses was given very specific plans for the construction work, even to the finest of details, and the Lord told him to be very careful that he followed the divine "pattern." (Ex. 25:9, 40; Heb. 9:23).

 The reason these instructions were so precise was due to the fact that Moses was constructing a building based on a pattern of a "true tabernacle" in heaven (See Heb. 8:1-5). It is this original tabernacle that features in Revelation.

The model that was given to the Jews at Mt. Sinai was a miniature visual aid designed to instruct them in a number of heavenly truths. Briefly here is how it worked.

**Section 2: The Divisions** The sanctuary consisted of three main divisions: **the COURTYARD**, (Ex. 27:9-13); **the HOLY PLACE** and **the MOST HOLY PLACE**, (Ex. 26:33). These three divisions correspond with the work of Jesus for us as our Sacrifice, Mediator, and Judge are, or will be on the face of our planet. Hence God the Father has highly exalted Him above all the creatures that are in heaven or on the earth.

### **The Courtyard:**

This area contained **the ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERINGS**, (Ex. 27:1-8); and **the LAVER** (Ex. 30:18-21). John was told not to measure this area as it belonged to the Gentiles. (Rev. 11:2). In actual fact the area typified Christ's earthly ministry, and as such, it tells the story of the sacrifice of God's Son for sin as it's recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.


 Hence we have Jesus in Revelation as "a Lamb as it had been slain" (Rev. 5:6) and "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

### **The Holy Place:**

This held three articles of furniture. A **TABLE OF SHEWBREAD** (Ex. 25:23-30) on the north side. It pointed to our dependence on God for both physical and spiritual food as well as to Jesus as the living bread (see 1 Cor. 11:23-24 and Jesus sermon on the bread from heaven in John 6:31-41). The Christian understands that eating bread, as Jesus has described it here, is Bible study --- feeding on the Word of God.

On the south side stood the **SEVEN BRANCH CANDLESTICK** (Ex. 25:31-40). The lampstand represented God's true church (Rev. 1:20). The light coming from its seven branches was both a type of God's word (Ps. 119:105) and of Jesus as the Light of the world

(see John 1:4-9;9:5). The oil in these candlesticks represented the Holy Spirit (see Zech. 4:1-6 and Rev. 4:5). Finally, over against the wall near the Most Holy Place was the **ALTAR OF INCENSE** (Ex. 30:1-9); and it represents the prayers of God's people (Ps. 141:2 and Rev. 5:8).

 The Holy Place in heaven is where Jesus ascended after His resurrection to begin the ministry recorded in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is also where we see Him in the first three chapters of Revelation, standing in the midst of the seven candlesticks (Rev. 1:12-13). If we link these chapters of Revelation with the ministry spoken of in Hebrews we can see how the messages to the seven churches apply to us. Jesus is mediating for us. He says, "I know thy works" and, here is My "counsel." In this way the messages of Rev. 2:1-3:22 become very personal both to us and to our churches.

### **The Most Holy Place:**

In this apartment there was only one item, the **ARK OF THE COVENANT** (Ex. 25:10-22). Basically, it was a chest covered with the Mercy Seat (Ex. 25:17-22). On either end of this seat were carved golden cherubs and between these cherubs dwelt the divine Presence. It typified the scene of Rev. 4:2-8 and Eze. 1:4-28. Inside the chest was the ten commandments written on tables of stone. (Deut. 10:4-5) The combination of the law and mercy seat in the Ark of the Covenant revealed to us God's wonderful blend of mercy and justice as seen in His Gospel.

### **Here is a basic floor plan of the Sanctuary**

**Section 3: The Sanctuary Services** There are two services connected with the sanctuary that interest us: the **DAILY SERVICE** and the YEARLY DAY OF ATONEMENT or "**YOM KIPPUR**" as the Jews called it.

#### **The Daily Service:**

In this service a person brought a sacrificial animal to the priest at the courtyard. There he confessed his sins over the head of the animal and slew it with his own hand. The priest then took some of the blood and sprinkled it on the horns of the altar of sacrifice and a portion of the flesh of the sacrifice was eaten by the priest (Lev. 6:25-30). In the sin offering for the congregation as a whole, the blood was sprinkled on the veil of the sanctuary by the priest and also placed on the horns of the altar of incense. In this way all confessed sin was transferred from the sinner to the animal substitute and then to the sanctuary. The lesson was to teach how Jesus becomes our substitute before the Father and His law when we accept His blood for our sins. This is what we see in Rev. 5:6.

It should be noted that there was no virtue in the actual blood of these animal sacrifices to atone for sin (see Heb. 10:1-4). They pointed to Jesus' sacrifice (1 John 1:7). Thus in this action, the Jews of the Old Testament looked forward to the cross, as we now look back to it and see in its victim Jesus as the Lamb who died to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

#### **Yom Kippur:**


Throughout the year the sins of the people, by means of the daily sacrifice, were transferred to the sanctuary. In this way the sanctuary became defiled. It was therefore necessary to cleanse the sanctuary from this defilement and this became the work of Yom Kippur.

Once every year the high priest entered the Most Holy Place to "cleanse" the sanctuary (Lev. 16:29-34; Heb. 9:7) The day they did this was called the Day of Atonement or "yom kippur."




To the Hebrew people it was always a solemn day of judgment. From the Jewish Encyclopedia, article "Atonement, day of:" we read: "God seated on His throne to judge the world ... openeth the Book of Records; it is read, every man's signature being found therein. The great trumpet is sounded; a still, small voice is heard; the angels shudder, saying, this is the day of judgment ... On New Year's Day the decree is written; on the Day of Atonement it is sealed who shall live and who are to die."

On Yom Kippur two goats were brought to the sanctuary and one was chosen by lot to be the scapegoat, the other was the Lord's goat. The Lord's goat was slain and its blood carried by the high priest into the Most Holy Place and sprinkled there to accomplish the work of cleansing the tabernacle from sin. The priest then confessed the sins of Israel over the scapegoat, who was led into the wilderness and left to die. (see Lev. 16; 20-26).

 In this way Israel was taught some of the truths found in Revelation 20; the scapegoat represented Satan, who will be separated from God's people forever. He will spend a 1000 years wandering in the wilderness and at the end of that time lose his life as a punishment for all the harm he has done. The Lord's goat represents Jesus who is the atonement for the people of God. It is by virtue of this blood that He has become our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:14-16, 23-27). Jesus is a King-Priest; and He ministers in the sanctuary above (Heb. 8:1-2) for the benefit of His people.

### Section 1: The Heavenly Sanctuary:

**The earthly sanctuary services came to their end** when Jesus died on the cross. At the time of His death, history attests, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom and the Most Holy Place was thrown open to view, (Mark 15:37-38). Prior to this time only the high priest saw into this apartment of the temple, and then only once a year, on the day of "Yom Kippur." However, after the crucifixion, the earthly sanctuary and its services were nullified. Hebrews says, these sacrifices offered in the temple could never "make those who approach perfect," (Heb. 10:1). But the writer adds, "... He takes away the first that He may establish the second," (Heb. 10:9). Not that there may no longer be a covenant and a sanctuary; but that He may establish the second which is in heaven, (see Heb. 8:1-6; 9:24).

 It is Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary that we see in Revelation. Here He reveals history that is past, present and future. Here He shows the outcome of "Yom Kippur;" and here He recites those fearful 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." (Rev. 22:11).

## Chapter 8

### The Seven Seals

The solemnity of this scene is set by the fact that it takes place before God's throne. A large audience is gathered about the Ancient of Days who holds a book in His right hand sealed with seven seals. The focal point of the action begins when, as a response to the question, Who can open the seals?, a Lamb approaches the Father and takes the book out of His hand (5:7). At this point, four beasts and 24-elders burst out into a new song praising the Lamb for being worthy to take the book. Up until this time no one was found worthy to open this book (5:4). Let's begin our study of the Seven Seals by looking at the characters who are involved in the action:

**Heaven's Attendants:** God is surrounded by attendants waiting to serve Him:

**Rev. 5:11** “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’.

**Dan. 7:10** “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.”

There are three groups of attendants mentioned here: angels, elders and beasts (some Bibles have "living creatures" for beasts).

#### The Elders:

**Isa. 24:23** “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

This chapter in Isaiah is headed "God's Judgment on the Whole Earth" and the "ancients" are His elders as the NKJV has it. These elders wear white raiment, a symbol of righteousness Rev. 3:4; 19:8, and have crowns of gold, a symbol of victory Rev. 2:10; James 1:12, see Rev. 4:4. This would indicate this group are redeemed people from the earth; perhaps those raised at Christ's resurrection (see Matt. 27:52-53).

In the OT there were 24 divisions, or orders, of the priesthood serving in the temple (1 Chron. 24:1-19). This system of divisions appears to have been preserved until the time of Zacharias because Luke says he "was serving as a priest before God in the order of his division" (Luke 1:8 NKJV) when an angel announced he would have a son. It is not clear whether Revelation's elders represent a preservation of the Levitical priesthood in heaven, but what is clear is, they assist Christ as priests (Rev. 5:8-10).

**The Beasts:** Possibly a whole book could be written about these beasts. However, as our space is limited, we can only offer a brief comment:

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

**Their Identity:** Scripture offers us two possibilities: their six wings (v. 8) suggests they may be seraphim (Isa. 6:2); while their faces seem to be more in line with the cherubim (Eze. 1:5-26; 10:20-22). The new song they sing (Rev. 5:9-10) has led some to identify them as human beings. However, textual evidence seems to suggest, this song was sung in the third person eg. "redeemed them" not "us" as the KJV indicates. Therefore, it would appear they are either cherubim or seraphim, as Scripture offers nothing like this in human form.

**Their Position:** The four beasts are "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne." According to Scripture the God of Israel dwells "between the cherubim" (1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Ps. 80:1; 99:1 etc.). It also says a cherubim carried God (Ps. 18:10; 2 Sam. 22:11). The description of God riding on a cherubim seems to make Ezekiel's comment on their feet significant (Eze. 1:7). Two Assyrian-type cherubs, excavated at Khorsabad, show a winged creature with an animal body supporting a man's head; such a beast could easily be ridden. The close association of God with the cherubim seems to make them the most likely choice here.

**Rev. 4:7** "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."

**Their Faces:** These present an interesting study on their own; and a number of proposals have been put forward regarding them. However, we need to be careful here for John has used similes in his descriptions. Each face is said to be "like a" lion, calf, man, and eagle. (Rev. 4:7). Not each face "was" etc. Therefore it is possible the prophet was referring to a certain look or characteristic on a normal face. Maybe he saw a kingly look as of a lion; the helpful look of a servant; the human look of a man; and a divine characteristic resembling, not an eagle, but an eagle in flight -- something majestic. Whatever he saw, Scripture hasn't made it entirely clear.

**Heaven's Lamb:** Twenty-nine times, the book of Revelation refers to Christ as a "Lamb." The allusion is to Jesus as the sacrifice for the sins of the world (John 1:29; Acts 8:32).

### **Jesus Credentials:**

**Rev. 5:6** "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth"

The form of the verb, "has been", that is used here is in the past perfect state. That is to say, the time of the action is in the past, and the state of the action is finished (The slaying was completed in the past). This is important because: this book with its seven seals could not be opened until after the death of the Lamb; just as a will isn't valid until the testator dies (Heb. 9:16-17). Therefore, this phrase about the Lamb is really giving Jesus credentials to open the seals.

**Seven:** This number is thought to indicate completeness. It was a sacred number to the Hebrews and some feel the idea came to them from before the flood when the 7th day marked the completion of creation. Certainly the number recurs repeatedly in the Jewish ritual service: every 7th day was holy (Ex. 20:8-11); there were 7 days of Unleaven Bread (Ex. 34:18) and 7 days of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:34); every 7th year was a sabbatical (Ex. 21:2); the 1st day of the 7th month was a sabbath (Lev. 23:24); there was the 7-fold sprinkling of blood on "Yom Kippur" (Lev. 16:14, 19). Circumcision took place after 7 days (Lev. 12:3); a sacrificial animal had to be at least 7 days old (Ex. 22:30) and the lampstand in the tabernacle had seven branches holding seven lights (Num. 8:2), etc. The number seven, or multiples of seven, feature in many other places of the Bible, and while the number has its literal uses, it also expresses this idea of completeness. Hence the seven churches cover the complete Christian era.

**Horns:** Figuratively it applied to strength or political power; from the fact that the horns of an animal were a symbol of its strength (Ps. 132:17; Jer. 48:25). Prophetically, the symbol stood for kings, kingdoms, or other powers (Dan. 7:8, 20-21, 24; Rev. 17:12, 16). Hence, Jesus having seven horns, indicates His supreme strength (Matt. 28:18) or He will possess all kingdoms (Dan. 2:44; Dan. 7:27). Here it is probably the power He has to open the seals that is being inferred (Rev. 5:3-5).

**Eyes:** Refer to the seven Spirits of God (Rev. 5:6; 4:5; 1:4). These Spirits were before the throne of God; they were represented by the seven lamps of fire, and the seven eyes. It is interesting that eyesalve was offered to the Laodicean church to cure spiritual blindness (Rev. 3:18). Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to guide His church through the period of time from His departure until He returns the second time (John 14:16-20, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14). The work of the Spirit mentioned in these verses is typified by the lamps of fire and the eyes; and the period the Spirit assists the church is the same as the time allotted to the seven churches and seals.

**Rev. 5:5** “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

**Gen. 49:9-10** “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? <sup>10</sup>The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.”

**Lion:** The lion is a symbol of strength. The kingdom of Babylon was likened unto a lion (Dan. 7:4, 17) and the other kingdoms which followed were all said to be inferior (Dan. 2:39; the metals used in this chapter decline in value per ounce from Babylon to Rome). Jesus came from the tribe of Judah and is a King-Priest (Heb. 7:14; 5:5-10).

**Rom. 15:12** “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.”

**Root:** This is a prophecy from Isaiah that Paul applies to Jesus (see Rom. 15:8-11). The interesting thing is, a few chapters before this, the apostle speaks of the Gentiles being grafted into Israel through the "root" stock and partaking of the nature of the root (Rom. 11:16-18). Jesus is the source of all spiritual growth for all peoples, both Jew and Gentile.

**The Four Horsemen:** As we see a progression in the prophecies of Daniel two and seven - each covering the same period but from a different point of view - so in the prophecies of John relating to the Seven Churches and the Seven Seals there is a repetition of the eras but from a different perspective. As four horsemen appear prominently in the first four seals of Revelation, it would seem a good place to begin this study would be to look for the meaning of prophetic horses in Scripture.

**Zech. 1:8-10** “I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that *were* in the bottom; and behind him *were there* red horses, speckled, and white. <sup>9</sup>Then said I, O my lord, what *are* these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will show thee what these *be*. <sup>10</sup>And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These *are they* whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.”

**Zech. 6:2-5** “In the first chariot *were* red horses; and in the second chariot black horses;

<sup>3</sup>And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses.

<sup>4</sup>Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What *are* these, my lord?

<sup>5</sup>And the angel answered and said unto me, These *are* the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.”

**Ps. 68:17** “The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.”

**Horses Identity:** A clue to the meaning of these four horses comes from the mention of the Holy Place. In the wilderness tabernacle the curtains were embroidered with large numbers of cherubim to represent the countless angels surrounding the throne of God (see Ex. 26:1, 31). The horses came from standing before the Lord. From our previous study we know cherubim stand before God. Whether these four horses refer to the four beasts (cherubims) surrounding the throne is hard to say; certainly each horse is introduced by one of these four beasts (Rev. 6:1, 3, 5, 7). Perhaps the safest interpretation is they are angels (possibly cherubim) who appear before God.

### The 1st Seal:

**Rev. 6:1-2** “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. <sup>2</sup>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.”

**White** symbolises purity (Ps. 51:7; Isa. 1:18).

**A Crown** represents victory (James 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; 1 Cor. 9:25).

**The Bow** indicates success in the battle against evil (Ps. 7:11-13; "arrows" come from a bow, 45:4-5).

**History:** The description of this horse and rider accurately describes the Church as it was in the Ephesian era 31-100 AD. Note the expression in Ps. 45:4 "because of truth, humility, and righteousness." How beautifully it fits in with Rev. 2:2 where Jesus commends the Ephesian Church for their works and how they cannot bear evil. It is also the era when Paul wrote they had preached the gospel throughout the entire world (Col. 1:5-6, 23). The symbol represents the church in its purity.

### The 2nd Seal:

**Rev. 6:3-4** “And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. <sup>4</sup>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.”

**Red** symbolises the spilling of blood (Eze. 32:6-12; Jer. 46:10). It is also the colour that represents sin (Isa. 1:18) and apostasy (Rev. 17:3). By this means peace was taken from the earth.

**History:** The link between this period and the Church of Smyrna, 100-323 AD, couldn't be plainer. Jesus gives Smyrna no reproof but says, I know thy tribulation and poverty (Rev. 2:9). Under the rule of Imperial Rome the believers were losing possessions and spilling their blood. However, a new development was endangering Christianity. Toward the end of

the Ephesian period Paul wrote, the "mystery of iniquity" was working (2 Thess. 2:3-7). Thus corruption began to creep in to the church. According to Rev. James Where, "Christianity began already to wear the garb of heathenish. 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." In this era dissensions (Rev. 2:9) and persecutions took place from the Church.

It would seem appropriate to pause in our study of these seals at this point to consider, Why John would be duplicating material he seems to have previously covered in Chapters two and three of Revelation. The answer appears to lie in the Sanctuary. Previously we have seen that after His ascension Jesus began His work of intercession in the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. It is in that area that He gives the messages to the churches telling them, I know your works and this is My counsel on what you are to do about it.

Now a different scene presents itself in Rev. 4-11:18. Here we are before the throne of the Ancient of Days and a book containing scenes of apostasy and persecution is being reviewed by beings in heaven. A very similar situation to what happens in Dan. 7:9-26. After this has taken place, the next thing John sees is seven angels with seven trumpets bringing judgments upon the earth. This is significant. How could these angels bring judgment to an earth that has never had its case heard. It would be a travesty of justice. The seals show God's court hearing the evidence before the trumpets begin. Let's look at the next seal:

### The 3rd Seal:

**Rev. 6:5-6** "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. <sup>6</sup>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."

**Black:** is the shade of darkness which Scripture uses to symbolize moral darkness, sin, apostasy and error (Acts 26:18; John 1:5; 3:19; 12:35).

**Balances:** represent a form of judgment, a considering of something (Dan. 5:27).

**Wheat:** in the form of bread, has been likened to the Word of God (John 6:31-41; 1 Cor. 11:23-24). The price placed on it "a penny" (Gr. denaries) represented a day's wages for an ordinary laborer. The quantity "a measure" was about a day's food ration for a working man; so the cost of this wheat, about 8-10 times its normal price, wouldn't feed a family. This inflated wheat price indicates a wheat shortage with the possibility of famine.

**Barley:** This was the inferior grain usually reserved for slaves and the poor. Under normal circumstances, a penny (denaries) would purchase 24 measures of barley; again indicating excessive prices possibly due to a famine.

**Oil and Wine:** These represent two vital components of the gospel without which no one can be saved. The oil symbolises the Holy Spirit (Zech. 4:2-6) and the wine the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:27-29). If Christians ever lose the Spirit of God and the atoning blood of Christ their eternal salvation is gone. No amount of works can save them.

**History:** Under the Church era of Pergamos 323-538 AD a spiritual famine developed. Bibles were not available to the people and large numbers of pagans were coming into the church. Note how the church in Pergamos was reproved for having the doctrine of Balak as well as those pursuing the course of the Nicolaitans (p. 10 of these lessons). Millions of unconverted people flooded into the Church. Of this era Rev. Where (ibid., 54) wrote: "Christianity had now become popular, and a large portion, perhaps a large majority, of those

who embraced it, only assumed the name, received of the Church, while at heart and in moral character they were as much heathen as they were before. Error and corruption now came in upon the Church like a flood."

### The 4th Seal:

**Rev. 6:7-8** "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. <sup>8</sup>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."

**Pale:** the Greek adjective "tellers" refers to the pale colour seen in blighted plants (yellowish-green) Perhaps a colour associated with fear and death.

**Death** rides and Hades, the abode of the dead, follows indicating the terrible work of destruction that would be accomplished by this horse and rider upon God's people.

**a fourth part** of the earth; the earth is seen by heaven as having four corners (Rev. 7:1) and this expression probably means a wide area as opposed to a single country.

**History:** The era of Thyatira, 538-1517 AD, has the historical distinction of being the one period in which a church ruled the empires of the world. This tragic era, when a church engaged in promoting the worst tribulation Jesus said would ever be (Matt. 24:21) became known as the dark ages. So infamous was the period of persecution that Scripture records it many times over (Dan. 7:21, 25; 12:7; Rev. 13:5; 12:6, 14; 17:6) because it almost wiped the true Church of God from the face of the earth. Under this tribulation God's people suffered those ordeals mentioned at the close of v. 8 and as a result of their faithfulness in martyrdom, they are to be especially close to Him in His new kingdom (Rev. 7:13-17). Jezebel, as she is portrayed under the church of Thyatira, gives a realistic picture of the apostasy committed by this Church.

### The 5th Seal:

**Rev. 6:9-11** "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: <sup>10</sup>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? <sup>11</sup>And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled"

The place mentioned here is not the altar of incense where the prayers of the saints ascend, but the altar of sacrifice where the blood of the victim was poured out at its base (Lev. 4:7). Hence the souls are referred to as being under the altar; in other words --- they've been slain.

This phrase explains the expression "souls." These deceased people want to be avenged for having been murdered. Their blood cries out, as did the blood of Abel, to be vindicated (Gen. 4:9-10). The Greek word "psuchê" can be translated either "soul" or "life" and its not the soul that is at issue here, for the soul of a martyr is safe as we shall see in note 3, what they want to be avenged for is their loss of life.

In a sense this gift is a vindication of their righteousness. The white robe is a symbol of their righteousness (Rev. 19:8). It marks them as overcomers with their names in the Lamb's book

of life (Rev. 3:5). As such they will not be hurt of the second death into which their persecutors must eventually go (Rev. 20:14-15).

**History:** This seal parallels the Church of Sardis, 1517 - 1798 AD. Volumes could be written about the incredible loss of life God's people suffered at the hands of evil men prior to the Reformation. In 1506 AD, just prior to Martin Luther publishing his 95 Thesis Oct. 31, 1517 AD John Foxe wrote, "If John Huss, or good Jerome of Prague, or John Wycliffe before them both, or William Brute, Thorpe, Swinderby, or the Lord Cobham; if Zisca with all the company of the Bohemians; if the Earl Relmond, with all the Toulouslans; if the Waldois, or the Albigenses, with infinite others, had either been in these our times now, or else had seen then this ruin of the Pope, and revealing of Antichrist, which the Lord now hath dispensed unto us, what joy and triumph would they have made!"

It was during the time of the "souls under the altar" that the reformation struggled out from under the darkness of popery. Led by valiant men of different backgrounds, the Reformation doctrines vindicated the faith of the martyrs and declared the doctrine of papal Rome wrong. Thus partly vindicated, these saints were to wait quietly "until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled" (Rev. 6:11). This waiting period will cease when Jesus returns to reward all His saints at the same time (Rev. 22:12; Heb. 11:36-40).

**The 6th Seal:** The sixth seal resembles Jesus' discourse on the signs of the end of the world; let's group them together:

**Rev. 6:12-14** "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. "

**Matt. 24: 21-22** "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup>And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

**Matt. 24: 29-30** "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: <sup>30</sup>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."

The "tribulation" mentioned here is the one already noted under the 4th seal which nearly destroyed God's true church. So furious was it that Jesus said there has never been one like it nor will there be (Matt. 24:21). What interests us here is, the days of this tribulation were to be shortened. From the study of Dan. 7:21, 25 we learnt that this period lasted 1260 years (this prophecy comes up again in Revelation and we will defer a discussion of it until then) going from 538-1798 AD. This being the case we would expect a cessation of papal persecution prior to this date. Students familiar with history and prophecy will be aware that Napoleon Bonaparte's General Berthier took the Pope prisoner in 1798, an event which marked the conclusion of the tribulation period -- but the Reformation so powerfully aided by Martin Luther, so weakened the papal alliance that persecution began to diminish and cease before the end of the 1260 years. Now, notice what was to happen next:

The mention of an earthquake is totally insignificant unless we have something to locate it by. The world has, or so it seems, always been subject to violent movements of the earth's crust. How could the mention of an earthquake be of any help us? The significant thing is,



this one has to come after the tribulation, and as its days were shortened, it must appear before the end of the 1260 years in 1798 AD.

**Nov. 1, 1755 AD:** "Among the earth movements which in historic times have affected the kingdom of Portugal, that of Nov. 1, 1755, takes the first rank; as it does also, in some respects, among all recorded earthquakes. The first shocks of this earthquake came without other warning than a deep sound of rumbling thunder, which appeared to proceed from beneath the ground, and it was immediately followed by a quaking which threw down almost the entire city. In six minutes sixty thousand persons perished."

**Effect:** "The effects of the earthquake of the first of November, 1755, were distributed over very nearly four millions of square English miles of the earth's surface; a most astonishing space! and greatly surpassing anything of this kind ever recorded in history."

Up until this point in human history, this earthquake was possibly the greatest natural disaster since Noah's flood. However, we need to keep in mind that what is significant about this earthquake isn't its size or location or devastation, but the fact that it came at the time prophecy indicated; after the tribulation, which was itself cut short there would be "a great earthquake" and right on cue there was!

The timing and sequence here are everything. Sometime after the earthquake following the "great tribulation," the sun must be blackened and the moon must turn red. To fulfill prophecy, this order of events must be maintained.

**May 19, 1780 AD:** "Dark Day, The. May 19, 1780; so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day, extending over all New England. In some places persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening song, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barn-yard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about 10 o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."

"For several days past the atmosphere has been remarkably charged with dry smoky vapours, so that the sun might be viewed easily with the naked eye.... The disk of the moon, through the nights of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday last, was of a reddish-copper colour, somewhat resembling her appearance at the time of her being eclipsed."

While it is true that there have been a number of attempts to explain this phenomenon by natural causes we need to be careful that we don't lose sight of the fact that Scripture didn't reflect on its cause, but simply said it would be there sometime after 1755 AD.

**Nov. 13, 1833 AD:** "The morning of Nov. 13th, 1833, was rendered memorable by an exhibition of the phenomenon called shooting stars, which was probably more extensive and magnificent than any similar one hitherto recorded.... For some time after the occurrence, the 'meteoric phenomenon' was the principal topic of conversation in every circle."

"Probably the most remarkable of all the meteoric showers ... was that of the Leonids, on Nov. 12, 1833. The number ... was estimated as high as 2,000,000 an hour for five of six hours."

The difference in the dates here is probably due to the date line. However, just 35 years after the close of the 1260 year tribulation prophecy, the last sign given in Matthew twenty-four was seen. The next event will see the coming of Christ.

How this event ties in with the last seal.

## The 7th Seal:

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

In studying Daniel we learnt how a day equals a year in prophecy (Eze. 4:6; Num. 14:34); therefore "half an hour" would be the equivalent of seven and a half days. The reason there is silence in heaven for this period is, when Jesus comes the second time, every angel comes with Him (Matt. 25:31; 24:31). What an incredible thought it is that we are living between verses 13 and 14 of Revelation chapter six. Just on the verge of when Jesus comes. What a thrill it will be to finally see Him.

Revelation chapter seven is a parenthesis about the 144,000 who appear later in chapter fourteen. Therefore we will be looking at chapter seven in the context of chapter fourteen later. In our next lesson we will again enter the throne room where seven angels are given seven trumpets and see what they are told to do with them.

# Chapter 9

## The Seven Trumpets

After the seven seals the scene returns to the throne room where we see seven angels with seven trumpets standing before God (Rev. 8:2). Another angel enters having a golden censer which he fills fire and casts into the earth (Rev. 8:3-5). This act is a signal for the seven angels to blow their trumpets (Rev. 8:6). The censer, previously filled with the prayers of the saints, and then being used to begin the sounding of the trumpets indicates there is a connection between these prayers and the seven trumpets. Let's look at that:

### The Saint's Prayers:

**Rev. 8:3** “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”

The scene resembles the one we see in the Gospels where Zacharias offers incense on the altar as the people pray without (Luke 1:8-11). Here there is no mention of the saints, but in the fifth seal, saints were seen crying out to God from under this altar of incense (Rev. 6:9-11). Under the Mosaic system incense was burned morning and evening on this altar standing in front of the curtain to the Most Holy Place (Ex. 30:1-9). Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place and there he burned incense in a censer (Lev. 16:12-13).

This raises the question of what connection is there between the saint's prayers and judgment. The answer is, under the 5th seal, the saints are pleading for God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on earth (Rev. 6:10). These saints have had a hard time: In Daniel we are told the little horn makes war with the saints (Dan. 7:21) to the point where Scripture says, he shall wear out the saints of the Most High (Dan. 7:25). For the forces against God's true people shed the blood of His believers until they were drunk with the blood of the saints (Rev. 16:6, 17:6, 18:24) Their cruelty and inhumanity was such they became intoxicated with the sufferings of the saints. Hence the saints cry unto heaven. Now, the action of the angel throwing a censer of fire to the earth (8:5) should alert us to the fact that the prayers of these saints are about to be answered:

**Fire:** In Scripture fire has been connected with: the presence of God: Abraham and a smoking furnace (Gen. 15:17), Moses and the burning bush (Ex. 3:2), God's descent on mount Sinai (Ex. 19:18), and as a reference to God as "a consuming fire" (Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29). Fire that has been cast can indicate a judgment or punishment from the Lord: Nahab and Abihu were consumed by fire (Lev. 10:1-2), when the children of Israel murmured against the Lord fire swept the camp (Num. 11:1-3), a consuming fire destroyed 250 men in Korah's rebellion (Num. 16:35) and all the wicked will eventually be destroyed by fire coming down from God (Rev. 20:9). Finally fire coming from God has been used to testify on behalf of God's true worship as was the case with Elijah on Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:24, 38-39). Therefore fire, coming from God, has been used to punish the wicked as well as show approval for the saints.

There is an OT book whose message is very apt here; it is the book of Habakkuk. Only three chapters long it tells the story of a distressed prophet who complains to God about injustice. He cannot understand how God can sit in silence permitting evil to continue. The Lord replies to His servant that, He isn't ignorant of the evil that is being practiced, neither is He

indifferent, but that He will shortly punish the sinful nation by the Chaldeans [Babylonians]. Habakkuk is shocked. He asks God, How He can punish a sinful nation by another sinful nation far worse than the one being punished? To this the Lord replies that He isn't unmindful of the wickedness of the instrument He is using and that presently He would punish the nation He has used for Israel's correction. (Hab. 1:1-2:20).

We can see this prediction fulfilled in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar attacks Jerusalem and Scripture says, the "Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand (Dan. 1:2). Now a little later on in history we find the king of Babylon being told, "thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.... thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians" (Dan. 5:27-28). God punished the Babylonians with the Persians; later the Persians are defeated by the Greeks. There is a principle that goes way back to Abraham's day, God allots a nation time to repent and if they don't, when their iniquity is full, they are punished (Gen. 15:16). These seven trumpets will see nations punished.

**Introduction to Trumpets:** The seven trumpets is a pivotal study in the book of Revelation. Properly understood, it links what has taken place under the seven churches and seals to what follows in the rest of the book. While it is quite possible to understand Revelation without a knowledge of these trumpet chapters, it is nearly impossible to understand why John writes the rest of his book the way he does.

As this study proceeds more will be revealed about how Revelation goes together as a book. However, as the trumpets progress they reveal a considerable amount of history which leads to a problem with space. Therefore in the interests of brevity, the history for this study, unless otherwise specified, has been condensed from "The New Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia" and "The Worldbook Encyclopedia" 1976 edition, and given in note form.

## The 1st Trumpet:

**Rev. 8:7** "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

**Hail & Fire:** God is seen as raining fire and brimstone on the wicked (Ps. 11:6); the seventh plague on Egypt saw fire mingled with hail, this was a judgment on that land (Ex. 9:23-25). Sometimes the elements of hail and fire are literal and at other times the destruction is accomplished through armies and warfare. In either case they are destructive forces coming upon a rebellious people.

**Third Part:** This fraction is used frequently in the seven trumpets. It appears later in chapter 12 when Satan, as the dragon, draws a third part of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth (Rev. 12:4). In this instance, a portion of the angels who had rebelled, were cast out to the literal earth (Rev. 12:9). It means a portion was cast to the earth.

**The Trees:** are a symbol of the people of God. A righteous man is likened to a tree (Ps. 1:3; 52:8; 92:12; Isa. 65:22). Some see in the action of Jesus cursing the fig tree a parable of the coming destruction on God's people (Matt. 21:18-21); as it is a little after this that He meets the chief priests in the temple (v. 23) and after speaking some parables and the woes on the Pharisees laments: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, ... your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:37-38). This is followed by Matthew chapter twenty-four which predicts the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies.

**Green Grass:** The Greek reads "chlôros chortos" meaning the first tender vegetation of the pasture ground. In Ps 23, The Lord is my Shepherd, where the shepherd makes His sheep lie down in "green pastures" the margin of the KJV has "pastures of tender grass." Under the OT symbolism God fed His people the living bread through the services of the sanctuary service. As all the green grass was to be "burnt up" this method of feeding the sheep would be

destroyed.

The symbols indicate that what we are looking for here is a judgment upon a people who were once connected to God but rebelled against Him. However, the "third" indicates they would not all be destroyed in this calamity but, the means God used in teaching them of His love and grace would be totally wiped out.

**History Sketch:** Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-2). There was a special reason for Him mentioning a judgment against the Jews first and that was, in the OT God had said that judgment was to begin at the house of Israel (Eze. 9:6-7). For three and a half years Jesus preached the Gospel to the Jews which so aroused the hatred of the rulers they agreed He must be put to death. However, at the time they were a subject people, and couldn't put Christ to death without the co-operation of the Romans. It was a difficult time for them but they managed to secure a charge they felt the Romans would support.

During the trial of Christ these leaders of the Jews make a pronouncement that removes them from the theocracy; they say to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:14-15). In this they reject God and place themselves on the side of Rome. Pilate washes his hands of the matter; and the Jews declare of Christ, "His blood be on us and on our children." (Matt. 27:24-25). Jesus is led away to be crucified -- a Roman method of execution.

After the crucifixion the Jewish nation went on to persecute the followers of Christ. Then in 70 AD, after a confrontation lasting several years, the Roman army under Titus lay siege to Jerusalem. Thousands of Jews were nailed to crosses around the city. Finally, the Roman soldiers entered Jerusalem and in a terrible slaughter captured Jerusalem and destroyed its temple. Never again would the Jewish sanctuary teach the way of life to a single soul. The Jews had chosen Rome over Christ and now Rome had repaid her with blood. Thus in the destruction of the temple by fire was all the green grass destroyed; and in the fighting which took place in the capture of the city a large portion of the population (a symbolical "third") were destroyed. The first trumpet had blown against the persecutors of God's Son and His followers; the second was soon to follow.

## The 2nd Trumpet:

**Rev. 8:8-9** "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; <sup>9</sup>And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

**The Falling Mountain:** introduces a new symbol we haven't encountered before. However, the idea has been already presented in our studies on Daniel; there a mountain falls on Nebuchadnezzar's image and crushes it to pieces which become like chaff that the wind carries away. This falling mountain represents a kingdom which destroys all the others (Dan. 2:32-35, 44).

**Sea:** The creatures and ships are all connected to the sea and so we will do them all together. As far as the sea itself is concerned Scripture says it represents peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues (Rev. 17:1, 15) or countries as we would say. Creatures, or fish, have been likened to people (Hab. 1:14). Now if the sea is the nations and fish are the people living in those nations, then the ships being part of the nations are likely to be their material possessions. (Note how ships are associated with possessions in Rev. 18:11-17).

The symbols indicate this trumpet will see a judgment come upon a nation that will see its destruction. Taken on its own, this wouldn't be enough information to make an accurate assessment of which of the world's nations that have been overthrown throughout history to be identified as the one. But we have another clue. The first trumpet! In that trumpet we saw how the Jews were punished for their part in the crucifixion of Christ and the persecution of

His followers; but they didn't act alone. They had collaborators in the pagan Romans. Why wouldn't God punish them also. The fact is He did, and that is what this second trumpet is about.

**History of Pagan Persecution:** 64 AD, under the Roman emperor Nero, the 1st traditional persecution of Christians took place; 95AD Domitian introduced the 2nd traditional persecution; 112 AD saw the introduction of the 3rd traditional persecution of believers; Antoninus Pius, 130-161 AD, held Christians responsible for the earthquakes in Asia Minor; During the time of Marcus Aurelius, 161-180 AD, philosophers accused Christians of the most horrible crimes (incest, cannibalism of children etc.), the period saw many martyrs; 180 AD Commodus persecuted Christians for renouncing paganism; 253 -260 AD, Valerian, Christians forbidden to hold meetings, many martyrs; Aurelian, 270-275 AD, passed many edicts against Christianity; 284-305 AD, Diocletian, passed the Edicts of Diocletian, resulting in a terrible persecution of believers.

Before we can look at how the second trumpet heralded a judgment on pagan Rome for their treatment of God's Son and His followers, we need to look at another providential situation that prepared the way for Rome to be punished.

**History of Constantinople:** In 305 AD Diocletian abdicated as Emperor of Rome and divided his empire into two parts: East and West. This was followed by a 19-year period of struggle. It was during this period of struggle that Constantine I, engaged in a conflict with the Roman emperor Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge. This bridge crosses the Tiber near Rome; the year was 312 AD. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, "before the battle Constantine saw in the sky a flaming cross inscribed with the words, 'In this sign thou shalt conquer.'" The result of this experience and Constantine's victory brought a turning point for Christianity. The next year 313 AD Constantine presided at the Milan Conference where he issued the Edict of Milan making Christianity a lawful religion; giving freedom of worship to Christians; and recognition to the church as a legal body with the right to hold property. In 320 AD he moved the headquarters of the Roman empire to Constantinople. This was to play an important part in this trumpet.

Another development which we need to take care of before we can finalize this trumpet concerns the prophecies of Daniel. In Dan. chapter 2 we learnt that there would be four world empires [Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome] and that there would be a transition from the legs of iron [Rome] to the feet of iron [a portion of Rome] and clay [other nations]. This same transition is also symbolized in the 7th chapter where the ten horns of the beast find three of their number replaced by a little-horn. Then, in the 8th chapter, where the same period of history is repeated the little-horn is depicted as covering the whole period from beginning to end that Dan chapter seven allots to pagan and papal Rome.

This shift in thought is significant. Daniel chapter eight is saying, the power that was pagan Rome would become papal Rome. Myers says, "Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman empire an Ecclesiastical state which was shaping itself upon the imperial model." And Robinson, writing about the history of Europe, said, "Besides the Emperors at Constantinople; and the various German kings, there grew up in Europe a line of rulers far more powerful than any of these, namely the popes." Thus the little-horn of Daniel which prophecy identifies as the papacy, is really, according to Scripture, the same power as pagan Rome.

The period for the change appears to be after the headquarters of the Roman empire was moved to Constantinople for, the Catholic Quarterly states, "Long ages ago when Rome, through 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."

What we need to keep in mind here is, in the vacuum created by the removal of the headquarters of the Roman Empire to Constantinople, a ecclesiastical state emerged which

fashioned itself after the Roman senate. We can now return to Constantine.

**The Arian Issue:** Over the years since coming to power Constantine had tried to strengthen his empire with a strange mix of paganism and Christianity which he adopted as the state religion. In 325 AD he presided over the 1st great ecumenical council which met in Nicaea. The council met to consider the disputes among Christians, in particular the Arian crisis. Basically Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, was in conflict with the church authorities in Rome. Through the efforts of his followers the doctrines of Arius had spread throughout Europe. And this was to have an effect on prophecy; three nations of Europe declared for the Arian doctrine [Heruli in Italy, the Ostrogoths in the north, and the Vandals at the top of Africa]. In the years following the Nicaean council a series of violent and barbaric struggles broke out between the contending parties. These made an important contribution to the 2nd trumpet.

**History Sketch:** In 395 AD the Ostrogoths under Alaric invaded Western Rome. On three occasions he laid siege to the city eventually capturing and burning the city. He died as he was advancing on Southern Italy. Then in 428 AD Genseric led the Vandals in a naval assault on Italy. In 431 AD the Vandals crossed Africa to become the masters of Carthage; in 455 AD Genseric sacks Rome; 13 years later 1,113 Roman ships and 100,000 men were destroyed at Carthage. Then in 476 AD Odoacer, the leader of the Heruli, after the abdication of the last emperor of Western Rome, Romulus Augustulus, issued a command that the name and office of Roman Emperor be abolished.

The 2nd trumpet called for the destruction of the persecutors of Jesus and His people; who, at the time of Christ, were the Emperors in Western Rome. Here in these barbarian invasions the specifications of John are fulfilled to the letter. Joseph Deharbe said, "Rapacious pagan nations left their own wild homes, and overran the Christian countries in countless swarms.... The Roman Empire, more than one thousand years old, and once so powerful, could no longer resist these savage tribes, and was at last completely overthrown. Odoacer, king of the Heruli, took Rome, and was proclaimed king of Italy in 476. It is impossible to describe the extent of misery which these barbarous hordes inflicted on all Europe."

Rome had shed the blood of the saints; they had feasted on the spectacle of their agonies in her amphitheatres. Now God had visited her for her cruelties. The barbarous Arian tribes of Europe had fulfilled the conditions of the 2nd trumpet.

Two trumpets have blown and under their impact we have seen armies destroy the cities belonging to those who had a part in crucifying Jesus and persecuting His followers. Now a change takes place and a different kind of judgment emerges; one that is linked to men's beliefs:

### The 3rd Trumpet:

**Rev. 8:10-11** "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; <sup>11</sup> 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"

**Falling Star:** A star refers to an angel (Rev. 12:3-4, 9). This one fell like a burning lamp; perhaps the idea is like a meteor. Scripture records one angel having such an experience -- Lucifer or Satan (Luke 10:18; Isa. 14:12). Therefore the angel spoken of here under the third trumpet is Lucifer.

**Wormwood:** is a name given to Lucifer here. The name is associated with turning people away from the Lord. When the Jews went after Baalam, a system of false worship, they were given wormwood to drink (Jer. 9:13-15). In the third trumpet Lucifer was to impart the

flavour of wormwood to the rivers and fountains of waters.

**Rivers & Water Fountains:** Our God is a fountain of living water flowing out to all around Him. (Ps. 36:7-9; Isa. 12:2-3; Jer. 2:12-13; Jer. 17:13). As the water of life flows from the Father's throne in the new earth Rev. 22:1-2) so from every Church and Christian the water of life should flow out into the world to be a blessing to all who are willing to drink thereof. Under this trumpet something was to pollute these streams so that people die.

**History Sketch:** In our last trumpet we learnt that as the Western Roman Empire declined an ecclesiastical power was beginning to rise which, Dan. 7 points out, would become a world power. This power rose within the Christian Church. As early as 140 AD persecution had driven the center of Christianity from Jerusalem to places like Antioch, Syria, Alexandria and Rome. And, with the death of all the apostles, power struggles began to emerge within the Church. Not surprisingly, the Christian Church at Rome became one of the real plague spots.

The saying, "When in Rome do as Rome does, and when elsewhere, do as she does elsewhere;" gives us a little idea of the influence of this powerful city. As a result of living in the city, the bishop of the Church of Rome began to feel that he should have an influence over the Churches in line with the prestige attached to his city. The problem became so bad that in 187 AD there was a separation of the old Catholics from Rome. Six years later, 193 AD, Victor I ordered the eastern Churches to keep Easter on Sunday under threat of excommunication.

When Constantine I gave the Church legal status in return for compromise on some issues the way was opened for the bishop of Rome to attain real power. In the council of Nicaca in 325 AD Constantine condemned Arianism; this act favoured the Church in Rome. Then in 343 AD the Council of Sardica gave the bishop of Rome the right to judge between contending bishops. The first council of Constantinople, in 381 AD, took a stand against Arianism which had previously been condemned and the bishop of Rome found support from this council. Pope Innocent I, 402-417 AD, began to advance the concept of being the Universal Bishop. This was advanced still further when Sixtus III declared the he was "appointed by God to watch over the whole Church." Then Leo I, 440-461 AD in 440 AD issued a decree stating that the bishop of Rome was supreme as he was the successor of St. Peter. By 501 AD Pope Symmachus was recognized by the civil power as superior to all human councils because he was the Vicar of Christ. Two years later , 503 AD, presiding at a Roman Catholic synod, Symmachus adopted the position that, "the pope was judge as God's Vicar and could himself be judged by no one." In 532 AD Pope John II is acknowledged by Justinian as the head of all the Churches in the empire. The following year, 533 AD, Justinian issues a decree making the Bishop of Rome the head of all Bishops and the one true corrector of heretics. Thus, by a decree of the state and not by God, did the doctrine of Rome become supreme throughout the Roman empire.

The doctrine of Rome is different to that of the Gospel of Christ and of the Reformers: For example, at the conclusion of the General Council of Trent, held 1545-1563 AD, to meet the problems posed by the first Protestants - Luther, Calvin, and others - the Roman Church produced an extension of the Nicene Creed. Among other things it said, "I most steadfastly admit and embrace the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions and all other observances and constitutions of the same church....I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother the church has held ... to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures: neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.... I profess likewise, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation.... I steadfastly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful .... I also affirm that the power of granting



indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people...."

The Christian doctrine taught by the Reformers was, "The Bible and the Bible only." It also denies the Eucharist and, as for indulgences, the practice clashes horribly with the the gospel injunction to "sin not!" Luther experienced an "... inevitable collision between this [justification by faith] and the church system came when Tetzel, a Dominican monk, was authorized by Pope Leo X to go through Germany selling pardons or indulgences in the form of stamped tickets, at the rate of a few ducats for the graver sins."

Unquestionably, believing such a doctrine would cost a Christian their eternal life. It is interesting to read Paul at this juncture on the man of sin (2 Thess. 2:3, 7-12) and notice how the mystery of iniquity would work with all "deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." It is also very clear how the development of this state church fulfilled the conditions of the third trumpet; the waters of salvation had been polluted and people drinking from them would be bitterly disappointed, as they are doomed to die.

### The 4th Trumpet:

**Rev. 8:12** "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."

**Sun, Moon and Stars:** These symbols are fairly obvious as John describes the Church in Rev. 12:1 as having all these characteristics. The sun is a symbol of Jesus (Mal. 4:2; John 8:12) and as Christians are to reflect His light (Matt. 5:14-16) they may be thought of as the moon which reflects the light of the sun. The stars are a symbol of angels (Rev. 1:16, 20).

**Darkness:** There is an enlightening experience involving Pharaoh and darkness that helps us here. God told Ezekiel to take up a lamentation against the king of Egypt because he troubled the waters and fouled the rivers with his feet (Eze. 32:2). This pollution of the water is very similar to that carried out by wormwood in the last trumpet. Now, as a consequence, look what God said He would do; He says, "I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark, I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light." (Eze. 32:7). This was to be more than a physical darkness. It was a darkness that covered the whole nation. For God said of Egypt, "And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom" (Eze. 29:14). To this very day Egypt has not risen to the heights of her former glory; darkness has settled down on the nation.

**History Sketch:** As the history of Egypt so would be the history of Europe. After the defeat of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD Odoacer, of the Heruli, took over the Roman senate. This posed an enormous problem for the bishop of Rome for the Heruli were Arians along with the Ostrogoths and Vandals of Africa. However in the struggle between Romanism and Arianism prophecy predicted Rome would triumph. Daniel stated that after the fall of the Roman empire Europe would be broken up into 10 divisions, three of which would be destroyed and replaced by a different power (see Dan. 7:7-8, 19-20).

In the vacuum left by the collapse of the empire other nations began to struggle for supremacy. And in looking at their conflicts we should ever be mindful that the God of heaven rules over the affairs of men directing all things towards the accomplishment of His will. Now God had said that after the fall of Rome, three nations would be destroyed, and a new power would arise.

In 486 AD Clovis I, king of the Franks, defeated the last great Roman army in Gaul. In 496 AD, after a struggle with the Allemanni, the king became converted to the Catholic religion. In 500 AD he defeated the Burgundians; and seven years later conquered the Visigoths in 507

AD. As a son of the Roman faith, he became the king of the first nation to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. His fidelity established the papacy in the west.

Meanwhile back in Rome the Ostrogoths overcame the Heruli in 493 AD and their leader, Theodoric ruled in Rome. Then the Church of Rome received a little help from the East. In 534 AD Justinian conquered the Vandals; and, four years later in 538 AD, he vanquished the Ostrogoths. When the dust settled from all this fighting, the three Arian powers were destroyed ("plucked up" as prophecy says), Justinian was emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire and the bishop of Rome was firmly in control of the west.

This battle of Justinian's in 538 AD, which removed the Ostrogoths from power in Rome, marks the beginning of the 1,260-year prophecy when the church of Rome would reign supreme. It also marks the beginning of the dark-ages, when, as a super power, the Church plunged the world into intellectual and spiritual blackness which lasted down to the 1800's. In Europe religious knowledge as well as the sciences slipped into darkness as the blackness of the 4th trumpet sounded throughout the land.

## The Creature Flying in Heaven:

**Rev. 8:13** "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"!

**Angel:** Strong textual evidence favours the use of the phrase "eagle flying" here for "angel flying." Six of the eight Greek editions checked had "eagle" for "angel." Scripture sometimes uses the reference to an eagle as an omen of doom (Matt. 24:28; Deut. 28:49; Hosea 8:1). However, as the fourth beast around the throne was said to be "like a flying eagle" (Rev. 4:7) the reference could quite easily be to him; this seems the most likely option, in which case this creature is a cherubim.

**Three Woes:** This woe is repeated three times. As there are three judgments to come, it would indicate that each trumpet indicates a "woe" (Rev. 9:12; 11:14). These woes are directed to the "inhabitants of the earth" a phrase that seems to indicate the wicked (see Rev. 3:10 where, "them that dwell upon the earth" refers to the wicked. In our next lesson on the first woe we see an angel fall from heaven spreading darkness over the earth. What does this mean?

It is important to keep in mind the motivation behind these trumpets is the saints prayers. The fifth seal saw the saints under the altar praying God would avenge their blood. To date we have seen a judgment upon Jerusalem in 70 AD for their part in apostasy and persecution; then in 476 AD pagan Rome felt God's chastisement under the 2nd trumpet. This was followed by two trumpets heralding the terrible spiritual and intellectual darkness that engulfed all Europe throughout the dark ages. The next two trumpets were to mark a third group involved in persecuting the saints as candidates for divine retribution.

## Introduction:

**Prophetic Consistency:** It is important in our study of the Bible that we try to see the Word of God as a whole; for what happens in one place often explains what is going on in another. This is very true of Revelation for it is the companion book of Daniel and the two explain each other. Now in Daniel 7 the power opposing God's people was depicted as a beast with ten horns three of which were later plucked up and replaced by a little-horn (Dan. 7:7-8). The beast we learnt was pagan Rome, and the little-horn was the papacy. But in Daniel 8 there is no beast with ten horns, only a goat out of which comes the little-horn; this goat is Greece (Dan. 8:5-10, 21). On the face of it we appear to have a contradiction, when in fact we have a very accurate portrayal of what happened in history. Here's a brief review:

In 305 AD the Roman pagan emperor, Diocletian abdicated the throne. At the time of stepping down he divided the empire into east and west sections. After many years of struggle, when Constantine I came to power, he moved the headquarters of the empire to Constantinople. From the year 313 AD on Constantine became involved in establishing the papacy with its headquarters in Rome. Then in 476 AD when pagan Rome fell, papal Rome was sitting in the wings waiting to rise to power. Hence we can see how the little-horn while domiciled in Rome was nurtured by the emperor sitting in Constantinople; the headquarters of the Grecian Empire. While this review has been extremely brief, we can see from these few details how papal Rome belonged to both the domain of the beast in Dan. 7 (its domicile) and the goat of Dan. 8 (its political & military support). Prophecy is extremely accurate! Now if pagan Rome was destroyed for its crimes shouldn't we expect Eastern Rome to be punished?

## The 5th Trumpet:

### A Being from heaven:

**Rev. 9:1-2** “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. <sup>2</sup>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.”

In the Greek text the word "fallen" is in the perfect tense; which means the action of falling took place in the past but the result of having fallen still exists. This links the star with the 3rd trumpet (Rev. 8:10). We know from our previous study that a star is an angel and here this angel is given the key to the bottomless pit (Rev. 9:1). A key is a symbol indicating its holder has control of something (see Rev. 1:18; 3:7); in this case the bottomless pit. A bottomless pit is mentioned also in Rev. 11:7, 17:8 and 20:1-3, 7-9 where it refers to Satan being held captive on the earth during the thousand years. There appears to be a slight variation in the shades of meaning assigned to the word; however, the idea seems to be a place lacking order or foundation. We have already identified this star as Satan in the third trumpet. Here we are told his name is "Destruction" and he is the king over the locusts.

### Results of opening the pit:

**Rev. 9:2-3** “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. <sup>3</sup>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.”

When this pit is opened smoke pours out darkening the sun and the air. As Satan has control of this we would suspect the air refers to the domain he is prince of (see Eph. 2:2; "prince of the power of the air"). The sun has previously been identified as Christ and the light of His Gospel. These locusts would produce great spiritual darkness. As to their identity Scripture uses the term locusts to indicate armies (see Judges 7:12; "grasshoppers" is from the Hebrew "arbeh" a locust, and is translated as such in the NKJV).

### The command given the locusts:

**Rev. 9:4-5** “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. <sup>5</sup>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.”

What we have under the fifth trumpet is a vast army that would pour out of some wasteland and hurt those men who do not have the seal of God. (The seal of God will be examined in

connection with the mark of the beast in Rev. 13-14). This army has been instructed not to hurt the grass or trees which we have seen are symbols of God's people.

### A description of the locusts:

**Rev. 9:3-9** “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. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions. <sup>9</sup>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.”

### Identifying the Locusts:

There are a number of clues to the identity of these locusts: they are an army; they are religious being connected to an angel; they come from a desolate region; and they will persecute but not destroy for a period of 5 prophetic months. The Mohammedans meet all these specifications. So let's see if they match all the criteria put forward by the 5th trumpet.

Mohammed was the founder of the Islamic religion. Orphaned at a very early age he was raised by his uncle and grandfather. At the age of 25 he entered the service of a wealthy widow, Khadija, whom he eventually married. She was 15 years his senior. It was while meditating in a cave on Mt. Hira he had a vision in which an angel, whom Moslems believe to have been Gabriel, appeared to him. This angel called Mohammed to be a prophet to proclaim God's message to his countrymen.

At the time Mohammed began to preach, his first public announcement of his mission was in 612 AD, Arabia was a wild lawless land where fierce desert tribes fought continual brutal wars. The region resembled the description Scripture gives of the bottomless pit. Most of the people worshipped many gods praying to idols and spirits. Mohammed brought a new message. He taught that there was only one god Allah; and that this god required men to make Islam (submission) to him. He replaced the old loyalty to the tribes with a new tie of equality and brotherhood among Moslems. In this way he united his countrymen in a religious movement.

However, let's not forget that this movement began with Mohammed having a vision in a cave with an angel Moslems believe was Gabriel. The fifth trumpet said a movement would be let out of a desolate region by an angel -- Lucifer! Did the religious movement of Mohammed unite the Arabian Arabs? Regarding the unifying of the Arab tribes the historian writes, "The main factor was the powerful corporate feeling of Moslem, the ever increasing enthusiasm for the faith ... thus the masterless Arabs ... were transferred into the irresistible warriors of Allah."

On the symbol of locusts, Sir Isaac Newton makes the following observation, "Swarms of locusts often arise in Arabia Felix, and from thence infest the neighboring nations: and so are a very fit type of the numerous armies of Arabians invading the Romans."

Regarding their appearance, the Rev. Elliott writes, "...Pliny, St. John's contemporary at the close of the first century, speaks of the Arabs as wearing the turban, having the hair long and uncut,... In regard to the turban crown, it happens most singularly that Ezekiel (23:42)

describes the turbans of the Sabaeans or Keturite Arabs under this very appellation: 'Sabaeans from the wilderness, which put beautiful crowns upon their heads.' ... The Saracen policy was the wearing of defensive armor. The breastplate of iron was a feature of description literally answering ... to the Arab warriors of the sixth or seventh century."

### Tormenting the Empire:

For the prophecy of the 5th trumpet to be fulfilled the Eastern Roman Empire, that had its headquarters at Constantinople, would have to experience a torment for 5 prophetic months at the hands of the Mohammedans; however, it had to come at a specific time:

**Rev. 9:11** "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."

A big factor in establishing their identity is they have been allotted a time in which to do their work (five months) in which they were instructed "not to kill them, but that they should be tormented five months" (v. 5). This time was to run from the date a king was appointed over them.

**A King:** While the king spoken of here is primarily Lucifer, history testifies to the fact that for hundreds of years the Mohammedans had no general government or king residing over them. Instead they existed as tribal bands with separate leaders over them. Hence their description as locusts in the fifth trumpet; (locusts have no king Prov. 30:27). This changed with the advent of Othman I (founder of the Ottoman empire) as from this time on the locusts have a ruler. An interesting detail regarding this man is his name "... signifies 'breaker of limbs.' It was this name which became that of Osman's people, the Osmanlis or Ottomans. This seems a fitting name as the angel's name, Abaddon, meant destroyer.

Our problem now is when does this five month period of torment begin. Edward Gibbon says, "It was on the 27th of July, in the year, twelve hundred and ninety-nine of the Christian era, that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia." If we take this date as our starting point the Greek Empire, is to be tormented, but cannot fall to the Mohammedans before 1449 AD.

"Not that it could be supposed that the Saracens would not 'kill' many thousands in their incursions. On the contrary, their angel hath the name of 'the destroyer.' Rev. 9:11. They might 'kill' them as individuals, but still they should not 'kill' them as a political body, as a state or empire. They might greatly harass and 'torment' both the Greek and the Latin churches, but they should not utterly extirpate the one or the other. They besieged Constantinople, and even plundered Rome; but they could not make themselves masters of either of those capital cities. The Greek Empire suffered most from them, as it lay nearest to them."

**History Sketch:** At the time of Pope Innocent the power of the papacy was at its height. So much so that In 1202 AD he planned to annex the Eastern Roman Empire to his extensive dominions, but things went horribly wrong. The Ottomans had their eye on the same territory. And as Gibbon said, on July 27th, 1299, they entered the territory of Nicomedia for the first time. Their progress was irresistible. "No power known to history ever wielded the scepter over a wider sphere than this has done. In less than a single century Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Asia Minor, Persia, Part of India, Egypt, Numidia, Tripole, Tunis, the Barbary States, Morocco, the Africian coast as far down as the Niger, Spain, Sicily, Candian, Cyprus and other islands of the Mediterranean, and even parts of Italy itself, had fallen under the Saracenic sway; and that sway extended, not only to civil government, but to religious faith as well. Everywhere the corrupt and idolatrous form of Christianity prevalent succumbed before the onslaught of the vigorous monotheistic faith of Islam."

Here is an amazing thing: two religions are engaged in conflict for the Eastern Roman

Empire, and the Mohomedans are experiencing phenomenal success. So much so that it even attracts the attention of the secular historian. George Finlay writes, "Even though it be admitted that Mahomet laid the foundations of his laws in the strongest principles of human nature, and prepared the fabric of his empire with the profoundest wisdom, still there can be no doubt that no human intelligence could, during his lifetime, have foreseen, and no combinations on the part of one individual could have insured, the extraordinary success of his followers." This is a testimony to the master mind Scripture says was behind the rise of this power; the angel of the bottomless pit.

### The 150 Years:

Prophecy declared there would be torment but no death for 150 years. In spite of all their military success the Ottomans couldn't change God's word.

**History Sketch:** In 1326 AD the Ottomans captured Bussa; in 1345 they entered Europe; by 1354 they had settled just southwest of Constantinople; in 1360 they took Adrianople calling it Edirne and making the city their European capital. By the 1400's the city of Constantinople was a Christian island in a Moslem sea. This was the empire the papacy had planned to annex. Smyria fell in 1424. In 1438, Constantinople's Roman Emperor John VII, went to Rome casting himself before the Pope in an endeavor to save his city from the Turks but it was to no avail. He died on Oct. 31, 1448 and his older brother took the throne.

By this time Constantinople is subject to the Ottomans, in fact Constantine had to have the permission of the Turkish sultan in Adrianople, Mohammed II, to accept the throne. He was crowned emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire on Jan. 10, 1449 AD. However, despite all their successes, the Ottoman's hadn't been able to destroy the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. She was tormented; but alive still.

However, this was about to change. The 5 prophetic months were due to expire on July 27th 1449, after that time the fate of the empire lay with the 6th trumpet. In our next lesson we shall see how God has His hand over the nations.

The fifth trumpet concluded with the Ottoman Empire having been tormented for five prophetic months, however, before we continue with the downfall of Constantinople we ought to unravel the symbols belonging to the sixth trumpet:

**Introduction:** John introduces the sixth trumpet by saying, "One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter" (Rev. 9:12). The mention of these "woes" in connection with the last three trumpets seems to imply there is a connection between them that we should watch out for. The sixth trumpet opens with a scene in heaven:

#### A Scene from heaven:

**Rev. 9:13-15** "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup>Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. <sup>15</sup>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."

John has returned to the throne room where a voice is heard coming from between the horns of the golden altar. This is the altar of incense (Ex. 37:26) where the prayers of the saints had been previously offered (Rev. 8:3). The command is given to release the four angels bound at the Euphrates River. Whether these four angels are connected to the cherubim (beasts of Rev. 4:6-9) around the throne is unclear, however four angels have previously been mentioned in Rev. 7:1-3 as restraining the winds of earth so that nothing is hurt until God's servants are sealed. The principle here seems very similar, destruction being held back for a

time, and the mention of the Euphrates in regard to the "letting go" would indicate a local rather than world-wide devastation.

## The 6th Trumpet:

### Releasing the Horsemen:

**Rev. 9:16-19** "And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>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."

While there are elements in this description of the horsemen linking them to the fifth trumpet there are other aspects suggesting a change. The Rev. Albert Barnes points out, "If the first woe trumpet referred to the Saracens, then it would be natural that the rise and progress of the Turkish power should be symbolized, as the next great fact in history;... The Turkish power rose immediately after the power of the Saracens had reached its height, and identified itself with the Mohammedan religion, and it was, in fact, the next great power that affected the Roman Empire." So firstly, let's check how the symbols fit:

**Colour & Riders:** The riders were said to have breastplates of fire, and jacinth, and brimstone (v. 17). Regarding these Uriah Smith writes, "Fire, representing a color, stands for red,... jacinth,... for blue; and brimstone, for yellow. And these colors greatly predominated in the dress of these warriors; so that the description, according to this view, would be accurately met in the Turkish uniform, which was composed largely of red, or scarlet, blue, and yellow. "

**Number of Riders:** is given at 200,000,000 and seems to represent a vast army. Hezekiah Holland gives us an idea of the number of troops the Turks could raise around the time of this trumpet when he says in 1650 AD, "I well remember that living in the University of Ireland, a gentleman that newly came from ... Alexandretta told me he saw the Turkish army march by to recover Bagdet or Babylon, and that the army was above a week marching by, consisting of fifteen hundred thousand men."

**The Horses:** While the horses heads were likened to lions - John uses similar language for the first living creature (Rev. 4:7) - and no doubt captures the strength, fierceness and courage of these animals in battle, the mention of fire, smoke and brimstone coming out of their mouths is very unusual. However as it is the acquisition of these three things that enables the power represented here to go from tormenting to killing we would assume its possession to be significant. What it suggests is a change in warfare:

**Warfare:** The Rev. Albert Barnes makes an interesting observation on verse seventeen: he says, "The exact idea, whether that was intended or not, would be conveyed by the discharge of musketry or artillery. The fire, the smoke, and the sulfurous smell of such a discharge would correspond precisely with this language.... One thing is certain, that this is not language which would be employed to describe the onset of ancient cavalry in the mode of warfare which prevailed then. No one describing a charge of cavalry among the Persians, the Greeks, or the Romans, when the only armor was the sword and the spear, would think of saying that there seemed to be emitted from the horses' mouths fire, and smoke, and brimstone."

Regarding the appearance of fire etc., from the horses mouths, Uriah Smith makes the

observation, "... undoubtedly [it] has a reference to the use of gunpowder and firearms for purposes of war, which were then but recently introduced. As the Turks discharged their firearms on horseback, it would appear to the distant beholder that fire, smoke, and brimstone, issued out of the horses mouths." This would be the case if the rider was low in the saddle, firing forwards, and along the side of the horses neck. So what we have introduced in this sixth trumpet is a new innovation of warfare.

### **The Prophecy Fulfilled:**

The last trumpet beginning on the 27th of July, 1299 and running for 150 literal years meant the remnant of the empire couldn't be destroyed before July 27, 1449. Edward Gibbon, the historian, wrote, "The Roman world [A.D. 1395-1402] was now contracted to a corner of Thrace, between the Propontis and the Black Sea, about fifty miles in length and thirty in breadth." By the time the last Roman emperor was crowned on Jan. 10, 1449 it had shrunk even further till all that remained of the once mighty Roman Empire was the city of Constantinople. Of this experience Henry Hallam wrote, "Every province was in turn subdued, every city opened her gates to the conqueror; the limbs were lopped off one by one; but the pulse still beat at the heart, and the majesty of the Roman name was ultimately confined to the walls of Constantinople." The empire still stood. Then an interesting thing happened.

The problem Mahomet II faced was the size of the walls surrounding Constantinople. Now the sixth trumpet prophesied that, "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" (Rev. 9:18). The interesting thing that happened was, "It was to 'the fire and the smoke and the sulphur,' to the artillery and firearms of Mahomet, that ... the capture of Constantinople, and by consequence the destruction of the Greek Empire was owing.... 'Canst thou cast a cannon,' was his question to the founder of cannon that deserted to him, 'of size sufficient to batter down the wall of Constantinople?' Then the foundry was established at Adrianople, the cannon cast, the artillery prepared, and the siege began." "On May 29, 1453, Constantinople was carried by assault, and the last Greek emperor died fighting in the breach." Of the fall of Constantinople, Esther Singleton quotes Lord John Russell as saying, "With the fall of Constantinople was extinguished forever the last vestige of the majesty of Rome." This view was shared by Sir Edwin Pears who wrote, "As being a continuation of the Roman Empire whose capital was New Rome, the empire is correctly called Roman, and the name has the advantage of always keeping in view the continuity of Roman history. It was the Eastern Roman Empire which declined and fell in 1453."

An interesting comment concerning the fall of Constantinople comes from the papacy. "About the year 1300, fresh hordes of Turks, called the Ottomans, poured down from Tartary, subdued the Seljukians, and extended their conquests over Western Asia, Rumelia, Moldavia, Servia, Bulgaria, Greece, and the Morea; until at last ... they rendered themselves masters of Constantinople, the capital of the Greek Empire (AD 1453), which calamity God no doubt permitted in punishment for the grievous offenses it had committed against Him." Whether intentional or not, this papal author has accurately specified the sixth trumpet.

### **The End of the Destroyer:**

As the Jews had suffered the loss of their capital; as the Roman empire had been destroyed both east and west; so now the destroyer was to suffer a like fate for the prophecy said:

**Rev. 9:15** "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."

**Prophetic Time:** The prophecy predicted the destroyer would have power for a year (360 days), a month (30 Days), a day ( 1 day), and an hour (one twenty-fourth of a day). As a day equals a year in prophecy (Eze. 4:6; Num. 14:34), this gives 391 years and 15 days to when the Ottoman power should end. Therefore adding the first 150 years to this 391 years and 15



days brings us to Aug. 11, 1840 when the Sultan's power should be broken.

**History Sketch:** The breaking of this power was to come in the 19th century. History records that Napoleon Bonaparte "... sailed from Toulon for Egypt on the nineteenth of May, 1798." His plan was to capture Egypt, which he did, and press on to Acre where he expected to find, "...the pasha's treasure, and arms for 300,000 men." His intention was to stir up an insurrection amongst the nations the Sultan had captured arming them with the weapons he believed were stored at Acre. Of his objective he says, "I reach Constantinople with armed masses. I overthrow the Turkish Empire; I found in the East a new and grand empire, which fixes my place with posterity." Unfortunately for Napoleon, on May 7, 1799 an Ottoman fleet linked up with the British fleet and assisted the British in defeating Napoleon at Acre. Two years later, in 1801, a combined British-Ottoman force drive the French out of Egypt.

However, leading an Albanian regiment in the Turkish army was Mohmet Ali. Seeing an opportunity, he drove the British out of Alexandria taking it for himself. In 1811 he massacred the remaining Marmeluke leaders taking full control. He also destroyed the Sultan's army and took over his fleet. The result of all this was, in 1838, the Sultan declared war with Mohemet Ali of Egypt. At this point in time the 391-year-15-day prophecy is almost at an end.

Despite having declared war there is little the Sultan can do for Mohmet Ali has captured the bulk of the Sultan's navy. It is at this point in time that Europe's four great powers decide to intervene on the Sultan's behalf. The historian writes, "The four great powers in a collective note of July 27, 1839, declared that they would take the settlement of the Eastern Question into their own hands.... This state of things was officially expressed in the Quadruple treaty of July 15th, 1840 concluded at London." The Sultan agreed to accept the intervention of the four powers; he agreed to let Mohomet Ali keep Egypt provided he return all other possessions and the Sultan's fleet. The powers of Europe agreed to see this was carried out.

An emissary was dispatched to Egypt and as James Ritchie says, "Rifat Bey arrived at Alexandria on the 11th of August [1840]" the very day prophecy declared the Ottoman power would end.

When Rifat Bey stood on Egyptian soil backed, not by the might of the Sultan and his forces, but by the four great powers of Europe, it was evident the power of the Ottoman empire was at an end.

### The prophecy continues:

As we read the prophecies of the Bible it is important that we see the hand of God in the history of the nations. Time and again things work out according to an overriding providence; and this should encourage us as God's people that no matter how much things seem out of control to human beings, they are never out of the control of the Ancient of Days who sits on the throne of the universe surrounded by myriads of attendants. Patiently and surely He guides the affairs of the world toward the culmination of human history revealed in the book of Revelation.

However, at this point in time, we have come to the end of the Ottoman empire, but the sixth trumpet still hasn't finished. In actual fact, it runs on until Rev. 11:14 where John writes, "The second woe is past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly." So what comes next after the fall of the Ottoman empire?

### The Rest of Men:

**Rev. 9:20-21** "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

<sup>21</sup>Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication,

nor of their thefts.”

These verses don't seem finished. John leaves us up in the air at this point. A question seems to hang in the balances: What is to happen to these rest of men? The chapter that follows this one on the fall of the Greek Empire pictures an angel standing on the land and the sea with a startling message about time; but, at least for the present, the rest of men have vanished from the scene.

# Chapter 10

## The Angel With the Scroll

This chapter of Revelation appears, at first sight, to come out of nowhere. Why does John suddenly break the flow of his presentation about the trumpets to relate the events of chapter ten? There seems to be no connection between the events delineated here and what has gone before. Previous to this, in chapter seven, John paused in his narration of the seven seals to insert a parenthesis; but there the insertion was to answer a question under the sixth seal about, "who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:17), here we don't appear to have any obvious connections between chapters nine and ten. However, let's see if we can uncover why John has placed this here from within the chapter itself:

### A Mighty Angel:

**Rev. 10:1,3** "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire" And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices"

The description of this angel marks him out as being very impressive. Elements of his appearance match the description John gives of Jesus in chap. 1:15-16. The voice is said to be as a roaring lion, not the low tones of a growl, but the heralding call that carries on the wind; similar to what John says when he likens Jesus voice to a trumpet and thundering water fall (Rev. 1:10, 15). This angel's bearing is such as to give you the impression something important is about to happen

**Rev. 10:3-4** "And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. <sup>4</sup>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"

It would appear John was writing this vision of Revelation down as it was happening for he was about to write what the seven thunders said when a voice from heaven commands him to stop. Then, like Daniel (Dan. 12:4) , he was told to seal up the words spoken by the seven thunders. As the rest of Revelation has been proclaimed an open book not to be sealed "for the time is at hand" (Rev. 22:10) we can only surmise that the message of the seven thunders has something to do with time and that in John's day what these thunders said wasn't relevant.

### The Little Book:

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

**Rev. 10:5-6** "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, <sup>6</sup>And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."

The stance of this angel on the land and sea with his hand raised to heaven indicates he is taking an oath. The oath he takes is to swear by the creator of all things that there should be no more time. The Greek word "chronos" refers to "time, duration, time in general, any time, ... the time in which anything is done." It is time as a "succession or measurement of moments (as in [a] chronometer, a meter of 'chronos'"

The question this raises is, what time are we talking about here. It cannot be the ordinary flow of days, weeks, months etc., for v. 7 begins, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel...." Technically this section is still with the sixth angel; and so there are more literal days to come. Neither can it be probationary time which doesn't close until Jesus finishes His work as our intercessor. The only time left for us to consider is prophetic time.

We now have two clues regarding what this chapter in Revelation is all about: the end of prophetic time and a little book. Both these clues direct our attention to the book of Daniel.

**Dan. 12:4** "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."

**The Book:** in the angel's hand is the book of Daniel and, whereas it had been sealed, it is now open indicating the scene in Rev. 10 is taking place at the time of the end. However, if prophetic time is to be no longer, then the longest time prophecy in the Scriptures must have come to its completion for this to be the case. In Dan. 12 we have the 1260 days (v. 7), the 1290 days (v. 11) and the 1335 days (v. 12). But the longest one is found in an earlier chapter going for 2300 days (8:14). By the time this one is finished prophetic time will be no longer.

### Reviewing the 2300 Days:

As this prophecy has already been covered in the studies on Daniel a brief summary is all we need here:

This prophecy is based on the year-day principle (Eze. 4:6). Dan. 8:14 tells us there will be 2300 years until the cleansing of the sanctuary (Investigative Judgment). Then Dan. 9:24-27 give us the details. Beginning with Artaxerxes' decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem in the autumn of 457 BC God gave the Jews 490 years of probationary time reaching down to the autumn of 34 AD. After the first 483 years of this period had passed Scripture stated their Messiah was to come; this would be in 27 AD. The name Messiah means anointed, and in the autumn of AD 27 Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:1, 21-22). In this experience Jesus recognized the fulfillment of prophecy, He left His hometown Nazareth, and began to preach saying, "The time is fulfilled" (Mark 1:14-15). After 27 AD one prophetic week, or seven years was all that remained of the probationary time allotted to the Jews. In the midst of this time, that is after 3 1/2 years the Messiah was to be "cut-off" or crucified. Hence, Jesus was crucified in the spring of 31 AD. The time given to Israel as a nation ended with the rejection of the Gospel by the sanhedrin in 34 AD. Taking this period of time allocated to Israel from the 2300 years leaves us with 1810 years, bringing us down to 1844 AD where the angel is standing with an open book. Consequently the focus here in Rev. 10 seems to be around 1844 AD.

### Revelation 10 and Sixth Trumpet:

The power which overthrew the last part of the old Roman Empire came to an end on Aug. 11, 1840. Its downfall came at a time of great religious fervour in the world; in fact, the prophecy of the sixth trumpet added to the religious excitement. One writer describes it as

follows, "Two years before [1838], Josiah Litch,... published an exposition of Rev. 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown 'in AD 1840, sometime in the month of Aug.,' and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "... it will end on the 11th Aug., 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. When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended."

Between the time the Ottoman power fell under the 6th trumpet [1840], and when all prophetic time should end [1844] there was a great religious movement running in the world. Edward Miller writes, "The study of prophecy was of a more vague and general character during the early years of the 19th century. Such books as Faber's 'Dissertation on the Prophecies,' published in 1806, were mainly taken up with principles apart from any supposed application of them to contemporaneous events, or to such as were coming immediately. But about the year 1812 this study of prophecy took a more definite shape. In that year a book, which was afterward translated by Mr. Irving, was published by a Spanish Jesuit named Lacunza, under the assumed title of Juan Josafat Ben Ezra, on 'The Second Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty.' .... In the next year appeared Cuninghame's 'Dissertation on the Seals and Trumpets,' in which the period of 1260 years mentioned in the Apocalypse was fixed.... In the ensuing, Mr. Hatley Frère published his 'Combined View of the Christian Prophecies.' This was a book which acquired a great reputation among those who afterward made up the school of prophecy, which was now in its infancy."

Writing in 1841, Church of England clergyman, Matthew Habershon, says, "There appears to be no presumption in the attempt to direct the anxious mind to the chronological periods which God has given, and to inquire how far they support these anticipations. I have done so, as have likewise almost all that have gone before me in these studies; and the results of my inquiries, as they run throughout the whole of this work, and as they appear in the chronological chart in my former work, must, by this time, be familiar to the reader. It will be perceived they all point to a very early period, the year 1844; and although it is fashionable to object to the fixing of dates, yet so long as it is said, 'Things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever,' I see not on what sufficient ground."

The size of this movement was enormous. An observer at the time wrote, "We have no means of ascertaining the number of ministers, and others, who have embraced the advent faith. We only know that there are several hundred congregations, and still a larger number of ministers, who have publicly professed faith.... All peculiarities of creed or policy have been lost sight of, in the absorbing inquiry concerning the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom. Those who have engaged in this enterprise are from all the various sects in the land. Protestant Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, Primitive Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, Close Communion Baptist and Open Communion Baptist, Calvinistic and Arminian Baptists, Presbyterians, Old and New School Congregationalists, Old and New School Lutheran, Dutch Reformed, etc."

What Revelation 10 does is, it alerts us to the fact that prophecy had begun to take an important place in the preaching of the gospel around this time. However the angel with the little book made a dire prediction:

### Eating the Little Book:

**Rev. 10:9** "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."

**History Sketch:** Up until 1844 there was a growing expectation that the Lord was soon to come. In fact many Bible students had set the date Oct. 22, 1844 as the time Jesus would return to take them home. The accounts of the period tell of the happy fellowship shared by all believers of all persuasions as they waited for the time of their deliverance from this world. The prophecies were very precious to them; but it was not to be. The records of the time tell the stories of terrible sorrow and anguish as people realize their expectations from the prophecies are not turning out as they anticipated. Their disappointment could not be better described than by the angel's words, "it shall make thy belly bitter." As food enters the mouth first and then the belly, the joyful experience of this religious revival was to turn bitter.

In a wonderful gesture of Christian goodwill, the Presbyterian professor of Hebrew at the University of New York, wrote to William Miller, the man who headed the religious revival of the era in America, as follows, "In taking a day as the prophetic time for a year, I believe you are sustained by the soundest exegesis, as well as fortified by the high names of Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Faber, Scott, Keith, and a host of others, who have long since come to substantially your conclusions on this head. They all agree that the leading periods mentioned by Daniel and John do actually expire about this age of the world; and it would be strange logic that would convict you of heresy for holding in effect the same views which stand forth so prominently in the notices of these eminent divines. Your results in this field of inquiry do not strike me as so far out of the way as to affect any of the great interests of truth or duty." This must have been very encouraging to William Miller during these difficult times.

However, the angel still hadn't finished:

**Rev. 10:11** "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings".

Despite the mighty work done in the 19th century the Gospel hadn't gone to the whole world as Jesus predicted it would. There was still more to be done. And so the angel foretells a second religious movement; one sometime in the future from 1844 that is to go to every creature under the heaven. It has a startling message; a message telling the world that "the hour of God's judgment is come" (Rev. 14:6-7). It was to be given to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

Again we have the abrupt ending. Nothing has been said about the rest of men; and after this commission to preach, the next chapter opens with an angel giving John a reed to do some measuring. How does this tie in with a message to preach again? In our next lesson we will uncover more.

# Chapter 11

## The Temple in Heaven

There is no natural break between chapters ten and eleven; the commission to preach again is followed immediately by an instruction to measure the temple. It is even possible that this command to measure the temple came from the same angel who spoke with John in chapter ten and so it would appear the action is flowing on. Lets see what happens:

### Measuring the Temple:

**Rev. 11:1-3** “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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.”

**The Temple:** mentioned here can't be the Hebrew tabernacle that stood in Palestine for that building was destroyed by the Romans before the book of Revelation was written. Neither can it be the Christian church, for they are referred to as "them that worship therein. The only temple left, to which this passage can apply, is the one in heaven where Jesus ministers as our High Priest. (Heb. 8:1-2). It is also where the investigative judgement is conducted.

**The Altar:** can only be the altar of sacrifice, where the lambs were offered (Ex. 27:1-8), which was in the courtyard, or the altar of incense inside the holy place where the high priest made intercession for the worshipers (Ex. 30:1-6). As the courtyard, where the altar of sacrifice was located, is to be left out of the measuring it appears the altar of incense is the one intended here. We should keep in mind that the trumpets started with an angel standing before this altar in the temple with a golden censer (Rev. 8:2) offering incense with the prayers of the saints (v. 3-4).

**The Measuring:** referred to here isn't for the purpose of establishing the length or height of anything as no cubits are mentioned. The passage also makes mention of people being measured as well as the temple and altar. It would seem then, that the measuring here is connected to the investigative judgement which will take place in heaven before Jesus comes. Notice how the chapter finishes with: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of His testament...." (v. 19).

Paul tells us that: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). More specifically however, in a judgement setting, the standard used to measure people is God's law (see James 2:8-12; Eccl. 12:13-14). These ten commandments were stored in the ark mentioned as being in His temple in Rev. 11:19 (see Ex. 25:21-22; Heb. 9:4). No Jewish Christian, in the days of the apostle John, could think of the ark of God without being conscious of the ten commandments.

One more thing regarding the measuring and this temple is, verse 19 says, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament." The only time this place was opened and the ark seen was on the day of atonement which occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month every year (Lev. 16:29-34) and the service

represented the day of judgement.

The angel of Rev. 10 had said prophetic time should be no more indicating the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary or investigative judgement had arrived (these two are also called the day of atonement). Chapter eleven opens with a measuring or judging process and the question this raises is, Does this relate to the investigative judgement of 1844 or is it something else?

One clue that we have is found in the time periods mentioned in vs. 2-3, the "thousand two hundred and threescore days." Prophetically, forty and two months equals 1260 days. So the period is mentioned twice; once in connection with treading down of the holy city and once in connection with the two witnesses prophesying. This time period occurs first in the book of Daniel. It is in the setting of a judgement at which the Ancient of Days presides (7:9-10) At this judgement we are told the little-horn (papacy) "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" (7:25). From our study of the book of Daniel we know this refers to the period of papal supremacy from 538 AD to 1798 AD. But what is its significance here? The prophecy continues:

### Prophecy of the Two Witnesses:

**Rev. 11:4** "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."

**The Two Witnesses:** mentioned in verse 3 are here described as the two olive trees and the two candlesticks. Although three different definitions have been given (witnesses, olive trees, and candlesticks) the number has stayed the same; that is there are two of them. It would appear that the olive trees are an allusion to Zech. 4:3-6 where it is explained that the two olive trees represent the word of God. Jesus declared that the OT Scriptures were a written testimony when He said: "Search the Scriptures; ... they are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39). When something testifies of anything it is said to be a witness. Finally concerning the candlesticks the Psalmist writes, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105); and the wisest man the ever lived said, "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Prov. 6:23). From these declarations it would appear the two witnesses are the Old and New Testaments.

**Rev. 11:5-6** "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.

<sup>6</sup>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."

The allusion here seems to be to Elijah and Moses. Elijah brought fire down from heaven on two occasions; once at the contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs. 18:30-40) and again as a judgement on the messengers of Ahaziah (2 Kgs. 1:9-12). It was also Elijah who prayed that no rain would fall (1 Kgs. 17:1-7) for three and a half years; this time period is in Luke 4:25 also James 5:17. It is also interesting that three and a half years equals 1260 days that this rain was withheld. The prophetic time here mentioned twice in Revelation eleven is also 1260 days. A Jew living in John's era would have seen this. He would also have noted that the water turning to blood alludes to Moses and the first plague that fell on Egypt (Ex. 7:19-21).

These judgements, executed on evil people through Moses and Elijah, came as a result of the word of the Lord. In the same manner, the judgements recorded in Scripture will fall upon evil people as often as Scripture says they are to take place. One instance of this is the seven last plagues (Rev. 15-16) which are yet to take place; another is the final destruction of the wicked by fire at the end of the 1000 years (Rev. 20). People tampering with God's word or His law are warned they will suffer judgements (Rev. 22:18-19).



## War on the Two Witnesses:

**Rev. 11:7** "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,"

**The Witnesses Testimony:** was to continue for 1260 day/years in sackcloth (see v. 3). Now we are told, "when they shall have finished their testimony," war would be made against them. Therefore, we should expect an attack to be made on the Bible after 1260 years of suppression.

**The Beast:** This is not an angel coming out of the pit but a beast; now a beast denotes a kingdom (see Dan. 7:17, 23).

**Rev. 11:8** "And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

**The Great City:** is identified with Egypt and Sodom. It is also linked to the place where our Lord was crucified. Now as Jesus wasn't crucified in either Sodom or Egypt this phrase must be understood figuratively. What we are looking for is a nation that spiritually resembles Egypt when Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I know not the Lord..." (Ex. 5:2). This points to an atheistic nation. It would also uphold the characteristic sin of Sodom which was licentiousness. Finally, in some sense it would crucify our Lord.

**History Sketch:** In the parable of the Separation of the Sheep and Goats the king says "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matt. 25:40, 45). God takes anything done to one of His believers as being done unto Himself. Therefore, when a plot was laid in France to destroy all the Huguenots, and in one night, Aug. 24, 1572 AD, fifty thousand of them were murdered, it is accounted as an act done to Himself.

However, as many acts of murderous aggression have been performed against Christians down through the centuries this act alone isn't enough to identify this nation as the one portrayed as Sodom and Egypt here. So let's look at the rest of the evidence. This nation was to adopt the attitude of Pharaoh who said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice" (Ex. 5:2). Here is the spirit of atheism; did France do this? At the time of the French Revolution "Infidelity and atheism reigned supreme. The National Convention abolished the Sabbath, and the leaders of the Paris Commune declared that they intended to dethrone the King of heaven as well as the monarchs of the earth. Finally, Nov. 10, 1793, the leaders of the Paris Commune ... prevailed upon the National Convention to decree the abolition of the Christian religion in France and the substitution of the worship of Reason instead.."

Blackwood's Magazine said of this time, "France is the only nation in the world concerning which the authentic record survives that as a nation she lifted her hand in open rebellion against the Author of the universe. Plenty of blasphemers, plenty of infidels, there have been, and still continue to be in England, Germany, Spain, and elsewhere; but France stands apart in the world's history as the single state which, by the decree of her legislative Assembly, pronounced that there was no God, and of which the entire population of the capital, and a vast majority elsewhere, women as well as men, danced and sang with joy in accepting the announcement."

An interesting statement about this and the bottomless pit comes from de Lamartine who wrote, "When the ignorant people no longer saw God between them and annihilation, they plunged into the bottomless abyss of atheism." As for Sodom, it was the symbol of moral degradation, and epitomised that state of the French nation during the revolution when all restraints imposed by religion had been removed. Fornication was actually upheld by law

during this period when Church marriage was outlawed by the state.

**Rev. 11:9** “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.”

This verse describes the reaction of the other nations to what was happening in France. They would observe the national war France was making on the Scriptures but would not nationally follow suit. Though the Bible was to lie dead for three and a half days/years in France, the other nations wouldn't suffer the Scriptures to be buried out of sight. We will return to the three and a half days in a moment.

**Rev. 11:10** “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.”

The clue to this verse lies in the phrase "because these two prophets tormented them." The prophets referred to here are the two witnesses and the people they torment are those who hate the Bible. Infidels everywhere were delighted by the work being done in France; however their joy was only to last for three and a half days/years.

**Rev. 11:11** “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”

**History Sketch:** One of the critical things in all this is the timing. The witnesses were to prophecy for 1260 day/years in sackcloth; after the 1260 day/years they were to be slain; they were to lie slain for three and a half day/years. These time periods create a definite sequence which must be fulfilled by any nation being portrayed as the one fulfilling this prophecy. Now let's see if France fits.

The Bible witnessed in sackcloth during the time of papal supremacy. In the year 503 AD a Roman Catholic synod presided over by Pope Symmachus adopted the position that the pope was judge as God's vicar and could himself be judged by no one. Thirty years later, in 533 AD, Justinian, the Roman emperor, passed a decree stating the Bishop of Rome was to be the head of all bishops and the one true corrector of heretics. Of this latest act the Rev. Croly writes, "In the year 1793 twelve hundred and sixty years from the letter of Justinian declaring the Pope 'Universal Bishop,' the gospel was, by a solemn act of the legislature and the people, abolished in France.... By the decree of the French government, declaring that the nation acknowledged no God, the Old and New Testaments were slain throughout the limits of republican France." Lorimer says that, "On the 10th of November [1793] an ass, dressed out in a sacerdotal habit, was led in procession through the town by two *sans culottes*, carrying a sacred cup, out of which they gave the animal drink; and when they arrived at one of the public edifices, Bibles, books of devotion, etc., were piled up in a heap, which was set on fire...." Joseph Galloway, in his commentary states this ass had, "the Old and New Testaments tied to its tail."

Now the interesting thing is on Nov. 10, 1793 the Bible was publicly burned as we noted. Then on Nov. 21 the French Assembly swore allegiance to Reason and two days later on the 23rd a decree was passed closing all churches. If we count three years from that date we come to Nov. 1796 and a further half year added to this brings us on to May 1797 AD. At this time the French, filled with horror at the scenes of cruelty produced by their Revolution, in May 1797 had a council of 500 prepare a new law on religious worship. This new law was brought before the National Convention on June 17, 1797 and ratified. Thus 1260 years after the Bible began witnessing in sackcloth she was attacked in France and three and a half years after the attack she was set free as prophecy indicated.

**The French Connection:**

One question raised by the application of this prophecy to France is: Why is the French nation being punished in this way. Part of the answer relates to the suppression of religion by her legislative assembly but another part goes back to her connection with papal Rome.

**History Sketch:** In 481 AD, the year Clovis inherited the royal title, he was only one of several Frankish [French] kings. Originally he was little more than a tribal chieftain, who became the leader of the Salian Franks by murdering a number of his relatives. In 486 AD Clovis defeated the last great Roman army under Syagrius at Soissons in Gaul. He then turned his attention to the other Germanic tribes. In one campaign after another he defeated the Alamanni, Visigoths and Burgundians. It was while he was fighting the Alamanni that he had an experience which was to have an effect on the history of the Roman empire.

The battle took place in 496 AD and Clovis I made a vow that if he should have the victory he would become a Christian. As it happened he was victorious and true to his word he was baptised by St. Renie the Bishop of Rheims. Of this experience an Encyclopaedia says: "By his conversion to Christianity, Clovis won the support of his Catholic subjects, including the clergy." For the papacy this meant the acquisition of Gaul as this Encyclopaedia says, "In 496 AD, the king of the Franks, Clovis I, was converted. His conversion brought Gaul into the church and checked the spread of the Arian heresy there. Gaul was a huge region now occupied by Belgium, France, and part of Western Germany." Clovis defeated the Burgundians in 500 AD and the Visigoths in 507 AD. He became king of the first nation to acknowledge the supremacy of the pope. His services to the papacy were invaluable at this time. Pope Gregory commented that Clovis was: "God's chosen instrument for the extension of the Catholic faith." The reason for this was: "By his conversion he led the way to the triumph of Catholicism: he had saved the Roman Catholic Church from... heresy and paganism, planted it on a rock in the very center of Europe, and fixed its doctrines and traditions in the hearts of the conquerors of the West." Thus Clovis I crushed both paganism and Arianism in the West enabling the papacy to come to power.

Therefore, if under the first six trumpets we have seen God's punishments falling on the persecutors of His people, ie.: Jerusalem fell as a punishment to the Jews; Rome fell as a punishment on the western Roman empire and Constantinople as a punishment on the eastern Roman empire; it would seem quite natural for the power who established the papacy to be punished also.

**Rev. 11:12** "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"

The ascending up to heaven of the Scriptures is understood to refer to their exaltation after France made war on them. Shortly after their suppression in France the British Bible Society was organised in 1804 and the American Bible Society in 1817. These with many other groups have scattered the Scriptures around the globe.

**Rev. 11:13** "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

The city referred to here is that "great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth (Rev. 17:18); or as Daniel points out, the papal Church. France was one of the ten horns (Dan. 7:24) who gave her power to the beast; therefore she was the one tenth part of that city which fell. Peter Jurieu says, "Mark that the earthquake, ie., the great alteration of affairs in the land of the Papacy, must for that time happen only in the tenth part of the city that shall fall: for this shall be the effect of this earthquake. Now what is this tenth part of this city, which shall fall? In my opinion we cannot doubt that 'tis France. This kingdom is the most considerable part, or piece, of the ten horns, or states, which once made up the great Babylonian city.... This tenth part of the city shall fall, with respect to the Papacy; it shall break with Rome, and the Roman religion."

**Rev. 11:14** “The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.”

This concludes the sixth trumpet with the statement that the second woe has taken place. This trumpet has seen the punishment of the Eastern Roman Empire, the Ottomans who followed them and the French who brought the papacy to power. Time wise, we are at the end of 1840 when the collapse of the Ottoman empire took place. At this point in time we are told a third woe is to follow quickly.

## Chapter 12

### The Seventh Trumpet

The sixth trumpet ended with France severing her support for the papacy; and for her part in suppressing the Scriptures she suffered the results of the French Revolution. The sixth trumpet then concludes with the statement, "The second woe is past, behold the third woe cometh quickly" (Rev. 11:14). Under the seventh trumpet we are to expect a third woe; Let's see what it is:

#### The Finished Mystery:

**Rev. 11:15** "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

There are no symbols presented in this trumpet. John simply states that worldly governments have come to an end. Previously the apostle warned:

**Rev. 10:7** "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."

Two things are marked by the sounding of this angel: firstly the mystery of God is finished and secondly the kingdoms of this world have passed out of the control of our world leaders and into the hands of the Lord. Let's look at the mystery of God first:

In Mark Jesus says to His disciples, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God..." (Mark 4:11). The statement followed the parable of the sower's seed and the disciples query as to what it was about. Jesus then went on to explain how the seed was the sowing of the word (v. 14) and by the illustration taught the effect on people of the preaching of the Gospel. However this preaching of the Gospel wasn't to last forever. For Jesus also said, "... this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). When this time of preaching ends, probation for the world also ends; that's what Rev. 10:7 is saying.

The second event marked by this seventh angel refers to the kingdoms of this world passing out of the control of the world's leaders to Christ. This takes place at the time of the investigative judgement which we learnt from Daniel began in 1844. Daniel 7:9-14 gives us the story. In fact it is this judgement that removes the dominion of this world from the little horn and gives it to Christ and His people (vs. 26-27, 14).

Therefore it would seem safe to assume that, when the seventh angel has finished sounding his trumpet, this world as we know it along with life as we now know it will have come to an end as predicted in 2 Pet. 3:3-13.

#### The Elders Praise:

After the mention of the seventh angel John tells us that the twenty-four elders give praise to God (v. 16) because He has taken over the affairs of earth and begun to reign (v. 17). Then they go on to say:

**Rev. 11:18** "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst 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.”

**Angry Nations:** Two things are linked together here: the nations are angry and the time of God's wrath is come. There is a hostility that will build up against God's people towards the close of time (Rev. 12:17) based on a controversy over worship (Rev. 13:15). This controversy brings about God's wrath (Rev. 14:9-11) which comes as a result of the enforcement of the image to the beast.

**God's Wrath:** The wrath of God for the generation instituting the image to the beast comes with the seven last plagues (Rev. 15:1-2 and 16:1). However, God's wrath is also poured out upon all wicked people after the judgement (Rev. 20:12-15).

**God's Judgement:** There is a mention of "time" here. The Greek word "kairos" from which "time" comes refers to a particular time with a definite purpose. The purpose here is to punish the wicked and reward the servants of God. As the great majority of the wicked are still in their graves at the time of the seven last plagues this work of judgement would be the one in which the saints participate (see 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 20:4). The judgement of the saints takes place before the seven last plagues are poured out; according to Dan. 8:14 it began in 1844.

**The Saint's Reward:** comes at the end of the 1000 years mentioned in Revelation chapter twenty when they come into full possession of the new earth.

## The Temple:

**Rev. 11:19** “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

**The Open Temple:** reveals the ark of His testament in heaven. This ark was placed in the most holy place and contained the ten commandments (Ex. 25:16; 31:18; Deut. 10:2, 5). These commandments are with the church of God to the end of time (see Rev. 12:17; 14:12). The only time they were seen in the most holy place was when the high priest went into the second apartment on the day of atonement. From our study of Daniel we learnt that Jesus began His day of atonement in 1844 at the time when the heavenly investigative judgement began and the books were opened (Dan. 7:9-10).

This trial in Daniel chapter seven examines the deeds of the little-horn and it appears that John in Revelation chapters 12-18 is giving us further details about the struggle between the saints and this power that wears out the saints of the Most High. Notice how in chapter 17:1 John is told by one of the seven angels that he would show him "the judgement of the great harlot" indicating this power had passed through a trial as in a court case.

# Chapter 13

## A Persecuted Church

Chapter eleven closed with a view of the temple of God "opened" in heaven. In this temple John saw the ark of His testament which contains the ten commandments by which all men are to be tested (see James 2:8-13). Now, in chapter twelve, we see the church of God under attack. Three times a persecuting power, under the description of a dragon, attempts to destroy the Church; and each time the Church survives. The conflict spills over into chapter thirteen where a decree goes forth against God's people threatening their very existence. What's this is all about?

### A Clue to Revelation Twelve's Aggressor:

**Rev. 12:3** "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads."

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

**Rev. 13:2** "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."

The symbols used here correspond to those found in Daniel chapter seven. For instance, John sees a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns with ten crowns (Rev. 13:1) Daniel sees a beast coming up out of the sea having ten horns from which three were taken away (Dan. 7:7-8). The ten horns represented ten kings (Dan. 7:24).

John's beast looked like a leopard with bear's feet and a lion's mouth. These are the same animals that Daniel uses to describe the kingdoms before pagan Rome only in Revelation they are in the reverse order (see Dan. 7:3-6). As Daniel uses these animals to describe certain characteristics of the kingdoms preceding Rome, for example -- the lion was the king of beasts illustrating the fact that Babylon would be the king of kingdoms (Jer. 4:7; 50:17, 43-44) -- this final beast would have characteristics found in the preceding kingdoms of Daniel's day in her. Notice how the woman who sits upon the beast with seven heads and ten horns has the name of Babylon (Rev. 17:3-5).

Also, the bear's feet link John's beast with Medo-Persia (Dan. 7:5) whose laws were often cruel and oppressive (see Daniel's experience with the law of the Medes and the Persians in Daniel 6). So this beast will enact laws endangering the lives of God's people (see Rev. 13:15-17). Finally the leopard reminds us of Greece, Daniel's third world empire (Dan. 7:6; 8:20-21), in which case Alexander the Great's ability to conquer the world may be emulated by this last world power. Ultimately, the lamb-beast comes to the place where he forces all the world to worship the first beast (Rev. 13:12, 15).

Another clue to his identity comes in a repeated time period:

**Rev. 12:6** "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days."

**Rev. 12:14** "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a

time, from the face of the serpent.”

**Rev. 13:5** “ 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.”

**Dan. 7:25** “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.”

**1260 Days:** All these texts refer to the same period of time which was, as our study of Daniel chapter seven revealed, from 538 AD to 1798 AD. During this period of papal persecution God's hand was over his church preserving it from extinction. As Jesus said in His prophecy that it shall be a time of "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved...." (Matt. 24:21-22).

These verses link Rev. 12 and 13 with the fourth beast of Daniel seven. Now the only thing that is happening in Daniel seven that has relevance to the time frame we are looking at in Revelation twelve is the judgement. Daniel sees in the judgement scene the little horn persecuting the saints of God for 1260 day-years; he also sees the judgement begin and books of record being opened (Dan. 7:9-27). In the light of Rev. 11:19 being a reference to the opening of the judgement on the day of atonement, it is quite likely that what follows is the details relating to that judgement. Notice how chapter seventeen begins: "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 judgement of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." (Rev. 17:1).

Let's look at Revelation chapter twelve now and see what it tells us about God's church:

### Persecution of the Woman with Child:

**Rev. 12:1-2, 5** “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.” “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.”

In the OT a woman was sometimes used as a figure of the true church (Isa. 54:5-6; Jer. 6:2). When the church apostatised she was compared to a corrupt woman (Jer. 3:20; Eze. 23:2-4). The same principle holds good for the NT (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 17:1-3).

Now in Revelation twelve John sees her clothed with the sun. As Jesus is the light of the world (John 1:4-5, 7-8; 8:12) and He is the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2) it would appear this woman reflects the character of Christ and His true teachings. She stands on the moon, which is a reflected light. The types and shadows of the ceremonial law in the OT were illuminated by the life and death of our Lord. The gospel church stands on the testimony of the OT. Thus in this scene we have the two witnesses of chapter eleven represented by the figures of the sun and moon.

On her head was a crown of twelve stars. The crown indicated here is the "stephanos" which is a wreath type crown given as a prize for victory (1 Cor. 9:25) and not the "diadēma" which refers to royalty. Thus we are not talking about political kingdoms as indicated by the crowns on the horns of the beast (Rev. 12:3) but to crowns representative of victory. In his first chapter John links "stars" with "angels" (v. 20) but here it would be hard to conceive what twelve angels could mean. Most of Revelation is attached to the number seven; there are seven angels mentioned several times; there are seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets and seven plagues. The number twelve is linked to the twelve tribes of Israel and their names



are on the city gates as the twelve apostles names are on the cities foundations. There are twelve angels who stand at the twelve gates of the city but there does not seem any good reason to connect Revelation chapter twelve with them. Perhaps, as this woman is standing on the moon which has been seen as the OT her crown of twelve stars may well represent the twelve apostles who formed the foundation of the Christian faith.

The child who is caught up to heaven is Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:3; 10:12). John makes no reference to the life, work, suffering or death of Christ but passes from the birth to His resurrection.

**Rev. 12:3-4** “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. <sup>4</sup>And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

**Dragon:** This creature is identified as, "that old serpent, called the devil and Satan." (v. 9). However, as it is said to be waiting to devour the woman's child (Christ) the reference must be to Herod who, as pagan Rome's representative, instructed his soldiers to go to Bethlehem and kill Mary's child.

**Seven Heads:** appear also on the beast coming out of the sea (Rev. 13:1) as well as upon the scarlet-coloured beast (Rev. 17:3). These heads are identified in Rev. 17:9-10 as "seven mountains" and "seven kings." Scripture sometimes uses the symbol of a mountain to designate a kingdom (Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44-45). However, it is also true that Rome has sometimes been referred to by the Classical writers as "the City of Seven Hills" referring to the fact that seven hills surround the city.

**Seven crowns:** on these seven heads seem to favour a reference to political power over geographical features as the word for "crowns" in v. 3 is "diadēmata" which is a crown as a symbol of royalty whereas "stephanos" in v. 1 indicates victory.

**Tail:** is often used by creatures of this type to strike a fatal blow against an enemy. Here the tail is drawing a third part of the stars of heaven. We saw under the seven trumpets how a third part was frequently used to indicate a significant portion; here a large number of angels (stars Rev. 12:9) were drawn away from heaven -- that is their allegiance changed from God to Satan.

**Rev. 12:6** “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.”

**History Sketch:** The first six verses introduce the Christian church and her opponent -- Satan. It is evident from the text that Satan is working through world leaders as the Child of the woman was attacked by Herod acting under the authority of pagan Rome. After telling us that the woman's Child ascended to heaven (compare Heb. 1:3; 10:12) John passes over to the time of the Churches persecution by Papal Rome; the 1260 years ran from 538 AD to 1798 AD, during this time the Church survived in the wilderness

After relating this experience of the woman giving birth to a Child and the reception the dragon gave to her Child, John turns his attention to an earlier period of history. As far as Bible students can tell this war in heaven began before the creation of the world; hence Lucifer had already become Satan by the time Adam and Eve were placed in the garden of Eden. (see Gen. 3).

## War in Heaven:

**Rev. 12:7** “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels”

The idea that there should be a war in a place such as heaven sounds astounding. The dragons angels were undoubtedly those he drew away with his tail (v. 4). However Satan's plans failed and he was cast out to the earth (V. 8-9). Then John again directs our attention to the woman's Child for in v. 10 we are told the "accuser of our brethren" is cast down. There is a difference between the casting out of Satan and his casting down. He was cast out after his war with God in heaven, he was cast down when he killed the Child of the woman on the cross. John then talks about the persecution of the woman in v. 11-13. These were the terrible days of papal persecution and verses 14-16 tell how the woman survived through the help of God.

## War with the Remnant:

**Rev. 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."

In the seventh chapter of Daniel we saw that one of the things the little-horn that depicted the papacy would do was "to change times and laws" of God (see v. 25). To this end the ten commandments in Papal theology have been altered from those given to Moses in order to allow the worship of images and in keeping with Daniel's prediction that times would also be changed the Sabbath has been moved from Saturday to Sunday. In disputing with Luther Dr. Eck said, "If, however, the church has had power to change the Sabbath of the Bible into Sunday and to command Sunday keeping, why should it not have also this power concerning other days, many of which are based on the Scriptures --- such as Christmas, circumcision of the heart, three kings, etc. If you omit the latter, and turn from the church to the Scriptures alone, then you must keep the Sabbath with the Jews, which has been kept from the beginning of the world."

After an all out attempt to destroy the Church through the 1260 years of papal persecution, down at the end of time, Satan makes one last attempt to destroy the church of God. There he finds a small group of believers keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus. This testimony of Jesus is "the spirit of prophecy" (see Rev. 19:10). In the Greek this phrase refers to a testimony that originates with Jesus and is revealed to His church through prophets (see Rev. 1:1). The close relationship between the "testimony of Jesus" and prophecy can be seen by comparing Rev. 19:10 where the angel identifies himself as "thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus" with Rev. 22:9 where he says "I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets." The two concepts appear close together.

It is very important to beware of legalism here. The commandments are not kept as a method of salvation. That is, salvation by works. Paul distinctly says, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:21). He also says, "... that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith..." (Gal. 3:11-12).

Further more the apostle John writes of the remnant in Revelation, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12). The faith of Jesus and the commandments of God represent two important aspects of Christian living. The commandments set forth the kind of character God expects His children to develop. Note how the commandments condemn the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:16-21) and support the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). We will be judged by this law (Jam. 2:9-12).

However, no one is saved by keeping the law. By the law comes the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20) and nothing else. Its purpose is to reveal the kind of character God wants us to develop. Anything short of this character is sin. It reveals to us if we are becoming like Christ. Faith on the other hand is how we become like Christ.

When we accept Jesus as our personal Saviour and follow Him the Holy Spirit enters our hearts and begins to develop in us a character after the fruits of the Spirit. This character places us in conformity to the law of God. That's how its done. Hence Paul can say, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." (Rom 3:31). That is God's law is written on our heart by the Spirit through faith. (See Jer. 31:31-33; Heb. 8:10).

# Chapter 14

## A Great Persecuting Power

In chapter thirteen John's attention is directed to the final struggle in the persecution of the Christian church by the dragon and his confederates. The chapter enlarges on the war mentioned in Rev. 12:17 and ends with a warning that those who refuse to obey God at the end of time will receive the mark of the beast. This mark incurs the most awesome and fearful warning in all the Bible [see Rev. 14:9-11]. As we are living near this period of history this chapter should receive our most careful attention.

### The Beast from the Sea:

**Rev. 13:1** “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.”

**Sea:** This symbol depicts "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. 17:15) and it is used to denote a populated area. Notice how this differs from the second beast coming up out of the earth (v. 11) which indicates its rise is in a deserted land.

**Satan:** Stephen's (1550) Greek text places the phrase "And I stood upon the sand of the sea" at the end of the twelfth chapter calling it verse eighteen. It also indicates "I stood" should be "it stood" referring to the dragon or Satan. If this reading were indeed correct, it would indicate the dragon was on the "sand of the sea" or beach as we would say waiting for the beast to emerge from the water. This would make some sense as the next verse says:

**Rev. 13:2** “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.”

The beast's power came from the dragon. This is confirmed by v. 4 where John writes, the people "worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast." The characteristics mentioned in v 2 of a leopard, bear and lion are the three symbols Daniel seven uses for Babylon, Persia and Greece and indicate this beast is none other than the fourth beast of Dan. 7 which is Rome; both have ten horns. The 1260 years of persecution mentioned in v 5 indicates we are looking at the papal phase of the Roman empire. Did the dragon give this beast his power?

History records Constantine moved the seat of the pagan Roman empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330 AD. After the fall of Rome in 476 AD, the bishop of Rome became the ruling power in the Western empire; and by a decree of Justinian on Mar. 15, 533 AD was declared the "head of all the holy churches." Thus pagan Rome established papal Rome as a temporal sovereign in what was to become the Holy Roman empire. Now according to John something was to happen to papal Rome:

**Rev. 13:3** “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.”

**History Sketch:** The papal deadly wound came when General Berthier was ordered by Napoleon Bonaparte to proceed at the head of a French army and seize Rome. Between Feb. 20-25, 1798 French troops entered Rome and proclaimed the political reign of the papacy was at an end and the pope was taken prisoner to France where he died Aug. 29, 1799. Stripped of both its civil and ecclesiastical power a large portion of Europe's rulers thought the papacy was dead.

**Rev. 13:3** “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.”

**Note:** The French republicans were anxious that Rome should not have another Pope. However Scripture said the deadly wound would be healed. Reverses to the French armies left Southern Italy to its old masters, the cardinals, and on Mar. 14, 1800 they elected Barnabas Chiaromonti to the chair of Peter as Pope Pius VII. The first transaction of this Pope was with Napoleon Bonaparte. Bonaparte felt that as the majority of the residence of France were Catholic it must become the established religion of the country. Accordingly he issued a concordat in July 1801 re-establishing the Roman Catholic religion in France. Then in 1870 the Vatican received another blow when they lost all temporal dominions to the then newly unified Kingdom of Italy. As a protest against the removal of their territories the pope's retired to the Vatican as voluntary prisoners over what they perceived as theft. A healing of this rift took place in 1929 when Cardinal Gasparri and Premier Mussolini signed a treaty for Pope Pius XI and King Victor Emmanuel III giving Pius XI sovereign status over the Vatican City. This was called the Lateran Treaty. However Scripture predicts a much greater healing than this will take place in the future.

**Rev. 13:10** “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.”

**Captivity & Death:** What this verse is saying is the persecutors of God's people will themselves be persecuted. This received a partial fulfilment when in France the French Revolution persecuted the papal Church and when the pope was taken prisoner by General Berthier in 1798 AD. It will receive a greater fulfilment in the future when the beast is destroyed in the lake of fire. (See Rev. 19:19-20). Note the fourth beast of Daniel seven suffers this same fate (Dan. 7:11).

## The Beast from the Earth:

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

**Beast's Rise:** John Wesley's notes on Revelation thirteen, written in 1754, says of this two-horned beast, "He is 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." The forty-two months ended in 1793-1798.

Secondly, not only is time a factor in the rise of this beast, but unlike the other beasts, this one is to come out of the earth. Now if the beasts coming from the sea indicate they rise in a populated area, then we may expect the earth to represent a sparsely settled region.

**History Sketch:** The nation arising around the end of the 1260 years of papal supremacy was the United States of America. The Declaration of American Independence was signed on July 4, 1776 by thirteen American colonies; just 26 years after Wesley made his note on Revelation thirteen. In 1787 the Constitution of the United States was adopted and, two years later, in 1789 George Washington was inaugurated as the first President. Thus this new nation had barely begun when on Aug. 26, 1792 an open profession of atheism was made by the French National Convention and the pathway to the deadly wounding of the papacy had begun.

**Beast's Characteristics:** The horns like a lamb represent the fact that this young nation was the first to be founded on the great Christian principles of civil and religious freedom. George Washington, replying to the United Baptist churches of Virginia in 1789 said, "Any man, conducting himself as a good citizen and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience." The American Constitution guarantees it citizens civil freedom

through a republican form of government and religious liberty by virtue of Protestantism.

However all this is to change for Revelation says this country will speak like a dragon. The dragon is Satan, the father of lies (see John 8:44). Speaking like him indicates the U.S. will, at some point in time, repudiate its lamb-like profession of civil and religious liberty and, as a Protestant nation it will become a persecuting power. This may well be why Rev. 19:20 refers to it as a "false-prophet."

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

**Worship:** is the key to understanding what is happening here. The first beast (papal Rome) exercised the power of persecuting and putting to death all who differed from it in religious matters. It also put in place laws contrary to Scripture and demanded people obey its authority to introduce change. Notice what Daniel says of this:

**Dan. 7:25** "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."

**Change:** is the clue to the exercise of her religious power here. Pagans have persecuted God's people; Pharaoh spoke great words against the Most High; but this power would think to tamper with the law of God -- the ten commandments. Look at the supplement at the end of this lesson to see the difference between the Bible version of the ten commandments and those put out by the papacy. This is one of the things that Scripture presents to help us identify the beast.

However, there is also an aspect of these changes that fulfil part of the prophecy of Revelation chapter thirteen. That aspect is related to worship. The Augsburg Confession states, "They [the Catholics] allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord's day, contrary to the decalogue, as it appears; neither is there any example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great, they say, is the power and authority of the Church, since it dispensed with one of the ten commandments."

When arguing with Luther, Dr. Eck said, "If however, the church has had power to change the Sabbath of the Bible into Sunday and to command Sunday keeping, why should it not have also this power concerning other days, many of which are based on the Scriptures -- such as Christmas, circumcision of the heart, three kings, etc. If you omit the latter, and turn from the church to the Scriptures alone, then you must keep the Sabbath with the Jews, which has been kept from the beginning of the world." There is no change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday in the Scripture; it was done by the Church of Rome as Dan. 7:25 predicted and is a sign of her power and authority.

Now what happens when Protestants keep Sunday? Serur says, "It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church." In other words they are giving homage or worship to the power of the beast by keeping Sunday for there is no other authority for keeping the first day of the week. The second beast, to make an image to the first beast and cause all to worship it only has to force all the world to worship on Sunday and it has achieved its goal. To this end it will be aggressive to all who worship on Friday or Saturday; in fact any day except Sunday. Look at what Scripture says this beast will do:

**Rev. 13:13-14** "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, <sup>14</sup>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.”

**History Sketch:** In 1 Kgs. 18:17-39 the prophet Elijah challenged the false prophets of Baal to a test: whichever of the two parties could bring fire down from heaven his god was the true God. In the final contest between the beast and the true followers of God this scenario would be repeated only with the beast performing the miracle as a sign that it is the true religion. Other miracles will abound. As the world approaches the time of Armageddon Scripture says, the "spirits of devils, working miracles, ... go forth unto the kings of the earth" (Rev. 16:14) for the purpose of gathering them together to "the battle of that great day of God. The power behind all this miracle working is Satan (see 2 Thess. 2:9-10) or the dragon as he is sometimes called.

**Image:** comes from the Greek word "eikôn" meaning "a likeness." An "eikôn" implies there is an original pattern or model from which the image has been reproduced. Therefore an "image to the beast" would be an organisation functioning on the same principles as that beast's organisation. Notable among the first beast's principles was the use of secular force to establish itself among the nations of Europe as a world religious power with the right to enforce religious and civil policy.

What this implies is the time will come when the United States will repudiate its principles of religious and civil freedom and the political arm of that country will begin to crack down on the freedoms at present guaranteed in the Constitution. There will come an amalgamation of Protestantism and Catholicism pressurising the political arm of that country to enact and enforce laws restricting the freedom of people to worship God according to their conscience and demanding that they worship according to the established code produced by the authorities. The persecution of dissenting minorities will undoubtedly follow. This will form an image to the papacy.

**Rev. 13:15-17** “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. <sup>16</sup>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: <sup>17</sup>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.”

**Persecution:** of dissenters has ever been the story of a Church that doesn't possess the religion of Jesus. Luke tells us on one occasion Jesus, "sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village." (Luke 9:52-56). History records the massacre of the Waldenses, Albigenses, and others by the civil power in an attempt to make all the people worship the first beast and this second beast will issue a decree to put to death all who insist on giving their loyalty to God.

**Identity of Beast's Followers:** There are three phases of identity given for association with the beast and they are: his "mark," his "name," or his "number." The word for "mark" comes from the Greek "charagma" meaning "an impress or a stamp." It is evidently some kind of badge of loyalty to the beast; a mark indicating the bearer of this token accepts the authority of the first beast. As the controversy at the close of this world's history centers on the ten commandments (see Rev. 12:17 and 14:12) and as Daniel has pointed out the first beast was to change these (Dan. 7:25) as a sign of her power it isn't hard to see this mark as being Sunday worship. The papacy has already said,  
" ... the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of

themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church." This mark would stand in complete contrast to the seal of God which is in the foreheads of the saints (see Rev. 7:2) and will be discussed in Revelation chapter fourteen.

The beast's name could well be the name of the organisation and as such it would represent those who were members of that religious faith as opposed to those who, while not being actual members, are willing to accept its authority in religious matters. This might well portray the final end-time collaboration between apostate Protestantism and Catholicism.

And finally, "the number of his name." This is given in the final verse of the chapter:

**Rev. 13:18** "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore *and* six."

**Number:** This number has been identified as belonging to the Pope of Rome. On this matter the Catholic journal "Our Sunday Visitor" says, "The title of the Pope of Rome is *Vicarius Filii Dei*. This is inscribed on his mitre; and if you take the letters of his title which represent Latin numerals (printed large) and add them together they come to 666: .... This 'argument' was submitted to Rev. Ernest R. Hull, and answered in the following manner: 'Almost every eminent man in Christendom, who has enjoyed the privilege of possessing enemies, has had his name turned and twisted till they could get the number 666 out of it. In past history there have been numberless beasts or Anti-Christ's, all of whose names counted up to 666.'"

There are a couple of points we should note here. Firstly, there are many names in the Latin form which do add up to 666 and so this piece of information supplied by John isn't very useful for identifying the beast. However, the beast is amply identified elsewhere in Scripture as firstly pagan Rome and finally papal Rome giving us no problem in assigning this number to the papal Church. Now John indicates the name needs to be calculated, implying it represents something more than a number. Adding the letters in the Pope's title fits this specification. But why would John do this? What's the point of giving a cryptogram of a power he has already identified? It is possible there is more to be revealed on this point; or John, living in the time of pagan Rome, wished to point out that the pagan empire would be assumed by a man in the form of the bishop of Rome taking the title of "Vicar of the Son of God."



## Law of God Supplement

Below are the ten commandments as given by God in the Bible followed by the Papal version in red:

- I **Bible** "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."  
**Papacy** "I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."
- II **Bible** "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."  
**Papacy** -Deleted.
- III **Bible** "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."  
**Papacy** "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." [Now No. 2 because of deletion].
- IV **Bible** "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 Seventh day, and hallowed it."  
**Papacy** "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." [No. 3]
- V **Bible** "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."  
**Papacy** "Honour thy father and thy mother." [No. 4]
- VI **Bible** "Thou shalt not kill."  
**Papacy** -Same [No. 5]
- VII **Bible** "Thou shalt not commit adultery."  
**Papacy** -Same [No. 6]
- VIII **Bible** "Thou shalt not steal."  
**Papacy** -Same [No. 7]
- IX **Bible** "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."  
**Papacy** -Same [No. 8]

x **Bible** "Thou shalt not covert thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covert thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."

**Papacy** "Thou shalt not covert thy neighbour's wife." [No. 9]

**Papacy** "Thou shalt not covert thy neighbour's goods." [No. 10]

**Bible** [Ex. 20:3-17]; **Papacy** [Butler's Catechism, 28].

# Chapter 15

## Earth's Last Citizens

Scripture indicates that when the earth comes to its end there will only be two groups of people living on this planet; those who worship Jehovah and those who have given their allegiance to the beast. This has come about through the image to the beast John spoke of in chapter thirteen. Here, in this next chapter, we see earth's citizens divided by three angel's messages into these groups; one company of 144,000 saints who have their "Father's name written on their foreheads" (v. 1) and another assembly who receive the wrath of God (v. 19).

### The 144,000:

**Rev. 6:17** “ For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

This question of Rev. 6:17 relates to the second coming of Christ that is shortly to take place. John has seen the wicked cry out to be hidden from the face of Him who sits upon the throne. The scene is so majestic and awesome that the apostle wonders if any of the people living on our planet are good enough to stand before God's throne. The answer comes in the next chapter.

**Rev. 7:2-4** “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, <sup>3</sup>Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. <sup>4</sup>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”

**Hurt not until:** At the beginning of the chapter four angels are seen holding the four winds of the earth so that they should not blow on the earth. Winds, used figuratively, indicate: strife, commotion, destruction, war (see Jer. 25:31-33; 49:36-37; 4:11-13; Dan. 7:2; Zech. 7:14). The final destruction that is to come upon the world will not take place before God's servants, 144,000 in number, are sealed with the seal mentioned above.

They were to be sealed in their foreheads with something called the seal of God; but what exactly is that? Let's turn back to Revelation fourteen.

**Rev. 14:1** “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.”

**The Seal:** of God is His name. This name is written in their foreheads. Now as something like this has already taken place in the Old Testament we can use that experience to unravel what John is getting at here in Revelation.

**Eze. 9:4** “And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”

This experience relates to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The mark was placed upon those Jews who sighed and cried for the abominations done in the land of Israel. These abominations were the practices being pursued by those acting contrary to the law of

God. Hence those with the mark were law abiding citizens; and as such had the approval of Jehovah. The mark was not one of a visible nature to the human eye but that of a character in tune with God's law.

Nebuchadnezzar held the Jews as his captives for 70 years. Regarding this punishment the Bible says it was ; "To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." (2 Chr. 36:21). God had warned Israel about the consequences of forsaking His law. One of the things He said concerned the Sabbath: "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye *be* in your enemies' land; *even* then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." (Lev. 26:33-35). So Israel's captivity was brought about by their disregard for the Sabbath commandment.

Whenever the ten commandments are mentioned in some circles today the subject of righteousness by works seems to appear. In fact many people try to show how obedience to the law of God is contrary to righteousness by faith. However, Paul refers to Abraham saying, "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also" (Rom. 4:11). Prior to his circumcision Abraham was already justified by faith alone. Yet God still required Him to embrace a work of the law. Why? James tells us; "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." (Jam. 2:23). When someone is declared righteous by faith, that declaration is made on the basis that they will live a righteous life in the future. Paul says, "...Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid...." (Rom. 6:1-2). And, "...shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." (Rom. 6:15). Sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). If we are not to sin then we ought to keep the law. Hence Revelation twelve says the remnant Church "... keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 12:17).

Now let's see why God required Israel to keep the Sabbath.

**Ex. 31:13** "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, 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"

As circumcision was a sign of Abraham's justification by faith the Sabbath was to be a sign of Israel's sanctification by Jehovah. God had chosen Israel to be a holy nation and He intended to sanctify her just as he sanctified the Sabbath at creation. Now there is one more thing we need to understand about the Sabbath with regard to these people in Revelation.

**Ex. 20:8-11** "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>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."

**A Seal:** that is placed on a document to make it official must contain three things: 1) the name of the lawgiver; 2) His official position, title or authority giving him the right to rule; and the extent of his dominion and jurisdiction. Only one commandment contains the name, authority and dominion of the Author of the law of God and that is the fourth commanding us to keep the Sabbath. (1) His name: "The Lord thy God."; (2) His official position: "made"

He is the Creator and therefore owner of all things. (3) His dominion: "heaven and earth." Thus the Sabbath is God's seal placed in the ten commandments to prove that it is His law.

When God finished creating the world the last thing He did was to place His seal in the form of the Sabbath upon it to show that the world was perfect and He made it. (See Gen. 1:31-2:3). The Sabbath stands as his name placed as a sign of approval upon the objects of His regard. In Revelation chapter fourteen the 144,000 are mindful of the significance of the Sabbath and they keep it in mind (that is they "Remember the Sabbath"); in this sense their Father's name is written in their foreheads. Notice how John describes them:

**Rev. 14:4-5** “ These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. <sup>5</sup>And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

**Virgins:** in Scripture is a term used to describe God's true Church. In Matthew chapter twenty-five we have the parable of the ten virgins. (Matt. 25:1-13; 2 Cor. 11:2). Here is an undefiled virgin. But undefiled by what? The answer was in chapter thirteen. The USA will repudiate its principles of civil and religious liberty, and become a persecuting power causing all the world to worship the first beast (the Papacy) by enforcing Sunday observance. Other nations will follow her example. Now what happens when Protestants keep Sunday? Serur says, "It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church." As God's Church is referred to as being in a marriage relationship with Him acting contrary to His will is often referred to as adultery. (See Jer. 3:8-9, 14; Eze. 23:37).

In the future the world will eventually commit fornication with the beast when under the influence of a false religious revival people will be forced to accept doctrines that are contrary to the Bible. (See Rev. 17:1-6). Their decision in that time of crises will determine whether they receive the mark of the beast or the seal of God.

### **The Rest of Men:**

**The Wicked:** are clearly in the majority when this world draws to its close. The description of the men who survived the trumpets in Revelation chapter nine fits them perfectly; John writes: "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." (Rev. 9:20-21). In Revelation chapter fourteen, after he states the three angels messages, John turns his attention to those who reject their message, like the rest of men they did not repent, and the apostle depicts their end.

Prior to dealing with these wicked people John tells us the harvest of the world has taken place. He writes: "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." (Rev. 14:14-16). This takes place at the second coming of Christ.

**Rev. 14:18-20** “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. <sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>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”

**Winepress of wrath:** is a figurative way of referring to the destruction of the wicked. The subject of the wicked's destruction is taken up in Revelation chapter twenty and we will look at it when we do that chapter. However, a couple of points worth noting here are: the angel had power over fire and it is fire coming down from God that finally destroys the wicked (Rev. 20:9); and the winepress in which the wicked were trodden was to be located without the city indicating the wicked would be destroyed outside Jerusalem. In Rev. 20:9 we are told the wicked surround the New Jerusalem prior to fire coming down from heaven and destroying them there.

As the winepress is a figure of the destruction of the wicked in the lake of fire at the end of time so the blood flowing to the depth of the horses bridles for about 1600 furlongs (1600 stadia is a little over 295 km) is figurative of a large destruction of life.

# Chapter 16

## The Three Angels Messages

In our previous lesson we have seen two groups of people that are entirely different in character and in the way their lives end. The reason for this division appears to be the message given by three angels flying in the midst of heaven. Let's see if we can discover what this is all about?

### Scripture Predicts a Judgement:

The prophet Daniel was given a view of a judgement; he writes:

**Dan. 7:9-10** "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. <sup>10</sup>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."

This is a court scene. The Ancient of Days is God the Father; He has entered the courtroom and taken up a prominent position surrounded by thousands of attendants. At this point in time the court begins its session and the records are opened.

**Acts 17:31** "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

From our study of the book of Daniel we learnt that this judgement began with the dead in 1844 AD; it will examine all the records of their life deeds and then pass on to the living. When this judgement concludes Christ will come.

### A Judgement-hour Message:

**Rev. 14:6-7** "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, <sup>7</sup>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."

**The Gospel:** These verses reveal an angel having the "everlasting gospel." There is only one gospel (Rom. 1:16-17; Gal. 1:8), which was first announced in Eden to Adam and Eve in the promise of One who would come to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15) and later preached to Abraham (Gal. 3:8), and to the Children of Abraham -- Israel (Heb. 4:1-2). Finally it is to be preached to every nation and people on the earth.

As the preaching of the gospel comes to its close two other features have been added to its message: Firstly the judgement predicted by Daniel has begun, and secondly a call is made to worship God as the Creator of heaven and earth. This is significant, as it is only at this end of earth's history that men who know of God have turned from Him to a belief in evolution; yet it is God's ability to create that distinguishes Him from the false gods and ultimately will lead to their removal.

**Jer. 10:11-12** “Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. <sup>12</sup>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.”

**The Sabbath:** was placed in the commandments to continually remind human beings that God created the heaven and the earth. It is something that we are admonished not to forget (Ex. 20:8-11). It was also a sign of His power to re-create fallen human beings for it is God who sanctifies us (Eze. 20:12). Thus in keeping the Sabbath (Saturday) Christians acknowledge God as their Creator, Redeemer and owner of the universe. All other gods are impostors.

Linked with the Gospel and the Sabbath was the judgement:

**2 Cor. 5:10** “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.”

**James 2:10-12** “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

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

**History Sketch:** After the 2300 day prophecy came to an end in 1844 AD a movement was to arise in the earth which would combine all these three aspects of the first angel's message in its doctrines. There would be a strong emphasis on the Gospel and righteousness by faith (that is the everlasting gospel); they would teach that the hour of God's judgement had arrived and that the investigative judgement of the saints had begun; finally the ten commandments would be given prominence as the standard that God expects all Christians to attain as they are the standard by which all are judged. This message was to go to the whole world.

## The Second Angel's Message:

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

**Ancient Babylon:** Babylon was an ancient city that at one time ruled over God's people. The Bible predicted that this once proud nation would be overthrown (Isa. 13:19). As a consequence a call was made for people to flee from the city (Jer. 51:6) so that they were not cut off in her iniquity. Apparently she had made the nations drunk with her wine (verse 7) and for this she was to be destroyed (verse 8). Just before her fall, the last king of Babylon - Belshazzar, made a feast in which he drunk wine to his gods in the vessels dedicated to the worship of the Hebrew God Jehovah. From the record in Daniel chapter five this seems to be the act that closed God's forbearance with this heathen nation and they were destroyed.

**Modern Babylon:** So what has a nation that perished hundreds of years before the birth of Christ got to do with the Christian church? Scripture predicts there would be a second Babylon who would follow in the footsteps of the ancient city in oppressing the true worship of God. John says he saw "the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17:6). She sat upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of the



names of blasphemy" (Rev. 17:3), and was dressed "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" (Rev. 17:4). Now notice what Scripture says was on her forehead:

**Rev. 17:5** "And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

## Babylon and Rome

The association of the name belonging to the ancient kingdom of Babylon with the papal Church may come as a surprise to many students of religion in our day and age. Time has erased a good deal of the history concerning the rise of this major world religion and replaced it with a traditional pious view going back to the apostle Peter.

However, this traditional view has no real substance to it. For in studying the prophecies of Daniel we learnt that: beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, there would be four world empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome) after which a fifth political/religious organisation would arise from the ruins of pagan Rome. This is in fact what happened. As Myers says, "Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman empire an Ecclesiastical state which was shaping itself upon the imperial model." Guinness sees things much the same way when he writes, "The rule of Rome ... has never ceased. It was a secular pagan power for five or six centuries; it has been an ecclesiastical and apostate Christian power ever since." But it isn't just the fact that papal Rome comes at the end of the four world powers mentioned in Daniel chapter seven that links this religion to the name Babylon. Rome acquired the religion of Babylon. Let's look at how this happened:

"The Chaldean Magi enjoyed a long period of prosperity at Babylon. A pontiff appointed by the sovereign ruled over a college of seventy-two hierophants. They were also established at Memphis and at Tibet, where the costume is preserved by the priests to this day; they also extended their influence and doctrines into Etruria. When the Medes and Persians overthrew the reigning power at Babylon, they put down the old mythology, and set up their own religion.... The defeated Chaldeans fled to Asia Minor, and fixed their central college at Pergamos, and took the palladium of Babylon, the cubic stone, with them. Here, independent of state control, they carried on the rites of their religion, and plotted against the peace of the Persian Empire...."

Garnier explains how Rome came by Babylon's pagan rites. He says, "On the overthrow of Babylon by the Persians, who nourished a traditional hatred for its idolatry, the Chaldean priesthood fled to Pergamos, in Asia Minor, and made it the headquarters of their religion.... The last pontiff king of Pergamos was Attalus III, who at his death bequeathed his dominions and authority to the Roman people, 133 B.C., and from that time the two lines of Pontifex Maximus were merged in the Roman one." It was the bequest of Attalus III that enabled the Romans to use the city of Pergamos as the capital of the Roman province of Asia and the Babylonian mystery religion eventually made its way to Rome. The presence of Babylon's religion in this city is interesting in the light of John's comment that Pergamos is "where Satan's seat is" (Rev. 2:13).

That Rome accepted the bequest of Attalus III can be seen from the fact that "The Christian emperors continued, until the reign of Gratian, to bear the title of Pontifex Maximus, and to act as the political head of the pagan religion. This political supremacy of the emperor over the pagan priesthood was applied also to the Christian church; and in the reign of Constantine, the imperial power over the external and civil affairs of the church was fully admitted by the whole Christian clergy." This means the title Pontifex Maximus didn't come from the apostle Peter but was a gift to the Roman Emperors by a pagan king; its origin goes back to Babylon.

That papal Rome has links to her pagan past can be seen from the fact that "...some traces of the old heathen superstitions are indeed constantly peeping out from under their Roman Catholic disguises." Grattan Guinness asks us some very interesting questions on this point. He writes, "Had paganism its temples and altars, its pictures and images? So has popery. Had paganism its use of holy water and its burning of incense? So has popery. Had paganism its tonsured priests, presided over by a pontifex maximus, or sovereign pontiff? So has popery; and it stamps this very name, which is purely heathen in origin, upon the coins, medals, and documents of the ... priest by whom it is governed. Had paganism its claim of sacerdotal infallibility? So has popery. Had paganism its adoration of a visible representative of Deity carried in state on men's shoulders? So has popery. Had paganism its ceremony of kissing the feet of the sovereign pontiff? So has popery. Had paganism its college of pontiffs? So has popery, in the College of Cardinals. Had paganism its religious orders? So has popery. Had paganism its stately robes, its crowns and crosiers of office? So has popery. Had paganism its adoration of idols, its worship of the queen of heaven, its votive offerings? So has popery. Had paganism its rural shrines and processions? So has popery. Had paganism its pretended miracles, its speaking images, and weeping images, and bleeding images? So has popery. Had paganism its begging orders and fictitious saints? So has popery. Had paganism its canonisation of saints, as in the deification of the dead Caesars? So has popery.... Had paganism its enforced celibacy, its mystic signs, its worship of relics? So has popery."

Specific examples of the amalgamation of paganism with Christianity can be found in the fact that "... heathen temples became Christian churches; the altars of the gods, altars of the saints; the curtains, incense, tapers, votive tablets, remained the same; the aquaminarium was still the vessel for holy water; St. Peter stood at the gate, instead of Cardea; St. Roque or St. Sebastian in the bedroom, instead of the 'Phrygian Penates;' St. Nicholas was the sign of the vessel, instead of Castor and Pollux; the *Matre Deûm* became the Madonna; 'alms pro *Matre Deûm*' became alms for the Madonna; the Festival of the *Matre Deûm*, the Festival of the Madonna, or Lady Day; the hostia, or victim, was now the host; the '*Lugentes Campi*,' or dismal regions, purgatory; the offerings to the manes were masses for the dead.... Blunt, ... adds in a note that the very name purgatory is heathen; since the annual Feast of Purification in February was called '*Sacrum Purgatorium*.'"

Brock further states, "... the canonising of saints and martyrs, the honours paid to them, and the trust reposed in them, were simply a revival of the old pagan mythologies.... The multitudes, half Christian and half pagan, met together in those unhappy days to confuse the Feast of the Saturnalia (in honour of Saturn); the Feast of the Purification with the Feast of the Lupercila (in honour of Pan); and the Feast of Rogations with the Feast of the Ambarvalia (in honour of Ceres) ....The modern worship of saints is a revival of the old adoration paid to heroes and demigods. What are nuns with their vows of celibacy, but a new edition of the vestal virgins? What the tales of images falling from heaven, but a repetition of the old fable of the Palladium of Troy .... The daily 'sacrifice of the mass' seems to be copied from the victim --- hostia --- of the heathen ritual .... some would trace the Pope himself, with the triple crown on his head and the keys of heaven and hell in his pocket, to our old acquaintance Cerberus with his three heads, who keeps guard as the *custos* of Tartarus and Elysium" (pp. 28-31).

This acceptance of pagan customs into the church seems to be the policy of the papacy. Leinheuser (R.C.) writes, "In her work of Christianising the world the [Roman Catholic] Church adapts herself as far as possible to her surroundings. She does not reject completely the customs and institutions of a people into whose land she carries the good tidings, but endeavours to bring these institutions into harmony with her own doctrines.... So it comes that we find the early writers of the church retaining in substance many of the old heathen myths and legends, changing them only to invest them with a Christian atmosphere."

It is this mingling of the concepts of Christianity with pagan traditions that has brought the Roman church to its fallen condition. Prior to her rise to world dominion she was just another group of believers among the many churches raised by the apostles. Paul sent one of his greatest epistles to her in his Epistle to the Romans wherein he says the faith of the believers

in Rome "is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1:8). It is in this epistle the apostle sets forth the doctrine of righteousness by faith; a doctrine that should have saved Roman Christians from the errors of righteousness by works, indeed her son Martin Luther discovered this gospel foundation stone and it led to the Protestant reformation. History attests to how Rome hated this light and sought to destroy all who would uphold it. Hence her fallen condition as stated by John in Revelation.

### The Third Angel's Message:

**Rev. 14:9-13** "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, <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. <sup>12</sup>Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. <sup>13</sup>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."

This is by far the longest of the three messages and it relates to the events that will transpire in the future as a fulfilment of Rev. 13. The mark of the beast clearly attracts the wrath of God and a refusal to accept the mark of the beast will undoubtedly attract the wrath of man. Either way humans are faced with a dilemma that is so bad John writes "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" before this happens.

**War with Satan:** The reason for the intensity of this struggle lies in the deep hatred Satan has for God and His law. This hatred was portrayed in Rev. 12 which closed with the comment, "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" (v. 17). Here in Rev. 14 John again alludes to the saints saying, "Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (v. 12). Clearly the last conflict will be over obedience to God's law. God's people will be upholding His commandments while the forces of Lucifer will seek to enforce a Sunday law not approved by Scripture. Walsh, in an article on Sunday, identifies the origin of Sunday worship as a pagan institution when he says "The first day of the week, named after the sun, and therefore an evident relic of sun worship." The Sabbath was hallowed by God to remind us of our Creator. Hence the first angel told us to "worship Him who made heaven and earth" etc. Saturday links us to God as our Creator; Sunday links its followers to paganism. The people who accept this institution of Rome, will ultimately receive the judgements foretold by this third angel.

# Chapter 17

## The Seven Last Plagues

There are two chapters of Revelation devoted to the Seven Last Plagues and they are numbers 15-16. Previous plagues (or judgements) have fallen but in these last seven the wrath of God is said to be complete (Rev. 15:1). They fall on those who have accepted the mark of the beast as set forth in chapters 13-14. Chapter 14 mentioned two groups living on earth when Jesus comes. Those who accepted the mark of the beast and received the "wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture [of mercy] into the cup of His indignation" (Rev. 14:10) and those who kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12). These appear to be the 144,000 who sing a new song (14:3) which Rev. 15:3 titles the song of Moses and the Lamb. Rev. 15:2 identifies these singers as the ones "who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name."

### Rev. 11 and 15 Linked:

Both Rev. 14 and 15 open in a similar fashion with the righteous before God singing a special song. Then chapter 15 makes a reference to, "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened" (v. 5). Chapter 11 closed in a similar fashion saying, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament...." (v. 19). In a way these two verses link this section of Revelation together as a whole so that it makes sense. The key to it is in the judgement Rev. 14 said had come and the judgement in the heavenly sanctuary which we studied in Daniel.

Dan. 7 spoke of a judgement scene in which the Ancient of Days did sit (7:9-10). The books of record were opened and a session of the court began. The case being pursued through this court concerns who shall have the dominion of this world (Dan. 7:22, 26-27). Originally the dominion of this planet had been given to Adam (Gen. 1:26-28). When Adam sinned this dominion passed to Lucifer and through deception he became the prince of this world (John 12:31). Lucifer in turn gave the beast (little-horn) "his power, his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2, 4). Now in a celestial courtroom this transition of world dominion is reversed and passed back to Jesus (Dan. 7:14) and His saints. Now unless we understand this overall picture our study of Revelation becomes fragmented for the individual pieces are not placed together so that we can see what God is accomplishing.

In the judgement of Dan. 7 the dominion the saints receive is recorded in Rev. 21-22. Here John paints the picture of the place where God's people find their true home. When the court sits to "take away his [the beast's] dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end [or forever]" (Dan. 7:26) we are reading what John tells us in Rev. 19:20 and chapter 20. However there is no record of what the judgement is about in Dan. 7; for that we have to go to Revelation. These two books of Scripture complement each other and need to be studied together.

Rev. 11 and 15 stand at opposite ends of a record of what took place in Daniel's judgement passage when the books were opened. In chapter 11:19 the temple in heaven opens and people file into the courtroom to both witness and participate in the proceedings. The case opens in chapter 12 with the controversy between Christ and Satan being set forth using the symbols of a dragon and a woman clothed with the sun. The court is told how Satan fought with Christ in heaven and later, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the dragon, in the person of the beast (pagan Rome) to whom he gave his power, was attempting to take the life of God's Son. The court is then told how the Christian church, who is the seed of the woman, was for 1260 years persecuted by the dragon (this time in the form of papal Rome) and had to be rescued by God preparing a place for her in the wilderness (v. 6, 13-15). The chapter

closes with the dragon making war with the remnant of the woman's seed; who incidentally are keeping God's law.

This statement about keeping the law is significant for it reveals what chapter 13 is about. The first beast mentioned is identified as a composite of all the beasts mentioned in Dan. 7 and v. 5-7 uses language very similar to Dan. 7:25; in fact, both verses present this beast as prospering for the same length of time (1260 years). Notice how Dan. 7:25 says he will "think to change times and laws" and Rev. 12:17 declared the remnant Church was keeping God's law. Into this conflict over the law enters a new contestant identified as a lamb-like beast (Rev. 13:11). This beast, understood to be the USA, acts as a law enforcement agency (Rev. 13:15-17); not enforcing God's law but the wishes of the first beast (papal Rome) who has changed the law of God.

The real focus of Rev. 14 is the messages given by three angels. What the court is told is God would give a warning to the world about worshipping the beast that states: human beings are not to worship the beast but their Creator; that the beast (Babylon, papal Rome) was a fallen entity who was to receive God's wrath; and finally, people participating in the worship of the beast will receive the punishments that are to fall upon the beast.

Having presented this information the temple is seen as opening for the second time, not to let people come in but, to release seven angels who are to carry out the threat of God given in the warning of the third angel (Rev. 14:9-10). Thus the cycle of justice is completed between the temple opening in chapter 11 and again in chapter 15; the first to commence that judgement and the second to begin executing the verdict. It should be noted that the final execution of the verdict of this court isn't executed until Rev. 20.

## The First Plague:

**Rev. 16:2** "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image."

The Greek word for sore is <G1668> "helkos" and refers to an ulcer; in the Septuagint (a Greek translation of the OT) the word is used to describe the boils experienced by the Egyptians (Ex. 9:9-10) as well as the sores that came upon Job (Job 2:7). They are very painful. This wound marks the beginning of the woe of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 10:7; 11:15). In lesson 13 we saw that this takes place after the close of probation when every person's case has been decided by the judgement.

What these wounds indicate is the recipient has failed to heed the warning against worshipping the beast (Rev. 14:9) or the call to come out of Babylon (Rev. 18:1-4) and as a result they are partaking of the wrath of God.

## The Second Plague:

**Rev. 16:3** "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul died in the sea."

In Bible times the sea was used as a highway for international commerce and travel. It should be noted that when the plagues begin to fall on Babylon (Rev. 18:8) both the kings of the earth and its merchants express great distress at her fall because they can no longer trade their merchandise (Rev. 18:9-16). Notice how John refers to ships and trading (v. 17-19). The reference to the state of the sea paints a rather revolting picture; for something that possesses such natural beauty as the sea to become as blood, and the coagulated blood of a dead man at that, is very repulsive. Whatever the actual composition the water takes on at this stage isn't

quite clear, whether actual blood or the consistency, colour and odour of blood; but what is clear is this fluid is toxic. All sea-life perishes. Should many of these creatures rise to the surface then the world would be surrounded with a huge foul-smelling mass of decaying marine life making for a very unpleasant environment.

### The Third Plague:

**Rev. 16:4-7** “And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. <sup>7</sup>And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.”

Here the second plague is extended to contaminate both the rivers and the fountains or springs. It should be remembered that, at the time John was writing, these were the sources from which people obtained water for drinking, cooking, washing and irrigating their crops.

Now while the second plague on the sea would bring its measure of distress through the cessation of trade and travel, this one is of a far more serious nature. Human existence is threatened through the loss of all water supplies. Such is the suffering of man and beast brought about by the putrefaction of the drinking water that a statement vindicating God's justice in allowing such a terrible thing to happen is made by the angel who is given jurisdiction over the water; this testimony is repeated by another angel beside the altar in heaven. That two angels give this testimony give us an indication of the magnitude of the suffering this plague will bring. The cause for the plague is given in (v. 6).

### The Fourth Plague:

**Rev. 16:8-9** “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. <sup>9</sup>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.”

As the plagues fall each new calamity adds to the discomfort brought about by the previous ones. The discomfort of the sores has been made worse by not being able to acquire items of trade - medical supplies and perhaps certain foods; this possible loss of commodities is intensified through the disappearance of drinking and washing water so people can no longer bathe their wounds; now, under the fourth plague, the sun begins to intensify in heat so that a loss of body fluid is experienced due to sweating intensifying their thirst. The intense heat felt during this plague causes its recipients to blaspheme the name of God rather than to turn to Him pleading for mercy.

### The Fifth Plague:

**Rev. 16:10-11** “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, <sup>11</sup>And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”

An important fact seems to emerge with the outpouring of this plague and that is these judgements do not seem to destroy their victims for recipients of the first plague containing the sores can be found here gnawing their tongues for pain. This has led some to the conclusion that these plagues may not all be universal.

The darkness mentioned here falls on the kingdom of the beast which prophecy indicates is papal Rome. Previously, in the OT., God enshrouded Pharaoh's land with darkness as one of the judgments that fell upon Egypt for the treatment they gave to the Hebrews. (Ex. 10:21-29). By this plague God shows His displeasure at that false system of religion that has led the world to accept both the image and the mark of the beast.

# Chapter 18

## Armageddon

The sixth and seventh plague are the last two judgements to fall upon the earth before Jesus comes the second time to bring the kingdoms of this world to a close. The struggle between Christ and Satan for the control of the minds of human beings has been in progress for over 6,000 years and at the battle of Armageddon the final contest will be decided. Here is a preview of what this battle may be like.

### The Sixth Plague:

**Rev. 16:12** “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”

There is a tendency to leap in with all kinds of interpretations for this section of Revelation, some giving it a literal application with real armies and others preferring a spiritual version between the saints and the forces of evil. However, before we look at any interpretation whatsoever we should examine these verses in detail.

**Euphrates River:** Anciently this river ran through the city of Babylon. Now in the historical section of the book of Daniel we are given an interesting account about the dealings of this ancient city with the people of God. We are told that during the reign of Jehoiakim God gave His people into the hand of this heathen king (Dan. 1:1-2). And that one of the Hebrew captives, after whom the book is named, gave to this heathen monarch an outline of history from his day to the end of the world (Dan. 2:1-49). This revelation displeased the king of Babylon and he set about to try and influence the outcome of history creating a statue of pure gold in place of the composite one revealed to him by Daniel. He then set up this image he had made and required all those under his control to worship it on pain of death (Dan. 3:1-30). In the next chapter of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar receives a judgement from God and loses his kingdom for seven years (Dan. 4:1-37).

After this chequered history Babylon comes to its end. Its last king, Belshazzar, hosts an impious feast in which he honours the gods of his kingdom and shows great disrespect to the Hebrew God Jehovah. It is at this point in the proceedings that a hand appears and writes on the wall that the kingdom of Babylon has been taken and given to the Medes and the Persians (Dan. 5:1-31).

What is of interest to us in this scenario is when the Medes and the Persians attacked the city of Babylon their method of getting into the city was via the river Euphrates; the river being diverted by the soldiers, dried up and allowed the troops to march under the cities fortifications. The second point of interest is, if you look at a map of Babylon and its surrounding countries, you will find that the kings of Media and Persia who overthrew ancient Babylon came from the east. So in a very real sense this verse has its counterpart in ancient history.

**Modern Babylon & the Euphrates:** It seems highly unlikely the literal river of the Euphrates is being referred to here for by the time of the sixth plague the rivers of waters have been turned to blood. Also, this plague is in the context of armies going into battle. The river Euphrates would be no challenge for a modern day battle group and if it was, why isn't the Tigris river, whose source is only about 15 miles from the source of the Euphrates, and lies to its east also mentioned as a problem?



It would appear at this stage in world history that the Euphrates river is linked with spiritual Babylon which John sees sitting on many waters (Rev. 17:1, 5). These waters, he tells us, are "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues" (Rev. 17:15). What is referred to here is the huge number of people from all countries and languages who give spiritual Babylon (the Papacy) their support; drying up the river refers to the withdrawal of the support which has kept the Roman church in power.

**Kings of the East:** To identify these kings it is necessary to locate the east; that is, east of where? If this river had been the literal Euphrates we would have expected the kings of the east to have come from countries east of Babylon. But as spiritual Babylon is being referred to here and the waters (peoples) she sits upon seem to encompass the world, where is the east?

The Greek text may help us here. Literally the verse reads, "the kings from the rising of the sun." John understands the difference between this and the east for in Rev. 21:13 he writes "on the east" as "apo anatolê" whereas here in v. 12 he adds "hêlios" [sun]. In the NT, the word "anatolê" means "the place of rising, the east, .... metaphorically the dawn." Bagster, 26. It is used of the east in Matt. 2:1, 2, 9; 8:11, 24:27; and Luke 13:29 as well as Rev. 21:13 mentioned above. Only here and in Rev. 7:2 is it written with the addition of "hêlios." In Rev. 7:2 it refers to an angel coming down from heaven "having the seal of the living God." Anything approaching earth from heaven, due to the earth's rotation, would be seen as approaching from the east. (eg. the sun rises in the east due to our rotation).

Therefore, what is being referred to here is a loss of support for papal Rome just prior to the return of Christ who appears to approach our earth from the east (Matt. 24:27).

**Rev. 16:13-14** "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.  
<sup>14</sup>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."

In contrast to the "kings of the east" we have in these verses the kings of the whole world who are united by the miracles performed through devils to assemble for battle against God. These demons are said to come out of the mouth of "the dragon" [Satan, Rev. 12:9, perhaps in the form of Spiritualism]; "the beast" [previously identified as papal Rome]; and the "false prophet" [apostate Protestantism].

What is possibly referred to here is Spiritualism, papal Rome, and apostate Protestantism will speak words that produce miracles (see Rev. 13:13-14; 19:20) in an effort to attest their claims to be representing the true God. These miracles will convince world leaders to muster their armies to fight against Jesus when He comes as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16, 19).

Notice how John places the warning to watch for the second coming of Christ after these two verses (see Rev. 16:15). It is as though this experience of the kings of the earth with the demons is a sign that the return of Christ is eminent.

**Rev. 16:16** "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

As far as we know today the name Armageddon isn't applied to any geographical location and this has brought about a number of conjectures as to what John is getting at here. The fact that he has used the expression "in the Hebrew tongue" to a group of readers who, by the time he was writing this book, were principally Greeks has led some to the conclusion the apostle wanted the name Armageddon to be viewed in the light of Hebrew history so that it may be understood as a cryptic name rather than a literal location. In fact the Greek word

"topos" translated "place" here can also be used figuratively of "condition or opportunity" (see Acts 25:16 where "license" is "topos" and Heb. 12:17 where "place" refers to "opportunity"). From this possibility a group of interpretators have developed the idea Armageddon refers to the frame of mind these "kings of the earth" are gathered to by the events they have just experienced.

Phonetically we have a number of options for John's Greek transliteration of this Hebrew term. Using the numbers quoted in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance: Armageddon [Harmagedôn is the spelling in the majority of Greek editions available] the word may be a transliteration of: <H2022:Har> "mountain," <H5892:‘âr> "city," <H4023:Megiddôn> "the ancient city of Megiddo," or, and this doesn't produce a proper transliteration, the word <H4150:Môw‘êd> "congregation." So we have: Mount Megiddo, City of Megiddo, Mount of the Congregation and a condition of mind all as possible contenders. Or something else we aren't aware of at this time in history.

**Armageddon:** An important question to consider in deciding the appropriate meaning of Armageddon in this context would be, What significance could a physical place in Palestine have in the world at a time when it has been devastated by five of the seven last plagues? The only possible answer would be, if Armageddon is a physical battle, it has to be fought somewhere. And, in that case, what do we know about the region where the last great conflict on earth will be fought?

According to Revelation Satan gathers the armies of this world to a place called Armageddon as our verse states; nothing more is said about an actual engagement in this section on the plagues. Neither is there any information in chapters 17-18. However, chapter 17 does speak of ten kings, "who have received no kingdom as yet (v. 12) as making war with the Lamb who v. 14 identifies as the "Lord of lords and King of kings." In chapter 19 the "Lord of lords and King of kings" (v. 16) is seen as leaving heaven to make war (v. 11) with the kings of the earth and their armies (v. 19). The result of the conflict is the beast and the false prophet are captured and cast into the lake of fire (v. 20). This casting into the lake of fire is described in Revelation chapter 20. (see v. 10 of that chapter).

Now the actual sequence of events appears to be: after the fifth plague when men blaspheme God because of their afflictions, the forces of evil (the beast, false prophet and dragon) put on such a display of signs and miracles that the kings of the whole world gather to fight "the battle of that great day of God" (16:14). This is the battle referred to in chapter 19 where Jesus leads out the armies of heaven to fight against Satan and the kings of the earth. Now all the wicked are destroyed at the time of Christ's second coming (2 Thess. 1:7-8; 2:8) and are raised again after a period of 1000 years (Rev. 20:5). Therefore the only conflict between the kings of the earth and Christ up until this point of time has been a brief period prior to their destruction (Rev. 6:14-17). At the conclusion of the 1000-year period the wicked dead are raised (Rev. 20:5) and Satan goes out to gather them together for war (Rev. 20:7-8). The verse says they are in "the four corners of the earth" which could indicate they were not gathered into one locality under the sixth plague. However, here in chapter 20 they are gathered into one place -around the holy city (Rev. 20:9-10) - where they are finally destroyed by fire from God.

While we can be sure of the overall picture of how Armageddon will develop and end, it isn't quite clear at this point in time if the gathering under the sixth plague is to a locality as in Mount Megiddo for example or a state of mind as in a world wide eagerness for war.

### **The Seventh Plague:**

**Rev. 16:17-19** "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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>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.”

The opening statement under this plague constitutes an official proclamation from the Sovereign of the universe that the judgement of Dan. 7:9-14, 26-27 is now completed and the religio-political power designated as the little-horn or the beast is now completely unmasked.

This announcement is followed by a series of voices, thunders, lightnings and on earth a great earthquake (see Rev. 6:14-16 for a description of earth's final turmoil) which destroys a number of cities. However, not only is there a literal earthquake, but the city of the beast Babylon the great is also shaken and divided into three parts.

**Babylon:** is a name Scripture applies to the papacy. At the end of this world's history, after the "three unclean spirits like frogs" (Rev. 16:13) formed a coalition between the papacy, apostate Protestantism and spiritism, their union begins to unravel back into three parts. This marks the end of papal power in the last days; Dan. 11:45 says of the Roman power, ".... he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." After which chapter 12:1 says "At that time Michael shall stand up...." The expression "standing up" in chapter eleven of Daniel is used of a number of world rulers to indicate their rise to power. In chapter 12:1 it indicates the rise of the Son of Man to the throne of the world; In other words Christ returns to claim the kingdom of this world and make it His.

**Rev. 16:20-21** “And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. <sup>21</sup>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.”

The plagues do nothing to bring about repentance on the part of evil people. This is the third time during the period these plagues have been falling that men curse God. What we see here is an utter contempt for the Creator even in the midst of the most grievous judgements falling on them from heaven showing a total rejection of the first angel's message to worship the creator. It is because of this hardness toward God and His law that these plagues have come upon the world. In Rev. 19:1-6 God is praised in heaven for judging spiritual Babylon and avenging the blood of His persecuted saints on her.

**Chronology Note:** The chapters in Revelation do not follow a chronological order but present a number of aspects of what is happening in heaven and at the conclusion of each presentation John often returns to a chosen point in history to present another phase of his subject. He does this here in chapter 16; after presenting the plagues, which are judgements for the mark of the beast imposed upon the world by the beast, he returns in chapter 17 to the "judgement of the great harlot (papal beast)" which is an event taking place before the seven last plagues fall in chapter 16 as it refers to the judgement mentioned in Dan. 7. In this study of Revelation we will continue following the chronological line and return to chapters 17-18 later.

### **The Return of Jesus:**

At the time of the seventh plague Jesus returns to the earth. According to the judgement description of Dan. 7 He has already received His kingdom (14, 26-27). The court sitting in this scene described by Daniel takes away the kingdoms of this world from the beast and gives them to the Son of Man. It is this action on the part of the court that Scripture describes as the King receiving His bride.

John calls the New Jerusalem the Lamb's bride or wife (Rev. 21:2, 9) and it is the reception of this dominion in heaven by the Lamb that Scripture refers to as a marriage. The saints are

guests at the marriage supper which takes place after the Lamb has received His bride (Rev. 19:7-9). It should be noted in chapter 19:6 that, before Jesus comes, it has already been acknowledged that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" and when He leaves heaven on His way to collect His saints His garments carry the title of "King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16).

The battle of Armageddon commences at the return of Jesus with the armies of heaven (Rev. 19:19) and ceases with the destruction of the wicked by the One sitting on the horse (19:19-21). Scripture describes the events of this time as follows:

**Matt. 24:26-27** [The Second Coming will not be secretive] "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. <sup>27</sup>For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

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

This event will be witnessed by every living soul on the earth whether they are wicked or righteous (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 6:14-17) even though it may come upon some suddenly and unexpectedly as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:1-6).

**Acts 1:9-11** [Jesus will appear in a physical, not a spirit form] "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; <sup>11</sup>Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

The event will also be highly visual from the fact that all the angels of heaven of which there are "thousand thousands ... and ten thousand times ten thousand" in the judgement alone (Dan. 7:10) are with Him (Matt. 25:31-32; Rev. 19:11-14).

### At the return of Jesus several things happen:

**Dan. 12:2** "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."

There is a special resurrection just prior to the return of Jesus in which a number of wicked people who have died are brought back to life to witness His return to earth (Rev. 1:7; Matt. 23:39).

**1 Thess. 4:16-17** "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: <sup>17</sup>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."

The resurrection of all the righteous takes place when Jesus returns and they are gathered together by the angels (Matt. 24:31) to meet Jesus "in the air" not on the ground. The reason for this is the righteous are about to be transported to heaven in line with the promise made to them by Christ just before He was arrested in the garden of Getheseme (John 14:1-3).

# Chapter 19

## The Millennium

The word "millennium" isn't used in the Scriptures but Bible students apply it to the 1000-year period that comes after the return of Christ. The earth at this time is in a state of chaos. The wicked are dead, slain at the return of Christ, and the righteous spend these years in heaven engaged in the closing work of the heavenly sanctuary.

Scripture refers to three distinct resurrections at the end of time; one partial and two others comprising all the righteous and all the wicked. The resurrection of all the righteous and all the wicked are 1000 years apart and are the events that mark the beginning and end of the millennium.

### The Partial Resurrection:

**Dan. 12:2** “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”.

This is a partial resurrection of both the wicked and the righteous. The verse says "many" not all who sleep in the dust would be raised.

The reason for this partial resurrection is to fulfil Jesus words to the Jews that some of them present who didn't believe would see Him come with the angels of heaven (Matt. 26:64; Rev. 1:7).

**Death and Resurrections:** The Bible speaks of two deaths. The first death is the one people experience when they lose their life through: old age, sickness, accident or malicious event. People tend to see this as the end of life and refer to it as death (Eccl. 9:5-6, 1 Cor. 15:22; Heb. 9:27). But Jesus calls it a sleep (John 11:4, 11-14) from which people are awakened at the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:12-23). Thus the death experienced by humans from that of the first individual to die (Abel) to the last sinner or saint are not permanent but temporary. Two resurrections, separated by 1000 years, will see those who have departed live again; some to die a second death and others to inherit eternal life. There is no resurrection from this second death (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10, 13-15). Therefore the first and second resurrections are from the first death.

### The First Resurrection:

**1 Thess. 4:16-17** “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: <sup>17</sup>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.”

The very first thing that takes place at the return of Christ is the saints who have died through all ages past are raised; the next thing that takes place is the living saints at the time when Jesus comes are caught up together with the resurrected dead to meet Jesus in the air. There are no saints left alive on earth after Jesus comes this time; all are taken with Him to heaven (John 14:1-3).

**2 Thess. 2:8** “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”

At the same time as the second coming takes place the wicked are destroyed (2 Thess. 1:7-8) leaving no human beings alive on the earth. It is because there are no humans alive on the planet that Scripture says Satan is bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3); this is the period of time the saints are in heaven (Rev. 20:4-6).

### During the Thousand Years:

**Rev. 19:7-9** “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. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>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.”

**Lamb's Marriage:** Jesus foretold this experience (Matt. 26:29) when He would share a wedding feast with His followers in His kingdom. We have seen in Daniel chapter seven that Jesus does not receive His kingdom until the investigative judgement is completed. At the close of the court's investigations, Jesus receives His kingdom and comes to earth to collect His subjects. Upon His return to heaven with the saints this is the first celebration that takes place. However, the saints are in heaven for 1000 years (Rev. 20:4-6), What are they doing for this period of time?

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

Scripture tells us Jesus Christ will make the saints kings and priests (Rev. 1:5-6); this reference gives a little more detail on what John already said. For the 1000 years we sit on thrones as kings in judgement. Now, What are we judging?

**1 Cor. 6:2-3** “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? <sup>3</sup>Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”

**Justice:** Humans sometimes underestimate the importance of justice to God. The Creator of the universe is well aware that any injustice in His dominions could cause sin to begin all over again and so He conducts two open investigations into all His handling of the eternal destinies of human beings and angels. In the first investigation, recorded in Daniel chapter seven, human beings were not present personally but the records of the lives of all those who were seeking admission into heaven were present for examination (Dan. 7:9-10). Names are excepted and names rejected. This is how the angels know who to gather to meet the Lord in the air and who to leave for destruction at the second coming. Now, prior to their destruction by fire from God, a second judgement takes place in which the saints participate.

**Rev. 20:11-13** “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. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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.”

In this judgement the question isn't about the character of the defendants and whether they can enter heaven, but about the punishment they must endure for their evil deeds. This is the reason for the books of record. God will bring into judgement all our deeds, whether hidden or open (Eccl. 12:13-14) and His standard will be His commandments (Eccl. 12:13; Rev. 12:17; 14:12). Failure to obey the Lord results in a person's name being removed from the book of life and the penalty for this is the second death in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). It is in this judgement that all the injustices done on earth are righted. That the wicked are not alive and present for this court hearing is evident from the fact that they do not live again until the 1000 years are finished (Rev. 20:5).

## **The Second Resurrection:**

**Rev. 20:7** “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.”

The thing that loosens Satan out of his prison is people return to this planet. At this third return of Christ the wicked are raised and they are organised by Satan for battle (Rev. 20:5, 8). It is at this time the Holy City, the New Jerusalem descends from heaven (Rev. 21:1-3) and it is surrounded by the wicked (Rev. 20:9) who are intent on taking it for themselves.

It is at this point in time that fire descends from God out of heaven and destroys them (Rev. 20:9-10). In this final fire the wicked are punished for all the injustices and evil they have done; eventually they are destroyed, this is the second death (Rev. 20:14; 21:8).

From this point of time on the saints live in the earth which having been destroyed is renewed (2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1) with God forever (Rev. 21:3-7) and is described in Rev. 21-22. However, the apostle Paul warns us that, "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him (1 Cor. 2:9); use our imaginations as we might, we will never be able to capture the grandeur and beauty of the sight until our eyes shall behold heaven for themselves.

# Chapter 20

## The Great Judgment

We will conclude these study notes on Revelation with a chapter discussing the judgment passed in the courts of heaven on the great whore, called Babylon in verse 5.

### The Whore:


**Rev. 17:1** “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”.


In Revelation 17 the Greek word translated “judgment” comes from the word "krima" which means, "the decision arrived at, the sentence pronounced," in this case by the heavenly court.

What we need to keep in mind is, this scene of judgment in heaven is a further description of a judgment already mentioned in the book of Daniel and that Revelation 17 is just adding further details to what we have already been told..

Here John gives us further information regarding Babylon's crimes and why she is sentenced to destruction.


Our opening verse says the judgment is on a “whore sitting upon many waters:”-


 **A Whore**, or harlot as some translate this verse, is used here to show this woman represents an apostate religious group. In Rev. 12:1 a pure woman was used to depict the church of God. This woman is a whore indicating a corrupt church; see Jer.3:1-8, 20; Eze. 16:26-27; Hosea 2:2-5 for examples of a fallen church being likened to a harlot.

 **The Waters**, upon which she is sitting, refers to peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues (Rev. 17:15). So this woman represents a corrupt religio/political power that is ruling over the kings of the whole world. (Rev. 17:18).

**Her Crime:** for which she is being judged. John refers to as fornication.

**Rev. 17:2,4** "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:"

 It would appear that the kings of the earth don't mind the rule of the whore for they commit fornication with her even enforcing her doctrines and decrees.


 **Fornication** is a most unusual crime to charge a church with until you realise God refers to Himself as the Husband of the church. “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as a chaste virgin* to Christ.”.

Israel is told that chasing after other gods is adultery, Moses writes, “Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make





thy sons go a whoring after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.”


A similar thought appears in Jer. 3:6. This clearly forbids the worship of images and relics or having anything to do with pagan occult worship.

 **The Golden Cup** in the hand of the whore is full of the “abominations and filthiness of her fornication.” Apparently the Roman church is the only one in the world that uses a woman holding a cup on all their documentation. This woman is called Fides.

There is an interesting quote in a book about the rites of free-masonry, written by Albert Mackay regarding Fides. “The right hand has in all ages been deemed an emblem of fedelity and our ancient brethren worshipped DEITY UNDER THE NAME OF FIDES or fidelity, which was sometimes represented by two right hands joined, AND SOMETIMES BY TWO HUMAN FIGURES, HOLDING EACH OTHER BY THE RIGHT HANDS.”


 The lady with the cup in her hand represents the worship of Baal. In the temple of Bel there is a picture of a woman beside a tree with a cup in her hand. It is interesting to note that God referred to Babylon at one time as a cup. He said, “Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD’S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.”

 **Wine** is said to fill this golden cup. There is an interesting incident regarding wine in the book of Daniel.

 **History Sketch:** Bible students will be aware of the scene describing the fall of the last king of Babylon. Here is how Daniel records it: “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. [He then ordered his servants] to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. [While they were drinking out of these vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God in Jerusalem, they] praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. [The sight of this hand brought great fear to the king so that] the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.”

[Now Daniel was called into the banqueting chamber to interpret this writing which he said meant] MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”

One of the things Bible history teaches us is God hates his worship or church being connected in any way to heathernism and false gods.

 Spiritually wine represents church doctrines. Jesus said, of the wine, “... this cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” He also gave us the reason His blood was shed for us when He said after, “... he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

The term “new testament” really means “new covenant.” Now the basis of the new covenant Paul says is, “For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:”

The basis of the covenant Jesus said would be His shed blood for the forgiveness of sins and


the ten commandments as written in the heart. Now in Dan 7:25 we are told that Rome would seek to change all of this and it would form a part of her strange wine. Examples of her strange wine are as follows:-

#### Some non Biblical doctrines taught by the RC church

(1) a priesthood with exceptional powers and privileges, (2) immaculate conception of Virgin Mary, (3) denies God in Christ dwelt in the same flesh as fallen man has; (4) claims universal spiritual jurisdiction and demands submission under pains and penalties; (5) repudiates the truth of justification by faith and boasts of works; (6) the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of faith and practice; (7) the vicarious, expiatory and propitiatory atonement of Christ; (8) purgatory; (9) indulgences; (10) consciousness in death; (11) eternal torment etc.

### **The Whore's Name - Babylon:**


**Rev. 17:5** "And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. "

 **Babylon:** This symbol has already been covered in the section dealing with the second angel's message Rev. 14:8 where we saw the name is linked to papal Rome. However, it should be noted that although the Roman church is identified as "Babylon the great" there are still Christian people worshipping in her. We know this, for in a later chapter (Rev. 18:4) God makes a call to His people in Babylon, saying, "Come out of her My people."

Another thing concerning Babylon we should take a note of here is the description of her as a "mother of harlots." This indicates she has procreated other churches similar to herself. The call God gives to come out of Babylon is also extended to them. These daughters of Babylon can easily be identified when we come to that time in history that prophecy is referring to here as John has already given us the necessary information in Rev. 13:13-17 when he spoke about a great future coalition between two beasts.

**The Heads & Horns:** This whore is said to be sitting on a beast that has seven heads and ten horns.


**Rev. 17:3** "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."


 Here we have a clue as to the meaning of this chapter. In the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel we have already seen a sequence of prophecy involving beasts with heads and horns. There the symbolism applied to the five world kingdoms of Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome and finally Papal Rome. The chapter climaxed with a judgment scene. Here in Revelation 17 John adds further details regarding what Daniel said. Lets look at the details.

#### **The Seven Heads**

Here are the verses having information about the heads:-

**Rev. 17:7,9-10** "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" --- "And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 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."

 **The Mystery of the Woman and the beast is not something that we have to guess about for the angel talking to John has promised to reveal all of this to us.**

 The heads, we are told, are seven mountains. In scripture mountains refer to kingdoms. It is interesting to note that if we add the heads of the beasts in Daniel 7 they total seven (the lion = 1; the bear = 1; the leopard = 4 and the beast = 1; total = 7). In Revelation 13:2 we have already seen how the beast of Revelation has all the characteristics of all the beasts in Daniel. (See note at Rev.13:2). With this in mind we can interpret the phrase, “five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come” as being:-

**“Five are fallen”:** These are the kingdoms of Daniel 7 that have fallen; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome, and the Papacy (from 538 ad to the time of its deadly wound in 1798).


**“one is:”** still standing, which would be the wounded papacy that received a partial healing when Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty with the pope.


**The other is not yet come:** would then refer to the alliance of Revelation 13 where the USA makes an image to the Beast and gives the Papacy again world dominion. This could possibly come under the New World Order.

### The Beast

The angel continues his explanation to John saying of the beast that:-

**Rev. 17:8,11** "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." – “And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.”

 **The Beast referred here is the one John saw as being ridden by a woman in Rev. 17:3. Their relationship indicates that the woman, being the rider, is in control of the beast; and in this context it pictures an alliance between the church and the state in which the church has the reigns of power and the state is doing her bidding.**

 It is interesting to observe that the beast described here as the beast “that was, and is not, and yet is,” has a similar depiction to the seven heads mentioned earlier. If this beast indicated the political power of the papacy then this phrase used by John would be as follows:-

**“that was:”** the Papacy during its period of 1260 years supremacy (538-1798 AD).


**“and is not:”** The loss of Papal power; first in 1798 AD when Napoleon’s French General, Berthier took Pope Pius prisoner; and again in 1870 AD when the Papal states were seized reducing the power of Rome to the Vatican city.

**“and yet is:”** goes from 1929 AD when the Papal wound was healed when Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty with the Pope restoring some of its lost political power to the end of time when Jesus comes.

### Ten Horns


Lastly we will take a look at the information John gives us on the ten horns. We have already seen in Rev. 17:3 that this beast had ten horns. Who are they? There is no need to speculate for the angel has already told us:

**Rev. 17:12** "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.


 **The 10 Horns** are identified as being ten kings who have no kingdom as yet. That is, their dominion is still future. When the beast gets his control of the world these kings will rule for one hour (on the basis of a prophetic period, that is for 15 days). That these kings will give their power to the beast is certain for the next verse says: "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

The question which comes to mind next is, What will this union of church and state do?


**Rev. 17:14** " These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful."

 **The Union:** Of church and state will persecute the followers of Jesus; this will be the time already referred to in Rev 12:17. But the church of Jesus and not the evil union of church & state are the victors in this battle. What happens next is a breaking up of the union.

**Rev. 17:16-17** " And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

 It would appear that in the war with the saints the ten kings discover that they have been deceived by the false church into believing God was on their side. When they discover the deception they turn on the false church and destroy her.

Now while many of the details regarding how these events will work out in the future are yet to be revealed. The Appendix has some further information on coming alliances in the world. See "A New World Order", Appendix 2.

 **Still More Information:** on how Rome is taking control of the world and the impact that is having on world religions can be found in Professor Walter J. Veith's DVD series called, "Total Onslaught"; copyright 2004, that has been put out by Amazing Discoveries:-  
address: [www.amazingdiscoveries.org](http://www.amazingdiscoveries.org).

# Appendix 1

## The Bible & Ancient Manuscripts

Up until around 1930 Bible editions were relatively few with the KJV being the most popular in the English speaking Protestant world. Today we have Bible versions in abundance with new editions springing up regularly so that it becomes a question of some importance as to which version of the Bible to use for our personal study of God's word; especially when there are so many differences appearing among them in vital or key verses.

The first thing we need to become aware of is, not all the Bible versions we use come from the same ancient manuscripts. So let us begin our investigation into which Bible is best for an accurate study of God's word by looking at its source documents – the ancient manuscripts. Here we find that ALL the original manuscripts of the Bible, for both the Old and New Testaments, have been lost; there are NO original documents in existence. This means that when an edition of the Bible appears with the notation that it was produced using the “best” manuscripts, we ought to question what the word best actually means. With all original documents gone, it is very difficult to see how anyone can claim their version is founded on manuscripts which are best. We also should be wary of falling for the deception that oldest – most ancient – also means best; it may not be, especially if the copies those “ancient” discovered manuscripts came from were faulty or corrupted.

There are three groups of manuscripts used in producing Bible editions and they are: The Palestinian stream; The Western (Roman) family and the Alexandrian family. All the original manuscripts in each of these groups have been lost, they are copies of copies. Here is the list and the Bibles that come from them:-

### 1<sup>st</sup> Stream - PALESTINE

Lost manuscripts of the Traditional Text (Almost identical with originals in text)

Gothic Version 4<sup>th</sup> Cent; Peshitta Syrian 2<sup>nd</sup> Cent; Codex W (Matthew) 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> Cent; Codex 4 (Gospels) 5<sup>th</sup> Cent; The vast majority of Extant NT manuscripts.

Bible produced from this stream.

**The King James Version 1611**

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Stream.- ROME

Ancestor of Western Family (lost)

Old Latin version 2<sup>nd</sup> Cent; Latin Vulgate 4<sup>th</sup> Cent, Codex D 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Cent; Codex D2 6<sup>th</sup> Cent; Codex E2 7<sup>th</sup> Cent.

Bible produced from this stream:

**The Douay Version 1582**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Stream:- ALEXANDRIA

Ancestor of Alexandrian Family (Lost); These texts are an abbreviation of an original text:

Papyrus 75, C200AD; Papyrus 66, C200AD - Mixed text; Codex B, 4<sup>th</sup> Cent; Codex Aleph, 4<sup>th</sup> Cent.

Bibles produced from this stream:

.....**Revised Version 1881**  
**American Standard 1901**  
**RSV 1946**  
**New English Bible 1961**

Now before we comment on these three streams of manuscripts it would be helpful for us to take a look at what took place in 331AD when ...

### **Constantine ordered an 'Ecumenical Bible'.**

In 331AD Constantine ordered an 'ecumenical bible' be written. Eusebius, a follower of Origen, was assigned to direct this task. Eusebius rejected the deity of Christ and claimed that Christ was a created being (Arian heresy).

As Eusebius was a follower of Origen, it would be helpful in understanding the Bible he produced, to study a little of Origen's teachings ...

 **Origen** taught that Jesus was a created being who did not have eternal existence as God.

(i) - Origen, being a textual critic, is supposed to have corrected numerous portions of the sacred manuscripts .... Changed them to agree with his own human philosophy of mystical and allegorical ideas ... certain manuscripts became corrupt. (ii)

(i) Encyclopedia Britannica Vol 16, 1936 p 900-902; (ii) Which Bible Can we Trust p16)

These teachings have influenced manuscripts streams two and three. Keeping this in mind lets have a quick look at the three streams:

### **STREAM 1 – TEXTUS RECEPTIUS:**

“The first stream which carried the Received Text in Hebrew & Greek, precious manuscripts were preserved by such as the church at Pella in Palestine where Christians fled when in 70AD the Romans destroyed Jerusalem.”

(David Otis Fuller DD)

Thus they came from the Christian area, Jerusalem, Syria, where the apostles preached)

Of these manuscripts the Encyclopedia Britannica says:-

“The Received text (textus receptus) is the old Byzantine text with hundreds of copies in agreement. It was written in Koine Greek of which hundreds of words cannot be translated to classical Greek. The early church used Koine Greek manuscripts and rejected the Alexandrian versions which were based on corrupt versions with Origen and other agnostic revisions.”

(Encyclopedia Britannica Vol 16, 1936 p 900-902)


### **STREAM 2 – ROMAN FAMILY**

#### **Vatican Manuscript.**

In 1481 AD the Vatican manuscript was discovered in the Vatican Library. The manuscript repeatedly casts aside the deity of Christ. It reflects the Arianism of Origen and is thought by

some to be one of the surviving manuscripts done by Eusebius at the command of Constantine. The date of writing coincides with the 'ecumenical bible' of Constantine.

However there is an important point raised by Les Garratt when he said:-

 "Who but those with Roman Catholic sympathies could ever be pleased with the notion that God preserved the true NT text in secret for almost one thousand could ever be pleased with the notion that God preserved the true N.T. text in secret for almost one thousand years and then finally handed it over to the Roman Pontiff for safe keeping?"  
Les Garratt 1982, Which Bible Can We Trust P. 91-92.

On the Roman Latin edition the Council of Trent said:-

### **Council of Trent**

"Whoever shall not receive as sacred a canonical all these books and every part of them, as they are contained in the Old Vulgate Latin edition or shall knowingly and deliberately despise the aforesaid traditions let him be accursed"

Council of Trent 4<sup>th</sup> session.

The last family of manuscripts is:-

### **STREAM 3 – ALEXANDRAIN FAMILY**

#### **Sinaitic Manuscript.**

In 1844 the Sinaitic manuscript was discovered at Mt Sinai in the Monastery of Sanit Catherine – agrees closely with Vatican MS; minimised deity of Christ, is Arian in nature.

It should also be noted that Westcott & Hort have produced a Greek text that has become popular.

#### **Westcott & Hort.**

In 1881 Westcott & Hort Greek text was introduced. This text departed from the Textus Receptus & follows the Vatican and Sinaitic corruptions.

So we can see that streams 2 and 3 tend to converge leaving only two families to decide between.

### **ROME ON SCRIPTURES:**

As streams 2 and 3 have conversed and also Westcott and Hort's Greek text follows these families we should note Rome's attitude to the scriptures:-

#### **Change to 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment**

"Sunday is our mark of authority. The church is above the Bible and this transference of sabbath observance is proof of that fact".

Catholic Record Sept 1, 1923.

"The Pope has the power to change times, to abrogate laws and to dispenses with all things, even the precepts of Christ."

Decretal De Translat Espiscop Cap.

**"Doctrine Catechism"** By Rev Stephen Keenan.

Q. "Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept".

A. "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 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the 7<sup>th</sup> day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.”

### **EXALTATION OF MARY:-**

This has lead the Bibles produced by streams 2 and 3 to advance Arianism; lowering Jesus from the position of God to the level of a mere man.

“The church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to christian worship...The church rightly honours the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honoured with the title “Mother of God” to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs.”  
Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, Catecism 971.

“This is the moment for all to take refuge in me, because I am the Ark of the New Covenant...I am inviting all my beloved children to enter the ark of the new covenant which I have built in my Immaculate Heart for you, that they may be assisted by me to carry the bloody burden of the great trial which precedes the coming of the day of the Lord. Do not look anywhere else.

July 30, 1986, Our Blessed Mother explained another of her roles through Father Gobb  
The Thunder of Justice.”

Statements on Mary by Catholic Saints:

“.. He falls and is lost who has not recourse to Mary. Mary is called the gate of heaven because no one can enter that blessed kingdom without passing through her. The way to salvation is open to none otherwise that through Mary... The salvation of all depends on their being favoured and protected by Mary. He who is protected by Mary will be saved: he who is not will be lost... Our salvation depend on thee... God will not save us without the intercession of Mary.”

Dave Hunt, a Woman Rides the Beast, p438.

All in all it would appear that the Textus Receptious which produced the KJV is the best one to use for doctrinal purposes.



## Appendix 2

### A New World Order

ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT embracing one world religion has become the desire of the majority of the worlds leaders.

Robert Muller, former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations said “we must move as quickly as possible to a one world government, a one world religion under a one world leader”

Dwight I. Kinman “the World’s Last Dictator, p81)

Such a plan will entail serious consequences for individual freedom.

The former director of the World Health Organisation Dr Brock Chisolm said: “to achieve world government it is necessary to remove from the minds of men their individualism, loyalty of family traditions, national patriotism and religious dogmas”. The Christian World Report, March 1991 Vol 3 No 3 p8; July 1989 Vol 1, No 5 p1.

The effect of such a move will undoubtedly distress many Bible loving christians when they find the truths they hold dear in the Word of God are denounced by the state. Such a situation has already been envisioned by the promoters of a global religion, and they say:-

Peace will be impossible without the taming of fundamentalism through a united religion that professes faithfulness only to the global spirituality and to the health of this planet. Robert Mullers article in a 1997 Defend Life Magazine entitled One World Church Expected in '97 as quoted in Kah En Route to Global Occupation, p221.

All present [at the Papal Conference] were in accord on two key points: (1) Pope John Paul II was endorsed by consensus as the planet’s chief spiritual guide and overseer and (2) religious fundamentalists who refuse to go along with the global ecumenical movement are to be silenced. They must be denounced as ‘dangerous extremists’ full of hate.

True Bible Believers denounced at Papal Conference, Power of Prophecy (March 2000, Vol, 2000-03, p3)

It is interesting to note that the:-

 **World to be reorganised into 10 divisions.**  
**Gary Kah En Route to Global Organisation**

On Sept 17, 1973 the Club of Rome published a special highly confidential report called the ‘Regionalized or Adaptive Model of the Gobal World System’ which was sent to the power elite to be implemented. This document reveals that the Club has divided the world into 10 political/economic regions which it referred to as “kingdoms” a designation that tracks eerily with the terminology used in the Book of Revelation chapter 13:1-2. In 1974 the authors of the report, Mihaljo Mesaroul & Edward Pestal published their findings in a book, ‘Mankind at the Turning Point’. However in this book, which is intended for public consumption, they have dropped the word ‘kingdom’.

En Route to Global Occupation, p 193, 195. 1992.