LECTURES ON THE REVELATION

by Floyd Hitchcock


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“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (Proverbs 23:23)

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STATEMENT OF DEDICATION

To all Blood-washed Saints who love the appearing of Jesus Christ and who in patience wait for His coming, this book is affectionately dedicated.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

THE material given in the pages of this book was originally prepared and given as a series of Bible Lectures on “The Book of Revelation” over Radio Station KWTO in Springfield, Missouri. The literary style of the book is therefore somewhat out of the ordinary because the material was arranged for an oral presentation and was given in that manner.

Considering the fact that so many good books had already been written by able expositors of God’s Word on the Book of Revelation, it was only after much prayer and the constraining influence of the Holy Spirit that the task of preparing and giving out this material was undertaken. Somehow the wonderful truth contained in the Book of Revelation interested me greatly, and when I studied current events in the light of scripture prophecy, and especially the prophecies contained in the Book of Revelation I could find no rest for my mind and heart until I consented to study and proclaim the truth revealed in this last book of the Bible, to all who would hear it.

Our method of study and exposition has been very simple and to the point. In other words our purpose has been to give a chapter by chapter study and exposition of the entire book. Rather than to depend too much upon my own judgment or the opinions of other men, our principal of interpretation has been to let the scriptures act as their own commentary. It is my conviction that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself.

Realizing that the current events of these days in which we live are as an index finger pointing to the soon fulfillment of those things which have been prophesied in the Book of Revelation, we humbly submit the material contained in these Bible Lectures, hoping and praying that it may be used of the Lord to bring needed light and truth and blessing to Jews, Gentiles, and Christians alike.

Yours in His fellowship and service, Floyd Hitchcock
LECTURE 1 ON THE REVELATION

The Revelation of Jesus Christ — A Blessing Promised — John's Patmos Vision of the Risen Lord

TRULY, my friends, it is with a mingled feeling OF JOY, and of GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, that we approach our study and exposition of this marvelous book, which is the last book of the Bible.

It has long been upon my heart to give a series of messages on the Book of Revelation, but some how I have been hindered and restrained from doing so until now. And there is no doubt but what such delay has been providential, BECAUSE, until now, the people generally were unprepared, and many have been unwilling to hear, such truth as that which is presented in this wonderful book.

But now that the world is engaged in war on an unprecedented scale, and the moral foundations, and political institutions of the nations of the whole earth seem to be crumbling, some people, at least, are beginning to wonder what the end of present world conditions will be! Those who are of an inquiring mind, and who are sincere in their desire to know the truth of the whole matter, WILL BE WILLING NOW, to hear what the Word of God has to say upon the subject of CURRENT EVENTS IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE PROPHECY.

No Apology To Offer

And let me say, right in the very beginning, that I have no apology to make to any one for this effort to give a study and exposition of this marvelous last book of the Bible.

THE APOSTLE PAUL plainly tells us in Second Timothy 3:16-17 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.”

This remarkable statement, I am sure includes the Book of Revelation, just as much as it does the Book of Genesis, or any other book of the Old Testament. It includes the Book of Revelation just as much as it does the FOUR GOSPELS, or the EPISTLES of the New Testament.

It is only RIGHT and PROPER, therefore, that we should give time and study, and careful attention to what is written in this last book of the Bible, as well as to any other portion of God's Word.

A Special Blessing

As we undertake our study of this particular book, I am fully aware of the prejudice that many have regarding it. It is a very sad fact that SOME PREACHERS have not made a careful study of the Book of Revelation themselves, and therefore are totally unqualified to teach the subject matter contained in the book. It is perfectly natural that such ministers would seek to discourage the people of their own churches from making a study of the book. And in doing so they are acting ABSOLUTELY CONTRARY to the Word of God contained in the book of Revelation itself; for in the very introduction of the Book a SPECIAL BLESSING is pronounced upon those who READ, and who HEAR, and who KEEP the sayings of this Book.

In our present study of the Book of Revelation we are not seeking for the favor of men. We do not seek, even for the favor of the ministry of our day who are DENYING THE DEITY OF JESUS THE SON OF GOD, and who are REJECTING the inspired Word, and who are COMPROMISING the truth, and are withholding it from the people for filthy lucre's sake!

God pity the Pastors of some churches who draw large salaries for their work, and who at the same time withhold the truth of God's Word from the people. How many of them are blind leaders of the blind, and if so, how many preachers, with multitudes of their Church members, will BOTH FALL INTO THE DITCH!

On the other hand, my friends, in our present undertaking we invite all ministers, who will, to read these messages with an open mind and receptive heart. Truly, we seek and long for the fellowship of all TRUE MEN OF GOD EVERY WHERE! These are indeed perilous times, and all Christian work which rings true to the Word of God, is a spiritual warfare! These are days when God needs preachers and laymen with GREAT FAITH, and with the MORAL COURAGE of their convictions, who will stand for the whole Word of God NO MATTER WHAT THE COST!

THE APOSTLE PAUL was this sort of a Christian. Indeed, it was with a great sacrifice that he won his right to become the great Apostle t6 the Gentiles.

He was a PHARISEE OF THE PHARISEES! He was WELL EDUCATED having sat at the feet of Gamaliel. He was a ROMAN
CITIZEN and A MAN OF NO MEAN CITY. Yet, all which was gain unto him he counted as loss for Christ. Therefore, WITH THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS, Paul purchased for himself the great Apostleship to the Gentiles.

In His ministry of the Word of God, the Apostle Paul was not subject to any man, or group of men. He boldly testified to this fact in Galatians 1:10-12, where he said: “For do I now persuade men, or God? Or DO I SEEK TO PLEASE MEN? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the SERVANT OF CHRIST. But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me IS NOT AFTER MAN. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Thus, my friends, did the great Apostle DECLARE OPENLY before ALL MEN that he was not a PREACHER OF MAN-MADE TRADITION, and that he was not a servant of men, but a servant of Jesus Christ. In other words, he was not preaching to please men, but to please God.

Not A Preacher of Tradition

As we begin our study of the Book of Revelation, I take my stand with the Apostle Paul, and declare that I am not a preacher of manmade tradition! Most of you have discovered this already. As I study and expound the Scriptures there has been no Bishop, or District Superintendent, or Church board of any Church, anywhere, which has dictated to me what I should say. When I have finished my message they can not threaten to fire me, because I have failed to preach “the tradition of the elders.”

No, I am a FREE MAN IN CHRIST Jesus, and have set myself to the task of preaching the WHOLE WORD OF GOD! But in this regard I can truthfully say that with great SUFFERING and SACRIFICE I have obtained this liberty.

Standing Alone

In order to obtain this freedom I have been compelled to STAND ALONE!

While standing alone, I have been compelled to LIVE BY FAITH without a stipulated salary from any source. Standing alone, we have had to trust God for the supply of daily needs, and for open doors to preach His Word to the people. But praise God, our daily needs have been supplied, even though we have had to live in HUMBLE CIRCUMSTANCES and LIVE ECONOMICALLY in order to carry on the work.

Our work over the air, and through our Magazine, is purely a work of faith, and a labor of love. And just as long as God will give us strength, and you who know about our work will give us your MORAL and FINANCIAL SUPPORT, we shall continue to preach THE WHOLE WORD OF GOD without fear or favor, and without compromise, TO ALL MEN, EVERYWHERE.

Therefore, with a SENSE OF LIBERTY, and also with a FEELING OF GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, we approach our study of the Book of Revelation. It is our earnest prayer that God will give us freely of His Holy Spirit, and help us all into a better understanding of these things which He caused to be written for our instruction.

Introduction of The Book

Now let us read the first three verses of the first chapter of the Book of Revelation where it says:

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His Angel unto His servant John:

“Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that He saw,

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”

The Title Of The Book

Now, first of all, let us consider the NAME OR TITLE OF THE BOOK.

At the top of the page, in my Bible it says: “The Revelation of St. John the Divine.” There is no doubt but what this title was given to the book because it was written by John, the disciple of Jesus, who was one of the Apostles. But the very first verse of our lesson text is worded quite different from this, for there it says: “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.”

The title which men gave to the Book draws our attention immediately to JOHN THE APOSTLE, who merely wrote the book, WHILE THE DIVINELY GIVEN TITLE announces that the great FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE OF THE BOOK was to reveal the true NATURE and PERSON and WORKS of Jesus Christ. This is in keeping with the scriptural use of names. Bible names are very significant because they usually express the nature and character of the OBJECT or PERSON to whom they apply.
The name of the first book in the Bible is Genesis, which means "beginning." It is very appropriate because in that book we have a record of beginnings. For instance in Genesis we have; - The beginning of the HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, - The beginning of MAN, the beginning of SIN; - The beginning of JUDGMENT; - The beginning of GOD'S GRACE; - The beginning of the RACE OF ISRAEL, and; - The beginning of many other things. EXODUS means going forth from bondage. The Gospel means “good news” and so on through the whole Bible until we come to the Book of Revelation.

Meaning of Revelation

The very word “REVELATION” means to reveal, to make manifest, to uncover to view, and to make known. The noun “REVELATION” means a disclosure, an appearing, or a making manifest.

The expression “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” as used here must therefore mean THE REVEALMENT, or MANIFESTATION or APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST.

This, my friends, is the KEY TO THE WHOLE BOOK! It is not merely a book of something made known BY CHRIST, but it was intended to be unto us a divine revelation OF CHRIST HIMSELF.

The Christ who died upon the cross as we know rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, and is separated from us, both BY TIME and SPACE. He is alive all right, but for the time-being He is hidden from our view, except as He is revealed to us in the chapters of this book.

In the Book of Revelation the veil which now hides our Blessed Lord from view is lifted, (as it were) and by the EYES OF FAITH we are able to see the risen, ascended, exalted and glorified Christ, in His place at the right hand of God in heaven.

It is true that the Gospels reveal Christ to us, AS HE WAS IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH, when He was upon earth. But the pages of the Book of Revelation reveal the same Christ to us, not as He was, but as He is now, and as He will be when He comes again! Wonderful Relationships in the Book of Revelation Christ are presented in a threefold way:

First—As to time, for HE WAS, HE IS, and He IS TO COME! Secondly—He is shown in His present relationship to the Churches here on earth: in His relation to the coming time of tribulation; and His relation to the COMING KINGDOM AGE. Thirdly—He is presented here as exercising His THREEFOLD OFFICE WORK as HIGH PRIEST, BRIDEGROOM and KING.

Christ To Be Revealed

The glorious fact that Christ is to be revealed IN THESE WONDERFUL RELATIONSHIPS, is well confirmed in the Scriptures: In First Corinthians 1:7, the Apostle speaks of the Christians at Corinth as being enriched with utterance and knowledge, and as “waiting for the coming (or revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Also in First Thessalonians 1:10, Paul admonished them “TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to came.”

In First Peter 1:6-7, the Apostle Peter speaks of His brethren as being “In heaviness through manifold temptations”— (and) that the trial of (their) faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory AT THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST.”

Also in the 13th verse of this same chapter He said unto them: Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Also in Second Thessalonians 1:7-9, it says “And to you who are troubled rest with us, WHEN THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN with His mighty angels,

“In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

‘Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power’

Jude also spoke of the APPEARING, or REVELATION, of Christ when he said in Jude the 14th and 15th verses, 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.”

The Unveiling

And so, my friends, we see that when the opening words of the Book of Revelation speak of THE REVELATION OF JESUS
CHRIST,” which means the making manifest, the unveiling to view of our Lord, this glorious fact is confirmed in the Scriptures, and we have every reason to believe that what we shall read in this Blessed Book will reveal Christ to us in all of His relationships to things IN HEAVEN and UPON EARTH, in a FULLER and more COMPLETE way than any other Book of the Bible presents Him.

And some day, He, who is now the invisible Christ, whom we see only by faith, will appear in person, and will be revealed in all of His glory, and power to a wondering world.

How The Book Was Given

NEXT let us notice the ORIGIN and the PROGRESSIVE ORDER in which this wonderful book was given.

Verse 1 says: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him” Correctly speaking, therefore, God the Father is the ORIGINAL AUTHOR of the truth presented in this book.

This special revelation of truth was given by the Father to the Son. (What for?) To show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.

Thus THE ORIGIN and PURPOSE of the book are clearly stated.

Now, what did Jesus do about it? It says that: ‘He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John’

And what did John do? Well, He ‘Bore record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that He saw.’

Indeed, my friends, when we consider the origin, and the progressive manner in which the Book has come to us, WE ARE COMPelled to acknowledge its divine importance! Who could be so ignorant and so full of unbelief, and, so disrespectful as to set aside a book that has come to us DIRECT FROM GOD, THROUGH CHRIST, and by the administration of an Angel, and from the pen of one of the greatest saints, who ever lived? Who would dare say that such a book HAS NO INTELLIGENT MESSAGE for the Children of God in this, or in any other age?

A Message For Us

This Book DOES HAVE A MESSAGE FOR THE SAINTS OF GOD, and this is confirmed in the third verse of our lesson text where it says: “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.”

Therefore, dear friends, please do not be fooled by any one, even by your Preacher, if he tries to tell you that the Book of Revelation has no message for the Christians of today.

Preachers as well as other Christians should be careful how they discourage people from studying this book, for in Revelation 22:19 it says: “If any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away His part out of the Book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.”

To encourage us, in Revelation 22:7, Jesus said: “Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Therefore with the FULL AUTHORITY of the book itself, regardless of what men may say, we can study this book WITH THE ASSURANCE of receiving the approval of God upon our efforts and THE PROMISE of a divine blessing for doing so.
BECAUSE: “All Scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness.”

Again we should study this book—

BECAUSE it reveals the risen and exalted Christ unto us, in His relation to things IN HEAVEN and UPON EARTH in a more complete and comprehensive way than any other book in the Bible.

And last of all we should study this book—

BECAUSE: a SPECIAL BLESSING is pronounced upon all who READ and HEAR the words of prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.”

The Importance of Prophecy

I am sure that few people realize the IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY in the Scriptures. The first prophecy in the Bible was the promise of a Saviour, or Redeemer, who would come to bruise the serpent's head, as recorded in Genesis 3:15.

Ever since then, prophecy has played a necessary and a very important part in the Scriptures, by revealing, IN ADVANCE, to all who will believe the Word of God, the important world events which must come to pass, in keeping with God's plan of redemption for the world.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY is revealed in Second Peter 1:19-21, where, Peter speaking upon the subject of CHRIST'S SECOND COMING, said:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

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.”

The Ethiopian Situation

When the Ethiopian situation arose some time ago, and Mussolini marched with his legions into that country and conquered it, it was an IMPORTANT EVENT IN WORLD HISTORY! Why? Because the prophets had spoken of these things in the Word of God!

EZELKIEL HAD PROPHESIED, in Ezekiel the 30th chapter, and verses 1-4, saying:

“The Word of God came again unto me saying, Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Howl ye, Woe worth the day!

For the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen,

And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down.

Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.’

From these words we had the right to judge, that when GREAT PAIN SHOULD COME UPON ETHIOPIA, the day of the Lord would be near! And that it would be the time of the nations! And that FIRST ETHIOPIA and THEN OTHERS would fall.

Prophecies Are Being Fulfilled

These things, my friends, should impress us with the fact that important prophesies are being fulfilled before our very eyes. Prophesies are being fulfilled IN EUROPE, and in PALESTINE, and in RUSSIA and in THE FAR EAST!

And let me tell you right now that, while every effort is being made by the Statesmen of the world to prevent the war from spreading, there is not a nation on earth, or league, or group of nations that can keep this war in check if God's time for it to happen has arrived.

Universal War!

Let us remind you that UNIVERSAL WAR, and not UNIVERSAL PEACE, has been prophesied in the Scriptures as THE SIGN of the
end of this age.

JOEL PROPHESIED in Joel 3:9-14, saying: ‘Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty man, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

‘Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong,

‘Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord,

‘Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: and there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

‘Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

‘Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision’

JEREMIAH ALSO PROPHESIED of universal conflict in Jeremiah the 25th chapter, verses 31-33, where it says:

‘A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth, for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.

‘Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind (or tribulation) shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth,

‘And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.”

THE PROPHET DANIEL also foretold of a time of trouble in Daniel 12:1, where it says:

‘And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”

AND JESUS, THE GREATEST PROPHET of all the prophets, prophesied in Matthew 24:6-8, saying:

‘And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet,

‘For nation shall rise against nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.

‘All these are the beginnings of sorrows”

And so we see that we have the COMBINED TESTIMONY of the PROPHETS that a time of world trouble is coming. It is foolish, therefore for wicked men in their unbelief, to cry “Peace, peace, when there is no peace” For in First Thessalonians 5:3, it says “For when they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child and they shall not escape.”

General Outline

Nothing, my friends, is going to help us into an understanding of these things like a study of the Book of Revelation.

The first three chapters of the book are rather introductory in nature, and necessarily so. But beginning with the fourth chapter, on to, and including Chapter 19, we have given a PROPHETIC FOREVIEW of those events which will take place during The Great Tribulation Period spoken of by Daniel, in Daniel 12:1, and by our Lord in Matthew 24:21-22.

The closing chapters have to do with THE NEW THINGS which will come to pass when the awful time of Tribulation is ended.

In our preceding message we studied only the INTRODUCTION of the book of Revelation, which gave us an understanding of the ORIGIN and NATURE of the book, and impressed us with the EXTREME value of the MATERIAL and MESSAGE which the book contains.

The Salutation
Now in this lecture we will at least begin our study of the GREAT SALUTATION of the book, recorded in Revelation 1:4-8, where it says:

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia; Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before the Throne; “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, “And hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen."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."I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Here, my friends, in very beautiful expressive and very forceful language, you have a very SOLEMN SALUTATION to the seven churches here addressed.

In this passage reference is made to the DIVINE TRINITY, with special reference made TO CHRIST, who is the CENTRAL SUBJECT of the entire Book of Revelation.

In this salutation we have also a PROPHECY that Christ will come again in the clouds of heaven!

In brief, my friends, in this wonderful salutation to the Seven Churches, we have an OUTLINE, or SYNOPSIS, of the entire Book of Revelation. We would do well, therefore, to study it carefully, for it is, (as it were) an index of what we are about to study in the chapters which follow.

To Whom Addressed

First of all, let us notice TO WHOM the contents of this entire book were addressed.

The fourth verse says: “John to THE SEVEN CHURCHES which are in Asia.” These were literal Churches in Asia Minor at that time, and were chosen to receive these messages, no doubt, because they were REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL CHURCHES throughout the entire Church age.

The first thing which the aged Apostle was caused to invoke upon them was GRACE and PEACE. In this regard there is no question but what GRACE WAS NEEDED, and that PEACE also was desired by all of the seven Churches addressed.

GRACE, my friends, is defined as—

1. Unmerited favor;
2. Unbought love, and
3. Undeserved mercy.

And that was exactly what those churches needed, and must have, if they were to continue in their work and service for the Lord, as our later studies will reveal.

It speaks ALSO OF PEACE! Peace, my friends, is both the DESIRE and THE GOAL of all of our lives! It is the GOD GIVEN REWARD for our faith, and is the GRAND CLIMAX of all our struggles in this life. Truly, it is the SUPREME REWARD for all our painful endeavor in this world of sin and sorrow! And how few people ever find real peace.

Now, where were grace and peace upon those Churches to come from? According to this salutation they were to come from: Him which is, and which was, and which is to come.” In other words; they were to come from GOD THE FATHER, for He is the one who occupies, all time, PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE!

FROM WHOM ELSE were GRACE and PEACE to come from? According to our text they were to come also from the Seven Spirits which are before the throne.”

What can be the meaning of this strange expression? The general interpretation here is, that by THE SEVEN SPIRITS it means, the COMPOSITE FULLNESS of THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD. Reason for this belief is based upon such passages as Isaiah 11:1-2, where it speaks of Christ, saying: “And the SPIRIT OF THE LORD shall rest upon Him, the SPIRIT OF WISDOM, and UNDERSTANDING, the Spirit of COUNSEL and MIGHT, the Spirit of KNOWLEDGE and of FEAR of the Lord.”
These Seven Spirits mentioned here we know make up the fullness of the NATURE and PERSON and WORK of the Holy Spirit of God! Therefore, it is generally accepted that these are the Seven Spirits spoken of in Revelation 1:4 as being BEFORE HIS THRONE!

Therefore we may say that God's GRACE and PEACE invoked upon the seven Churches in Asia was to come from (or we might say) proceed FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT, which was before God's Throne, as well as from GOD THE FATHER.

But that was not all! GRACE and PEACE upon the Churches was to come also FROM JESUS CHRIST, who is the FAITHFUL WITNESS, and the FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD, and the PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH. Therefore, my friends, we see that GRACE and PEACE upon those Seven Churches, and upon ALL CHURCHES during this age, must come to us from the triune God, as revealed in the salutation of this book, i.e.—

(1) From GOD THE FATHER, who inhabits all time.

(2) From THE HOLY SPIRIT before His Throne, who works with all wisdom and power,

(3) And from JESUS CHRIST, who gave Himself IN LOVE and SUFFERING and SACRIFICE upon the Cross in order that GRACE and PEACE might come to our hearts as a result of the supreme sacrifice which He made for us when He shed His Blood upon the Cross, to make an atonement for our sins!

LECTURE 3 ON THE REVELATION

Study of the Salutation Continued — The Source of All Grace and Peace — Jesus Revealed in the Divine Titles Given to Him in This Salutation — An Important Prophetic Announcement

In making a study of this last book of the Bible we should always remember that the entire book is a Revelation of Jesus Christ in His relation to things in heaven and to things upon the earth.

Thus far we have considered the—

(1) Subject and the contents of the Book,

(2) Also the manner in which the Book was given,

(3) And the value and importance of the truth given in this Book of Prophecy.

In our last message we began a study of the remarkable SALUTATION given to the seven churches, as recorded in Revelation 1:4-8. This passage, we discovered, was in fact a synopsis of the entire book.

From this REMARKABLE SALUTATION to the seven churches, we have learned that all grace and peace, which was invoked upon them, was to come from GOD THE FATHER, and from the SEVEN SPIRITS before His Throne, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Thus, we discovered the source of ALL GRACE upon ALL MEN and upon ALL CHURCHES throughout all time! We find that all grace comes from the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Since we did not in any wise conclude our study of this passage in our last lesson, we shall reread it, to refresh our minds concerning what was said, and to provide us with new material for our present discourse. In Revelation 1:4-8 it says:

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, which was, and which is to come; and from the Seven Spirits which are before His Throne; “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. “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. “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Our lesson today begins, with the three titles given to Jesus Christ in the 5th verse, where He is called:

‘THE FAITHFUL WITNESS, and the FIRST BEGOTTEN of the dead, and the PRINCE OF THE KINGS of the earth’
Need For Witnesses

Indeed, my friends, here is something which immediately compels our attention, and is surely worthy of our prayerful consideration.

In a world of sin and wicked unbelief God has always needed witnesses, who would testify to the truth of God, as it is in Christ! There has always been a need for witnesses who would LET THEIR LIGHTS SHINE out into a world of spiritual darkness. God has always needed witnesses who would SPEAK THE TRUTH OF GOD without fear or favor, even though the voices of all (who refuse to hear and believe) be against them.

And just such a witness, my friends, was the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus was born, the ANGELS OF HEAVEN GAVE WITNESS to His birth, and sang of His Saviourhood and Kingship When Jesus was baptized of John, in the River Jordan, the voice of God in heaven WAS HEARD WITNESSING to the fact of His deity and Sonship.

When Jesus died upon the cross, the veil in the Temple was rent in twain, and the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened, and the earth did quake, and thus did both HEAVEN and EARTH GIVE WITNESS to the fact that He who died upon the cross was the Son of God. And the Roman Centurion also WITNESSED A GOOD CONFESSION, saying: “Surely this was the Son of God.”

Jesus A Witness

But it is very interesting to note here that Jesus Himself is called: The Faithful Witness.” And even so He was, for all during His earthly life JESUS GAVE WITNESS TO THE TRUTH OF GOD! He gave WITNESS TO HIS OWN DEITY AND SONSHIP. He gave witness also to His death and resurrection!

The Prophet Isaiah prophesied of Christ as a Faithful Witness, when he said in Isaiah 55:4, Behold, I have given Him FOR A WITNESS to the people, a leader and commander to the people.”

Jesus Himself testified in John 18:37 before Pilate, saying: To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should BEAR WITNESS UNTO THE TRUTH.

But why is He called the Faithful Witness? No doubt because He was faithful unto God, even unto death, (even the death of the cross!) Jesus witnessed to the truth of God when the wicked men of His day and time refused to believe it. - He witnessed to the truth while others mocked and BLASPHEMED GOD! - He witnessed also to the work of the Holy Spirit.

- He witnessed to the truth, while men PERSECUITED HIM, and laughed Him to scorn. - He witnessed to the truth of God before the High Priests and the elders of His people, and before Herod, and before Pilate, the Roman Governor, who delivered Him to the people to be crucified. And even upon the cross, He gave witness to the truth of God in the words which He spoke, and by the way in which He died!

Therefore, we may truthfully say that He justly deserves, and may rightfully wear the title which is given Him in Revelation 1:5, where He is called, “THE FAITHFUL WITNESS.” Truly, He witnessed to the truth of God, and sealed His testimony with His own precious Blood.

The First Begotten

In this same passage, in Revelation 1:5, He is also called: THE FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD.”

That, my friends, was a chief honor indeed! Death had come as a penalty for sin. And for Jesus to become THE FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD, testified to the fact of His purity, and His power over death, as the Son of God. Being the first begotten from the dead, gave unto Jesus the right to be FIRST IN ALL THINGS which pertain to the headship, and leadership of the whole human race.

HIS RESURRECTION from the dead, therefore, is the very foundation of His FUTURE KINGSHIP, which is also suggested in this same passage.

Being the first begotten of the dead, He has the right to be King, and to rule over all other men, and to call other men to positions of royal and priestly authority.

A Prince

Is it any wonder, therefore, that He is called also “THE PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH?”

Indeed, in Psa. 89:27 God said: I will make Him my first born, higher than the Kings of the earth"

What an enlarged vision of the risen and glorified Christ is presented to us in this threefold title given Him here! Indeed, Jesus is the
“FAITHFUL WITNESS”

“THE FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD” and

“THE PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH.”

But that is not all! For in this same verse, John speaks of Him as the one Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

The great Apostle here speaks of Jesus in terms of LOVE and REDEMPTION, and he points out that Christ's love has been put to our account through His own death upon the cross, and has been made effective, in bringing about our own deliverance, and exaltation to places of HONOR and SERVICE in the present and future purposes!

The Love of Christ

Now let us consider the LOVE of CHRIST for just a moment. Truly, He loved us TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO when He gave Himself for us upon the cross. “Greater love hath no man than this: that a man lay down his life for his friend.” But that, my friends, was not the kind of love which Jesus had when He died upon the cross! No! No! A thousand times no! His death upon the cross was not the case of a man dying for His friends, but the case of a man dying to save and redeem his enemies! This fact is confirmed in Romans 5:7-8, where it says: “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were YET SINNERS Christ died for us.”

Not All Past

But, my friends, let us not think for one moment that God's love for us is all in the past. Let us not think that God's love for men was all spent when He had given Jesus to die for them upon the cross. For such was not the case. God's love is eternal and unchanging, and He loves men TODAY as much as He ever loved them in the past!

If Jesus manifested His love toward His enemies when He died upon the cross, (what) we ask, must be His love for His friends? His friends, of course, are those who believe and obey Him, and keep His commandments. What must His love be for them?

His enemies were lost, and depraved and undone, and full of unbelief, and had no claim whatever to divine grace or mercy. Yet He loved them and gave Himself FOR THEM!

What then must be His love for those of us who have believed upon Him, and who love Him with all our hearts, and Who serve Him through sacrifice and suffering here in this present world?

Who, my friends, could measure the LOVE of CHRIST for the redeemed of the whole earth? Who could comprehend it? Surely His love encompasses us like a shoreless sea, and it will lift us from the LOWEST DEPTHS OF SIN to the HIGHEST PLACES OF GLORY.

Paul's prayer for the Christians at Ephesus was that they might: be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height; and to know the LOVE of CHRIST, which passeth knowledge.”

Also in Romans 8:35-39 he said:

“What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US, “For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from THE LOVE OF GOD, which IS IN CHRIST JESUS our Lord.”

Washed From Our Sins

Not only is it revealed in Revelation 1:5 that Christ loved us, but it also declares that He WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD.

Indeed, my friends, this is the very foundation stone of all Christian teaching. It declares the fact of redemption by blood. God has ordained that without the shedding of blood, is no remission, as stated in Hebrews 9:22.

This is a divine requirement. It is the established principle of redemption. Therefore, Jesus shed His own blood upon the cross, in keeping with the divine law and requirement, in order that He might: ‘Wash us from our sins in His own blood’
My friends, since Jesus shed His blood for us upon the cross nearly two thousand years ago, all we need to do is to believe and appropriate unto ourselves THE MERIT of that past absolution of all our sins, and we will be saved.

Is this hard to believe? Well, what saith the Scriptures? In John 3:17-18 it says: "God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

In Romans 8:1, the Apostle Paul spoke, saying: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

Therefore, my friends, let us, by faith, LOOK BACK, across the centuries, and REMEMBER THE CROSS upon which that precious, atoning blood was shed. LET US WEIGH in our minds the merit and virtue of that expiation of our sins. If we can, LET US FATHOM the depths of its love and power to cleanse our hearts from sin's deepest stains! If we will do this, I am sure we shall have cause to give thanks, and we will rejoice in the CLEANSING BLOOD of the Lord Jesus Christ, which gives us access to God, and to a throne of grace.

Kings and Priests

Now, in Revelation 1:6, it says He "hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

This, my friends, is a striking statement for it reminds us of the fact that Christ has not only redeemed us by His own blood, but that WE WHO ARE REDEEMED have been called unto the service of God, and to places of AUTHORITY and POWER, and ROYAL SERVICE in the future purposes of God.

How glorious indeed that our redemption implies not only the forgiveness of sins, but it also promises UNTO US WHO BELIEVE and serve Christ, great reward and positions of increased responsibility. Let men despise and condemn OUR WORK and SERVICE FOR CHRIST as they may, we have the assurance that there is a FUTURE EMPIRE connected with our lowly discipleship here. Our patience, and prayers and service here upon earth will be rewarded with positions of royalty and dominion in the Kingdom which is to come.

Let us not forget that the disciples of Jesus, who were tax gatherers, and fishermen, (by listening to Jesus and by following Him,) became HEIRS TO APOSTOLIC THRONES; for Jesus promised that they should sit upon, twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses, by faith, rose from the humble position of a Shepherd over Jethro's flocks to be the PRINCE OF ISRAEL. By faith, DANIEL also arose from the lion's den of condemnation, to the honor and authority of the empire, and to the still higher position of being a Prophet of God. LUTHER, the father of the Protestant Reformation, rose from his prison cell to where he could dictate to Kings, and became the Monk, whose convictions and teachings shook the world.

Therefore, let us consider what is implied in the words of the Apostle John, when he said in Revelation 1:6, He "hath made us Kings and Priests unto God." Will not God also make us, who have been faithful over a few things, ruler over many things? Indeed, to Christ's affections for us He has added honor, and to our salvation He has added official dignities, which we now little dream of and cannot fully realize.

Behold He Cometh!

Now let us consider the PROPHETIC ANNOUNCEMENT recorded in Revelation 1:7, where it says: "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."

Let us remind you that the Apostle John, who wrote these striking and impressive words, was present with the other disciples on Mt. Olivet when Jesus ascended into heaven. He heard the two men, which were dressed in white apparel, say: "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."

And how, (we ask,) was Jesus taken into heaven? Acts 1:9, says: "He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

Also in Matthew 24:30, Jesus testified of His own return, saying: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all of the tribes of earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN with
power and great glory."

And John says, "Behold, He cometh with clouds."

Here the fact of Christ's second coming is POSITIVELY and PROPHETICALLY declared. This statement does not take into account the reasoning of wicked unbelief on this subject. It simply declares that Christ is coming, and tells HOW HE WILL COME, and leaves no room for argument or controversy.

Hopeless Unbelief

We are fully aware of the fact that many people do not want to believe in the glorious fact of Christ's return! But it is nevertheless clearly taught in the Word of God. It has been prophesied by all the Prophets, and was promised by Christ Himself, and has been confirmed by the testimony of Angels, proclaimed by all the Apostles, and was believed by all the early Christians. A professed Christian faith, which does not accept and believe the doctrine of Christ's return, and which does not look forward to those events and purposes for which He MUST RETURN, is at best only a fragmentary faith, and is without hope, or promise of salvation for those who are devoted to it.

Therefore, let men murmur at this glorious doctrine which is taught in the Word of God, let them dispute it, let them despise it, and mock at it, and put it aside and hate it, if they wish! It is nevertheless a fundamental doctrine of the Bible, and is one which all of the godless unbelief of SO-CALLED CHRISTIANS cannot change. After all has been said and done the fact remains: "Behold, He cometh with clouds!"

He Is Coming

Yes, my friends, He is coming, and all men everywhere might just as well prepare themselves to meet Him. Why? Because it says in the very same verse that "every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him."

This, my friends, is a sobering thought. It does not necessarily imply that all shall see Him at the same time.

But it does mean that somewhere, at some time, in some stage of His judicial administrations, every man who has ever lived will look upon Him.

We know that the wicked dead, as well as the righteous dead, are to be resurrected. Therefore, not only the good, but the wicked shall look upon Him and see Him as He is. When some men see Jesus they will shout: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

And others when they see Him shall cry to "The mountains and the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come: and who shall be able to stand?"

Imagine, my friends if you can, the remorse of those who pierced Him, when they look upon Him as He is. Does not this statement refer to the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10, where it says that "they who pierced Him shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one is in bitterness for his first born"?

Is it any wonder, therefore, that WORLDLINGS and HALF CHRISTIANS, do not have any love for this great doctrine of Christ's return? How true it is that the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST will put a sudden end to their sinful pleasures, and change their self confidence into consternation, and plunge them into horror and despair! But Revelation 1:7 says, concerning these things, "Even so, Amen."

Conclusion

And now let us close our lesson by quoting Revelation 1:8, where Jesus said: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, sayeth the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."
beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, WHICH IS and WHICH WAS, and WHICH IS TO COME, the Almighty."

These words express the eternal character of the Christ, and there is NO HIGHER EXPRESSION OF DEITY any where in Holy Writ than the words which Christ used here, concerning Himself, i.e., "The Almighty."

This one expression announces the fact that HIS WILL and HIS POWER are supreme in all things! It is another way of saying that in Him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and that ALL THINGS are to be brought into subjection under Him, so that He may have the preeminence in all things.

Indeed, my friends, what divine authority and majesty are expressed in these words! What son of wickedness, therefore, would not tremble and be moved with fear in the presence of Him who is called ‘THE ALMIGHTY’?

Lesson Text

Now for our present lesson let us read what is recorded in Revelation 1:9-17, where it says:

"I, John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the Isle that is called Patmos, FOR THE WORD OF GOD, and for the TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, “Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. “And I turned to see the voice that spake with me, And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; “And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle, “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; “And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. “And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance was as the Sun shineth in His strength, “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.”

The Title of the Book

Now, before we undertake to explain this passage, let me remind you of the Title of this book. It is called, in the first verse, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST."

This literally means the revealing, or unveiling, or making known to us, the PERSON and CHARACTER of the Lord Jesus Christ, as He now is, at the right hand of God, in the heavenlies, and as He will appear when He comes again!

Therefore, we may expect in our study of the Book of Revelation that JESUS, the CHRIST, the SON OF GOD, the MESSIAH OF ISRAEL, and the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD, will be revealed to us - In His relation to His CHURCHES UPON EARTH. - In relation to the CHURCH IN HEAVEN, - In His relation to THE WICKED PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE EARTH.

The relation of the exalted Christ to HIS CHURCHES HERE UPON EARTH is set forth, in the first three chapters of the Revelation. And it is these things which now command our attention.

The Apostle John

The passage just read, however, directs our attention, first of all, to JOHN the Apostle, who was the human instrument, which God used to record these things which are given in this book.

The great Apostle here refers to himself in a very meek way! And identifies Himself merely as a BROTHER and COMPANION of those who were in tribulation. Yet, he was the oldest and most exalted Christian of his day.

The Apostle John was the last of the twelve Apostles. By this time he was a very old man, no doubt with white hair, and bowed form, and was truly a venerable old man!

As a young man he had been among the first to find and follow Jesus. He had listened to the wonderful teachings of our Lord and had witnessed His mighty miracles, and had looked upon the risen Christ, and had witnessed His ascension into heaven from Mt. Olivet, when a cloud received Him out of sight.

Since that historic event, John had labored for the Lord, and had outlived his fellow apostles. Therefore, he was, the one recognized, APOSTOLIC LEADER of the early church yet living. His courageous and faithful preaching of Christ, and his leadership of those
early Christians, had attracted the attention, and persecution of his enemies no doubt, and for all this some believe that the Roman authorities, had sent him as an exile to the Isle of Patmos, located just off the coast of Asia Minor. At least God had a divine purpose in having John on the Isle of Patmos.

Patmos

One writer in describing the Isle of Patmos says: "It has neither trees nor rivers, nor any land for cultivation, except some little nooks between the ledges of rocks. There is still a dingy grotto remaining, in which the aged Apostle is said to have lived, and in which he is said to have had this vision."

The aged Apostle, doomed to the place and circumstances of a convict, was NOT BOUND in spirit, however, and while he was there, (being in the Spirit,) that is, moved upon by the Holy Spirit, he soared as it were, on the wings of prophetic ecstasy, and traversed whole dispensations of time, and saw in panoramic vision the stupendous events of the great Day of the Lord. Shut out from the world and from earthly friends, he became conversant with spiritual realities, and with celestial beings, and was thrilled with visions of the exalted Redeemer, and with a revelation of things which God declared must come to pass.

Therefore, when John said that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, it may have had some reference to the Sabbath, but the broader meaning and application of this expression is, that John was MOVED UPON BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, and by the Spirit was transported, (as it were) by prophetic vision and understanding, into the great DAY OF THE LORD, with which the present age will end, and the new age begin.

Therefore, John was in the Isle that is called Patmos, for THE WORD OF GOD, and for the TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST!

The Sound of The Trumpet

We are now ready to take up a study of those things which John saw on the Isle of Patmos by divine revelation. The first thing which arrested John's attention was, "a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first end the last: and what thou seest, write it in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."

The reference here, "to a voice, AS OF A TRUMPET" was significant. It was especially so to John, for John, (remember) was a CONVERTED JEW, and to every Jew the sound of the trumpet signified the presence of deity, and many other important things; for instance:

When God came down upon Mt. Sinai there was heard 'the voice of a trumpet, exceeding loud'.

When the YEAR OF JUBILEE came around in Israel, it was ushered in by the sounding of a silver trumpet.

When the SERVICES IN THE TEMPLE were begun, and the Temple door was opened it was at the sound of the trumpet.

In First Thessalonians 4:16 we are told that: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch Angel, and with THE TRUMP OF GOD: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Also in First Corinthians 15:52, Paul says: "For THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"

Thus, from these, and many other scriptures, which could be cited, we discover the use of the trumpet, and realize that to John it signified the DEITY OF THE VOICE, or person who was speaking to him.

Now, it says that when John turned to see the voice which spake with him, being turned he saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man."

In other words, the person he saw was none other than Jesus, the GLORIFIED SON OF GOD. The expression, 'like unto the Son of man," used here, would indicate that, while He was like UNTO A MAN, yet He was MORE THAN A MERE MAN. He was the GOD-MAN, as the very passage implies.

What we have, therefore, in this lesson is a COMPOSITE word picture of Jesus as He NOW IS, and as HE WILL APPEAR when He comes again.

Now we are told in the 20th verse of this same chapter, that the stars are the Angels, (or messengers,) of the seven churches; and the CANDLESTICKS which thou sawest, He said, are the SEVEN CHURCHES."

The Number Seven

We pause, just here, to remind you that the NUMBER SEVEN, when used in the Scriptures, signifies PERFECTION, or COMPLETENESS, of the subject in question.
In our present Scripture lesson we see Jesus presented as being in the midst of the seven candlesticks: In other words, Jesus is presented here as being THE LORD and JUDGE, and PRIEST in the midst of all His churches, here upon earth, during this present Church age!

The Garments of Christ

John gives particular attention to the manner in which Jesus was dressed, in this vision, which he had of the exalted Christ! He says that He was dressed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. The garment described here is not so much descriptive of a Priest, as it is that of a ROYAL JUDGE, or that of a KING! In the 14th verse John mentions that, “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire.” Now, what do these things signify? The Scriptures tell us that, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” Daniel also in his vision says – “The Ancient of Days, whose garments was white as snow, and the hair of His head, like pure wool”

White Hair

We all know that white hairs are symbolic of age and patriarchal dignity. And how old, (we may ask) is Jesus? Well, nobody knows! He said, Himself “before Abraham was, I am.” He is the second Adam, and has lived from eternity, and therefore, He is rightfully presented here WITH WHITE HAIR, which is symbolic of age and patriarchal dignity, for He is, from everlasting to everlasting, and His age is more than that of any other man who ever lived.

His Eyes

Now, it says also, “His eyes were as a flame of fire” The eye, my friends, is the SYMBOL OF INTELLIGENCE. Therefore, we read in the Word that, “His eyes behold, His eyelids try the children of men” And again it says: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with which we have to do.”

Now, let us make an interesting comparison. The light of the human eye comes from without, and unless there is light outside of the eye, we cannot see! This goes to show how dark our lives really would be, if God did not send us light.

But not so with Jesus! The light in the eyes of Jesus, shines forth from the very deity WITHIN HIS BEING, and streams forth with all intelligence, and with penetrating sharpness, and there is no question but what Jesus can see as well in the darkness as in the day.

Truly, He possesses INTELLIGENCE and power to read the secrets of men’s hearts, and to bring HIDDEN THINGS TO LIGHT.

Therefore, we would all do well to pray the prayer which David offered, saying: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any evil in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

His Feet

Now, in Revelation 1:15 it says of Christ: “His feet (were) like fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters.”

Consider, my friends, the feet of Jesus. - Once they walked the paths of Galilee, as Jesus went about doing good. - Once they walked upon the water, and carried Him to His disciples in the midst of the storm in the dark wee hours of the night. - Once they trod the lone sad way to the Garden of Gethsemane. - Once they climbed up Golgotha’s rugged steps bearing a cross. - Once upon that cross, they were pierced with cruel spikes. From those wounded feet the precious blood of the Son of God flowed forth in love for you and me, to make an atonement for our sins.

But here they are pictured to us under the SYMBOL OF GLOWING BRASS, as if it burned in a furnace. Brass in the Scriptures is used to SYMBOLIZE JUDGEMENT!

And even so it is, those same feet of the Son of God will come again; this time to TREAD DOWN THEIR ENEMIES, and to CRUSH OUT evil, and to override the abominations of the whole earth!

His Voice

NOW, WHAT ABOUT HIS VOICE? How must it have sounded to those who heard Him say on the great day of the feast, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

HOW MUST IT HAVE SOUNDED to the Scribes and Pharisees when He cried out His woes against them, saying: “Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrits!”

HOW MUST IT HAVE SOUNDED when He cried with a loud voice for Lazarus to come forth from the grave!
HOW MUST IT HAVE SOUNDED when He wept over the sins of the City of Jerusalem?

When John saw Him here, His voice was described as having “the sound of many waters.” Even so, my friends, for we read that the time is coming when all who are in the graves “shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear, shall live.”

Yes, indeed, my friends, the voice of the Lord will one day awaken the dead, and will call those who are alive in Christ to come up higher.

HIS VOICE is full of MAJESTY and POWER, and because of this, the wicked of the whole earth will be stricken with fear when they hear Him speak, and shall tremble at His presence.

A Two Edged Sword

And now, last of all, it says that, “Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength.”

These words seem to indicate the JUDICIAL PURPOSE for which Jesus will come again. THE SWORD IS A SYMBOL OF ROYAL AUTHORITY and POWER! The sword referred to here, however, was a Word-sword!

On one occasion Jesus said: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

Even so, my friends, THE WORD OF GOD is “Quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder, of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.”

And so, by the POWER OF HIS WORD Jesus will execute judgment upon His church, and against the wicked of the whole earth.

John said: “His countenance shown as the Sun shineth in His strength”

Conclusion

Is it any wonder, therefore, we ask, that John the aged Apostle, and mighty man of God, when He had received this divine revelation of the glorified Son of God, fell at His feet as dead? Indeed not!

DANIEL, and ISAIAH and EZEKIEL, all of them, when they received visions of the Lord, were affected much in the same way. It seems impossible for man in his present state, no matter how much grace He may have received, to look upon the person of one so high and holy, and so full of power, and divine majesty, without being smitten with fear.

But unto John He said: “Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen! and have the keys of hell and death.”

LECTURE 5 ON THE REVELATION

LECTURE No. 5 Jesus Risen and Alive Forevermore — What John Was Commanded to Write About — Mystery of the Seven Stars — Encouragement for All True Ministers of God's Word — The Mystery of the Seven Golden Candlesticks

WE HAVE ALREADY considered the introduction of chapter one which gave to us the TRUE TITLE OF THE BOOK, and which explained to us the DIVINE ORIGIN, and the PROPHETIC CHARACTER of the material which the Book contains. The introduction also pronounces a special blessing upon all who READ and HEAR, and KEEP the words of this prophecy.

We have also studied the remarkable SALUTATION OF THE BOOK given in Revelation 1:4-8, in which we have a marvelous WORD PICTURE of Christ, based principally upon CERTAIN TITLES which belong to Him, because of His sacrifice and suffering, and which reveal His eternal, and Kingly character.

The salutation also contains that bold, startling PROPHETIC ANNOUNCEMENT which says: 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.”

In our last lesson we began a study, of the vision of Christ, given to the Apostle John upon the Isle of Patmos, as recorded in Revelation 1:9-17.

In this remarkable vision Christ was presented to John as the LORD AND JUDGE AMONG THE CHURCHES! His divine authority
over the churches, as Lord and Judge of all they do, was revealed in this passage, by the description of the glorified person of the Son of God, as He now is, and as He will appear when He comes again.

When the aged Apostle received this unusual vision of the Christ, he fell at His feet as dead. But Jesus laid His right hand upon him saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last”

Our Lesson For Today

Now let us continue our study by reading what is recorded in verses 18-20, where He FURTHER SAID:

“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen! and have the keys of hell and of death. ‘Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;’ The mystery of THE SEVEN STARS which thou sawest in my right hand, and the SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS. The seven stars are the Angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

Here, my friends, is some wonderful truth which well deserves our careful and prayerful attention!

We Need The Holy Spirit

May the Holy Spirit Himself guide us and help us into an understanding of those things which this passage is intended to reveal.

There is one point in the vision, which John had of Christ, which we have not considered as yet in our present discussion.

The Seven Stars

In Revelation 1:16 it says: “And He had IN HIS RIGHT HAND SEVEN STARS.”

This is a very important statement and is full of suggestive and interesting truth. We need not be in doubt as to what is meant by the Stars in His right hand, because this is fully explained in the 20th verse, where it says: “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand and the seven Golden Candlesticks. The seven stars are the Angels (or messengers, or Pastors) of the seven churches: And the seven candlesticks are the seven Churches’

In His Right Hand

It is very significant, my friends, that the angels, or messengers, or pastors of these seven churches are here presented as being IN CHRIST’S RIGHT HAND!

It is true that Christ is both LORD and JUDGE in the midst of the Churches, but it is also true that HE HOLDS THE MINISTERS OF THOSE CHURCHES IN HIS OWN RIGHT HAND!

Who would dare say that this is not a place of shelter and of security for those who serve God in the ministerial office during this dispensation of grace.

The fact that all truly called and anointed ministers of God’s Word are positionally in His own right hand, should serve to impress upon them a sense and feeling of their great and utter dependence UPON HIM, who is their LORD and MASTER. It should also serve TO IMPRESS OTHERS with the high and holy calling of those who are the true ministers of Christ.

I must say that we are living in a day of extremes as regarding the ministerial office, and the work of the Ministry.

Today Satan has brought GREAT REPROACH upon the work of all true ministers of the Gospel, by causing some, who labor in this office, to commit some of the most terrible crimes imaginable! The newspapers give wide publicity to such news stories, with the result that public confidence is rapidly being broken down, and many have little confidence left, in THE CALLING and WORK of the ministry. Ministers themselves who are careless regarding their conduct, and who fall into Satan's traps, are themselves bringing reproach upon the Christ they profess to love and serve, and are proving themselves unworthy of the HIGH HONOR to which their office and high calling entitle them. But IT IS COMFORTING TO KNOW that the true minister of God's Word, the true Pastor who is the Undershepherd of the sheep, is positionally in Christ's right hand.

We Are Subject To Christ Alone

What a solemn thought this is! This makes Christ's ministers subject to Him and to Him alone!

I know that our present day DEMOCRATIC IDEA OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT is different from this! Churches today have gotten
the idea that all MINISTERIAL AUTHORITY PROCEEDS from the people themselves. Therefore they can hire the kind of a preacher they want at a stated salary, and if he doesn't preach to suit their stubborn hearts, and narrow conceptions of divine truth and church order, they can fire him over night, and hire another man to take his place, WHO WILL PREACH to suit their carnal minds, and who will compromise the Word of God, enough, to allow certain sinful indulgences within the Church and rock them to sleep in their carnal security. All this they do in the name of Christ. And if the preacher refuses to compromise the truth, and refuses to yield to their demands for a low standard of living, and to their sinful practices within the church; then a board meeting is held and OUT HE GOES! If they can't kick THE TRUE MAN OF GOD out, ROUGH SHOD, then they will take a little more time at the job and STARVE HIM OUT. This is just a little more polite and dignified way of getting the job done. That's all.

And so, my friends, you see that we are in a bad state of affairs. So-called ministers are bringing reproach upon the HIGH OFFICE, and the NOBLE CALLING of their profession, by wrong and shameful conduct. And the people of the churches themselves, in many instances, despise the MINISTERIAL OFFICE and treat their preachers as if they were hirelings, and subject to men only.

But I would remind you just here that all true ministers of the Word, are represented here, as being IN CHRIST'S OWN RIGHT HAND. Therefore, we would advise that you touch not the Lord's anointed, and that you do His prophets no harm. SOME DAY, SOME WHERE, SOME TIME, God is going to bring vengeance upon every individual, man or woman, and upon every CHURCH COLLECTIVELY, who have in any way mistreated the true man of God, whom God, by the Holy Ghost, made an overseer over the flock.

Fellow Ministers: Press On!

To my fellow ministers of the Gospel, I want to say that if we are God-called men for the work of the ministry, we have indeed a high and holy calling, and one of which we need not be ashamed, no matter what others may think or say about our profession. We are related to Christ in a very intimate and definite way! We are in His right hand!

Therefore, let us LABOR ON, in the fear of God, and continue our preaching of the whole Word of God, even though all men should be against us! The Bible contains A DIVINE MESSAGE from God, for the people, and we are messengers of His Word. We are Ambassadors for Christ!

Preach The Word

Therefore, let us heed Paul's admonition to Timothy when He said: "Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."

He also said to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in Spirit, in faith and in purity."

If we who are preachers of the Word will do these things; and adorn the work we do, with noble, unselfish conduct; then we can preach the Word of God both WITH AUTHORITY, and with POWER; and the HIGH OFFICE, and the DIVINE CALLING, and the WORK OF THE MINISTRY will be ELEVATED IN THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE, whom, under God, we are called to serve.

Truly, the office of the ministry offers to those who fill it well, the highest honors, and the greatest rewards of any profession upon the earth! But to those who USE IT DECEITFULLY, and who depart from the high and rigid standards which it requires, it will plunge them, sooner or later, into greater shame and reproach than any other profession known among men!

Therefore, FELLOW MINISTERS, who are called of God; realizing the full weight of our glorious high calling, and the GREATNESS OF THE TASK to which we are called, let us watch and wait and labor on 'till the Master comes.

Well, so much for the work of the ministry!

The Divine Title

Now, let us return to our lesson text, and consider the DIVINE TITLE which Jesus gave to Himself when He addressed the Apostle John. To John he said: "I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen: and have the keys of Hell and death."

I wonder, my friends, if there is any place in the Scriptures where more truth is expressed, in so few words, than in this remarkable passage?

Talk about a man with titles to express his name and the character of his attainments! Well, the titles which the Lord here assumes are far above those which any COLLEGE, or SECRET ORDER, or MILITARY ORGANIZATION could possibly bestow upon any man, however great.
The expression: “I am the first and the last” is a title employed by God the Father to express His own deity, and the eternal character of His being.

In Isaiah 4:4 it says: “Who hath wrought and done it,—calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, the first and the last: I am He.”

In Revelation 1:17, Christ assumes this title, and appropriates it to Himself. This was just another way of asserting HIS OWN DEITY, and His ONENESS WITH THE FATHER! Jesus used this expression to announce to John that He was BEFORE ALL THINGS, and that He would OUTLIVE ALL THINGS!

He next said: “I am He that liveth, and was dead, and, behold I am alive forever more!”

Here indeed, my friends, is a wonderful truth expressed in only a few words. By this expression Christ meant to tell John that He was “The LIVING ONE!” This is ANOTHER TITLE OF DEITY. It refers to God who is the self-existing One: the great “I Am,” who is the very author and fountain head of all life.

Therefore, when Jesus said, “I am He that liveth,” or the “Living One,”! He again assumed a title which belongs only to deity. But we may ask, was He mistaken in doing this? No indeed! For in John 1:1-4 it says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him, was not anything made that was made, IN HIM WAS LIFE and the light of men.”

A Profound Mystery!

Now, the PROFOUND MYSTERY of this passage is this: He who was THE LIVING ONE “BECAME DEAD!”

There is no doubt but what the glorified Christ, in speaking to John, was here referring to the fact of HIS DEATH! UPON THE CROSS! It is utterly impossible for us to understand how He who was THE LIVING ONE, and the very FOUNTAIN HEAD of all life, could, or should die and become dead! But however contradictory these expressions may seem to be, the fact remains, and we cannot dispute it, that Jesus “THE LIVING ONE” actually DIED UPON THE CROSS, to make an atonement for our sins, through the sacrifice of Himself, and that on the third day He arose again from the dead. And because of His resurrection HE IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE!

As He said Himself, He laid down His life in order that He might take it up again, and thereby prove to all men that He is THE LIVING ONE! By His death and resurrection Jesus proved beyond controversy that He is the PRINCE OF LIFE and the MASTER OF DEATH.

Therefore He was able to say to John, “I am alive forever more and have the keys of hell and death.”
Indeed, my friends, what a bold assertion that was: What a claim of divine authority; and what an important prophetic announcement as pertaining to the future of God's plans and Purposes in redemption!

No one but Christ would ever dare to make such a high claim as the one stated here. Yet, for Christ to say this, was neither a false claim nor a misstatement of fact. For it was absolutely true!

Jesus had the right to say that He had the keys of hell and of death. He had already proved this all important fact by His death up the cross, and by His descent, after His death, into hell or hades, and by His own resurrection from the dead!

The DEATH OF CHRIST upon THE CROSS was not only to shed His blood as a sacrifice, to make an atonement for our sins, but it was to reveal, to heaven above, and to hell beneath, and to all men everywhere, the great truth which Jesus announced to John upon the Isle of Patmos, i.e., that Jesus holds in His own power THE KEYS OF HELL AND DEATH.

The Power Of Death

Who can MEASURE; who can ESTIMATE, who can even IMAGINE the superhuman strength of that mysterious power we know as death? Through long centuries of time, how many millions have gone down under its power? Like a mighty torrent of waters, with irresistible force, it has swept Kings from their Thrones in every age, and has taken the rich men of the earth away from their riches! It has also robbed the homes of the poor as well as those of the rich, and has covered much of the earth's surface with silent cities of the dead. And, there they are, held as it were, in chains of death, until some power, greater than death shall come to break the bands of death asunder, and to set the captives free.

Death came even to Jesus upon the cross. And in consequence they took His body down, and laid it in the sepulchre. But death could not hold Jesus long in the prison house of the tomb, because on the third day, He burst the bands of death asunder and came forth triumphant over death and the grave! Thus, He proved to ANGELS IN HEAVEN, and to MEN UPON EARTH that He is the ONE, THE ONLY ONE in all the universe who holds the keys of hell and of death.

Hell: Hades

The word “hell” used here, refers to HADES, or the underworld which is the abode of the dead, between death and resurrection.

According to ancient Jewish theology Hades was divided into TWO COMPARTMENTS. The one compartment was for the WICKED DEAD, and the other part for the RIGHTEOUS DEAD, and was called by the Jews “Abraham's Bosom.”

These facts, concerning THE STATE OF THE DEAD between death and resurrection, were forcefully told by our Lord in the account of the rich man and Lazarus, as recorded in Luke 16:19-31.

And so as death holds THE BODIES of men, just so does Hades hold THEIR SOULS between death and resurrection. All who die are retained there, shut in and locked up until Jesus, the true Christ, sees fit to release them. For, did He not say to John, “Behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death”?

This, my friends, should be a solemn thought to all of us! For if Jesus has the keys of hell and death, He is able to lock a man up in hell and keep him there, until he gets ready to let him out. And without His consent, and the use of those keys, there is no release, and NO ESCAPE from the place of remorse and torment.

Jesus Descended

It was into this hell, or hades, that the soul of Jesus descended when He expired upon the cross. Jesus knew; these things in advance of His death upon the cross, therefore He said to the repentant thief upon the cross: “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise,” that is in hades, the region of the dead.

That Jesus descended in spirit into hades, is confirmed in 1 Peter 3:18-19, where it says: ‘For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the Saints in prison.”

Also in Ephesians 4:9-10, it says: “Now, that He ASCENDED, what is it but that He also DESCENDED first into the lower parts of the earth. He that DESCENDED is the same also that ASCENDED up, far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.”

Therefore, my friends, if Jesus, after His death, descended first into Hades, into the heart of the earth, and then later ascended into heaven; HOW, we may ask, did He succeed in performing such a SUPERNATURAL ESCAPE from the regions of the dead?

Indeed, my friends, if Jesus had been a mere man, and a Son of fallen Adam, like the rest of us, He would be in “hell” or “hades” yet
today. But because He was THE SON OF GOD, and had in His possession THE KEYS of hell and death, He had no difficulty, whatever, of escaping from the regions of the dead, and ascending into heaven, far above all principality and power!

He Proved His Power Over Death

Even before His own death, Jesus proved to the unbelieving Jews that He had THE KEYS of the unseen world in His possession and that He had power over death. This He did when He raised Lazarus from the grave after He had been dead four days.

Thus we see, that Jesus has power to spoil the regions of the dead, and to release their captives at will. When He called the dead to come forth, they obeyed His voice and arose! When Jesus spoke, at His command, the soul returned from hades, and the body from the grave, and the dead lived again, as in the case of the WIDOW’S SON, and the NOBLEMAN’S DAUGHTER and LAZARUS, the brother of Mary and Martha.

And so, EVEN BEFORE HIS OWN DEATH, Jesus manifested the great truth that He had in His possession the keys of Hell (or Hades) and of death.

Also, after His own death upon the cross, on the third day, He arose from the dead, and by His own resurrection He gave PERSONAL proof, and, INDISPUTABLE TESTIMONY, to the fact of His having the keys of Hell and of death.

A Solemn Thought

Indeed, what a solemn thought! If this be true of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we know it is, then there is NO HELL SO DEEP but what Jesus can use those keys and open it, and thrust His enemies into it. And there is no opposing power great enough to hinder the Christ of God from using those keys to unlock the PARADISE DIVISION OF HADES, where the souls of the righteous are now confined, and bring them forth, in the power of His own resurrection, to the blessed rewards which await all the faithful ones who have been redeemed by His own blood, and by His saving grace!

Indeed, my friends, how this announcement, which the glorified Christ made to the Apostle John, upon the Isle of Patmos, must have affected him! There is no doubt but what it served to INCREASE HIS FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was speaking to him, and that it also was a GREAT COMFORT to him, to know these things.

John Needed To Know

It was necessary for the great Apostle to understand these great truths concerning Christ, in order to prepare him, for the still greater revelations of divine truth, which were to follow, so that he might record them with a personal understanding of what they meant.

We also should rejoice in a knowledge of such truth, and be thankful that it has been given to us in this great book of Revelation, to instruct our minds, and to comfort our own hearts!

For us, who believe in Christ, it is His pledge of our own resurrection from the dead, in His own likeness, and that even though we must die, He who holds the keys of Hell and death, will open, the prison house of hades, and dispel the darkness of the tomb, and we shall go free! And on the wings of the morning, in our glorified bodies, we shall arise in His own likeness and ascend into His own presence; and so shall we ever be with the Lord!

The Command To Write!

Now, before we pass on to the next chapter, let us call your attention briefly to the command which the glorified Christ gave to John as recorded in Revelation 1:19 where it says: “Write the things WHICH THOU HAST SEEN, and the THINGS WHICH ARE, and the things WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER.”

This, my friends, is the great STARTING POINT AND THE FOUNDATION of the entire book of the Revelation, and this command given to the Apostle John is the key to its true analysis.

Let us recognize that the book of Revelation assumes all the facts of the Gospels, including the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, as accomplished! By the time John received this vision on the Isle of Patmos the churches were fully organized and equipped to carry on their work. The old dispensation of the Law had disappeared and become inoperative and the new dispensation of Grace had fully come! Therefore, the book of the Revelation begins with a presentation of the character, the titles, and the administrations of our risen and glorified Lord, in His relation to the churches already established.

The Seven Churches

Beginning with the SECOND CHAPTER we have the message of the risen Lord to THE SEVEN CHURCHES. These messages continue through the second chapter on through to the close of the third chapter, and constitute a very definite DIVISION OF THE BOOK, in our present study. Considering, then, all that John saw and heard in his vision on the Isle of Patmos, together with what he
was commanded to write, we are carried down to the end of the third chapter. Everything in the book down to that point was received by the Apostle John from ONE SCENE OF OBSERVATION, and all holds together as belonging to one and the same order of things.

What John Was To Write

In his vision John FIRST SAW the risen and glorified Lord. He THEN HEARD from the Lord, certain announcements concerning himself, which revealed His deity and the character of the work He was to accomplish. And last of all he RECEIVED A COMMAND to write the things which he had seen, and concerning the things which are, and the things which SHALL BE HEREAFTER. This expression is important because it implies that John was to write about things, from that particular time on through to the close of God's plan of redemption. We may expect, therefore, that what is written in the entire book of Revelation will carry us to the very consummation of God's plans and purposes in redemption. And that, my friends, is exactly the case. In the book of Revelation we are carried to the FINAL CONSUMPTION of ALL THINGS! Therefore, in this book we must realize that the revelation of God is complete, and that beyond what is written here, no man has a right to claim any additional revelation from God, and is warned not to add to or take away from the things which are written in this book.

The Things Which Are

Now let us turn our attention to the study of THE THINGS WHICH ARE. In other words, the expression referred to of the things which were present at the time John wrote this book. The first thing that John was required to write, was the message of the risen Lord TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES. For he said, “The seven stars are the angels or messengers of the seven churches, and the seven candle sticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

The Meaning Of The Word, Church

Now, before we proceed with our study of these seven messages to the seven churches, it is very important that we should understand first of all the true meaning of the word “church.” The word church in the English is the equivalent of a GREEK WORD meaning to call out of or from among. In some places in the Scriptures THE CHURCH is spoken of as AN ASSEMBLY. Stephen, in Acts 7:38, spoke of the “church in the wilderness.” His reference here, of course, was to Israel whom God had called out of Egypt.

Sometimes the word CHURCH is used to denote the entire community of Christian people, of all nations, regardless of race or color. An example of this broad usage of the term is found in Matthew 16:18 where Jesus said, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Again, the word CHURCH is often used to denote A SMALL GROUP of Christians, belonging perhaps, to a single household. For example, Paul spoke of Priscilla and Aquilla, and of the church which was in their house.

Again, it is sometimes used to denote a PARTICULAR GROUP of Christians in the same neighborhood or city who have organized themselves together for the carrying on of God's work. Therefore, Paul speaks of “the church which is at Corinth” etc. We therefore should take into account all of these VARIOUS MEANINGS when we think of the word “CHURCH.” And we also wish to add that all TRUE CHRISTIANS of the entire church age, of whatever group they may have been or to which they may now belong, are members of the body of Christ!

In Revelation 1:11, Jesus commanded John, saying, What thou seest write in a book and send it unto THE SEVEN CHURCHES which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”

Why Seven Churches?

It is natural that we should ask why these messages should be sent to only SEVEN CHURCHES. Were there not other churches existing at that time, to which these messages might have been sent? Yes, there were many of them. But in this special revelation of divine truth the NUMBER SEVEN is very prominent and very important. A brief study in Scripture numerics will reveal more clearly what I mean. There is a real significance in numbers which proceeds from the very nature of things.

Number One!

THE UNIT ONE is the source, and we might say the parent, of all numbers. In the Scriptures, therefore, the unit one stands for God, who is the beginning and source of all things. The number one expresses commencement and the very first words of the Bible read, “In the beginning, God.” And nothing can so well express the thought of God's being the FIRST GREAT CAUSE, of all things, as the number one. In the Scriptures, however, God has revealed Himself, not only as the FIRST CAUSE, but as A TRINITY. This Trinity is expressed in language such as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are represented as being one IN NATURE, UNITY and PURPOSE. In this divine Trinity, the Father is FIRST, the Son is SECOND, and the Holy Spirit is THIRD. Therefore, if NUMBER
ONE stands for God the Father, NUMBER TWO stands for Christ the Son! The number two, therefore, DOES NOT, by itself, stand for perfect fullness or completion, for the Son is not complete within Himself, apart from the Father and the Holy Spirit; Number two is spoken of as the productive number, but it is ONLY COMPLETE when the product is added. This is best illustrated by the ordinary family. The man and wife are said to be ONE FLESH, but it takes a child which is THE PRODUCT OF A DUAL UNITY, in order to complete the family.

Number Three

THE NUMBER THREE is especially interesting. It is spoken of as a number of individual completion. It is composed of three numbers, each of which is in itself, one. For instance, one times one, times one, equals only one! Therefore, when God represents Himself as a Trinity, namely as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ONE FATHER times ONE SON, times ONE HOLY SPIRIT, equals only ONE GOD! Three, therefore, is the logical number used to express the Trinity. This thought of the Trinity is also expressed in man himself—for man is BODY, SOUL, and SPIRIT. Yet these three elements of a man's nature constitute only ONE MAN. Therefore, before a man tries to argue against the trinity of the divine Godhead, let him first analyze his own nature, and if he can, destroy the trinity of his own being! We know that this would be impossible, for God is a Trinity and man was made in the image of God. Therefore, he is also a trinity.

Number: Four

FOUR IS THE WORLDLY NUMBER. Being next in order from the number three, it represents that which proceeds from the Trinity. Therefore, in Scripture it represents the creation of God. The world, which came from the hand of God is divided into FOUR chief elements; fire, air, earth, and water. There are FOUR POINTS ON THE COMPASS: north, east, south and west. There are also FOUR SEASONS of the year, and many other things which we might mention to show that the number four is the worldly number.

Number: Five

THE NUMBER FIVE, we are told, represents progress but incompleteness.

Number: Six

NUMBER SIX is the Satanic number. Therefore, it is significant that the number of the coming Antichrist is to be 666.

Number: Seven

And now we come to the NUMBER SEVEN. Seven is the number of dispensational fullness. Therefore, when the number seven is used it represents completeness in relation to the subject in question. - If in the Scriptures it is used CONCERNING JUDGMENT, it would represent the fullness or completeness of judgment. - If the number seven is used concerning GOD’S GRACE, it would mean the fullness or completeness of God's grace. In our present lesson text, it is used in reference to the seven churches. Therefore, the number seven in this case, is REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL CHURCHES!

Number: Eight

EIGHT IS THE NUMBER OF NEW BEGINNING AND OF RESURRECTION! Therefore, it is significant that the EIGHTH DAY is the beginning of our new week. The Jewish child was circumcised on the eighth day, and Noah was referred to as the eighth person. This will suffice to show that the number eight is also important.

Number: Ten

TEN IS THE NUMBER OF WORLDLY COMPLETION, especially as related to the fact of evil.

Number: Twelve

TWELVE IS THE NUMBER OF FINAL COMPLETENESS! Hence, we have TWELVE MONTHS in the year. There were TWELVE TRIBES of Israel, and TWELVE APOSTLES of the Lamb. And the New Jerusalem is to have TWELVE GATES.

We do not have time to enlarge further upon this very interesting study of numbers and their important relation to Scripture truth. We have digressed somewhat in this chapter to mention these things merely to impress upon you THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NUMBER SEVEN as it is used in our lesson text today and many times throughout the entire book of Revelation. We shall first study about the SEVEN CHURCHES and then, the SEVEN SEALS and then, the SEVEN TRUMPETS, and then about the SEVEN VIALS of the wrath of God.

Now, in our next lesson we shall begin a study of the messages to the seven churches.
LECTURE 7 ON THE REVELATION

The Message of the Risen Christ to the Church at Ephesus — These Messages to Be Applied in a Three-fold Way — Important Facts About the Message to Each of the Seven Churches — Commendation and Rebuke

IN THIS WONDERFUL first chapter of the Revelation, Jesus is presented as being both LORD and JUDGE among the Churches, observing everything and passing judgment upon all we do.

We have given considerable time and study also to the DIVINE TITLES which Christ assumed, and spoke to John about, in this chapter, in order to reveal to him His true nature, and His eternal character and divine authority!

In the preceding chapter, we spoke chiefly concerning the words of our Lord to John, when He commanded him to write concerning THE THINGS WHICH HE HAD SEEN, i.e., the vision of the glorified Christ: And "THE THINGS WHICH ARE." This statement refers prophetically to the entire Church Age, or day of Grace, which began then, and which will continue until the resurrection and rapture of the Church: and the THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER, i.e., those things which shall be AFTER THE CHURCH AGE IS FINISHED, and the Church has gone to be with Christ.

We also called your attention to the importance of the number SEVEN, which is used so frequently in the Scriptures, and especially in the Book of Revelation.

The number SEVEN signifies perfection, or completeness! It is the number of dispensational fullness. Therefore, whether it refers to grace, or judgment, or to the churches, it symbolizes completeness, or fullness, of the subject in question.

Since, in our present case, the number SEVEN is used in reference to the Churches, we may rightly assume that the SEVEN messages to the SEVEN Churches cover the whole of the Church age, and, that which is spoken here, in these messages, represents God's message to ALL CHURCHES during the present age of Grace.

Now let us advance in our study by reading and considering what is written in Revelation 2:1-7, where it says:

The Message To Ephesus "Unto the Angel of the Church of Ephesus write: These things saith He that holdeth the Seven Stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks; “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; “And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted, “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. “But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

This, my friends, is indeed a remarkable passage of Scripture, which contains much truth that rightfully demands our prayerful and careful consideration.

But before we take up our study of what is written here, I wish to impress upon you again the fact, that what we have in these SEVEN MESSAGES to the SEVEN CHURCHES is in reality a PROPHETIC FOREVIEW of all Church History! In other words, they represent WHAT THE CHURCH WAS TO BE LIKE from the beginning, on through the entire Church age, and what it WILL BE LIKE in the end. In these seven messages, the glorified Christ gave to the Apostle John a PROPHETIC OUTLINE of Church history from the day of Pentecost to the rapture of the saints. These seven messages are therefore a COMPOSITE WORD PICTURE of the Church from then until now, and on to the close of the Church age.

A Threefold Application

These messages have a threefold application—

(1) First of all, to the local churches addressed;
(2) Secondly, to the entire church, addressed as a composite whole;
(3) And thirdly, the truth given here may be applied to the individual believer, for the entire Church is made up only of individual Christians. Now to clarify what we mean—
(1) The message to EPHESUS, which we shall study today, was symbolic of the APOSTOLIC CHURCH PERIOD.

(2) The message to SMYRNA represented the period of great persecution.

(3) The message to Pergamos represented that period of Church history when WORLDLINESS crept in, and the Church received the favor of IMPERIAL SANCTION.

(4) The message to THYATIRA portrayed the Church in the DARK AGES, as it was then filled with corruption!

(5) The message to the Church of SARDIS was symbolic of the Church during the period of the GREAT REFORMATION.

(6) The message to the Church of PHILADELPHIA represented the great MISSIONARY PERIOD of the Church, which seems just now to be coming to a close.

(7) And the message to the Church at LAODICEA clearly represents the apostate Church of the last days of the present Church age.

Therefore, we are compelled to look upon these seven messages to the seven churches as a PROPHETIC FOREVIEW of the entire Church age.

A Definite Division Of Truth

Viewing them in this light, we must acknowledge that they constitute a very DEFINITE DIVISION OF TRUTH in the Book of Revelation.

They constitute, in fact, one of the most enlightening and most unique portions of literature to be found anywhere. Why? Because they reveal to us THE END from THE BEGINNING. They make known to us, in advance, just what to expect as history unfolds before our eyes. What is written here has always helped Christians to understand WHAT NEXT in the divine plan for the Church.

Such truth, such foreknowledge, my friends, is priceless to the child of God because it serves as a BEACON LIGHT to guide our steps, and it serves to COMFORT us as we labor on in a world of sin and sorrow, with tares among the wheat, and with difficulty on every hand.

It helps us to understand that our present circumstance is not to be the eternal state of things, but that some time the long dark night will end, and a new day will dawn, both for the Church, and for the world.

The Day Of Peace

The new day of peace cannot come, however, until GOD’S PURPOSES IN GRACE have been accomplished, and the Church has been called out and raptured away to be with Christ.

The new day of peace for all the world cannot come until GOD’S PURPOSES IN JUDGMENT against the wicked have also come to pass.

A Birds-eye View

It was very important and very necessary for the Christians of the apostolic church, as well as for those in every period of church history, to have an understanding of these things. It was necessary for them to catch a birds-eye view of the entire Church age, so that they might labor on in hope, and conform their hearts and their work to the will and the purposes of God.

Four Important Facts

Now, since we are about to study the seven messages to the seven churches, and we are considering them AS A WHOLE, let us notice also FOUR IMPORTANT FACTS which are found in each of the seven messages.

(1) In each of them Jesus REFERS TO SOME PARTICULAR ATTRIBUTE of His own person, thus describing His own nature, and the character of His work in every period of the entire church age.

(2) Also in each message the Lord makes A SPECIAL APPEAL, and utters a warning which fits the need of the local church addressed. Here again the appeal and warning were symbolic of the respective periods of Church history.

(3) Also each of the seven messages contains the important exhortation—*He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

(4) And EACH MESSAGE to EACH CHURCH closes with a special promise to those who overcome.
About Ephesus

Now, let us return to a study of the message of our risen Lord to the Church at Ephesus recorded in Revelation 2:1-7.

Each of the seven churches addressed were local churches, which actually existed in Asia Minor at that time.

Of the seven churches, Ephesus was the one nearest to the Isle of Patmos, where John received this vision, and was commanded to write these things.

It was once an important and magnificent city. It is described as being the center of trade, for a rich and beautiful country. It was a center of government, and was widely known for its learning, wealth, art and religion!

It has been of interest to all Christians in every period of the Church Age, because it was here that the APOSTLE PAUL lived for two whole years, and accomplished some of the greatest works of his entire career, as the great missionary to the Gentiles.

It was here also that the APOSTLE JOHN himself had lived and laboured, and where he died.

MARY, the Mother of Jesus, may have spent her last days upon earth in this city with the Apostle John. For, you will remember, that while Jesus hung upon the cross, He said to her, "Woman behold thy Son," and to John He said, "Behold thy Mother."

Therefore when John went to Ephesus to labor there, did Mary, the Mother of Jesus, accompany Him? Well, be that as it may, it is an interesting point of conjecture.

It was also in Ephesus that APPOLLOS was converted.

And TIMOTHY also labored there as a faithful servant of God in the ministry of the early church.

Ephesus Today

But Ephesus is only a mere desolation now. The market place is in ruins. Only a trace of the great theater of the Ephesians still remains to remind us of the ancient glories, which the Ephesians once possessed. They tell us that it is impossible to locate with certainty, the great Temple of “Diana of the Ephesians.”

In that great city of ancient times was the first of the Churches to which Jesus, the glorified, risen and ascended Lord, commanded John to send the words of the entire book of Revelation of Jesus Christ, which we are now studying.

The Message To Ephesus

Now let us turn our attention to the message itself, as given in Revelation 2:1-7.

To John, on the Isle of Patmos, Jesus, the risen and glorified Lord, said, **Unto the Angel (or messenger or pastor) of the Church of Ephesus, write; These things saith He that holdeth the Seven Stars (or as we have explained, the true Ministers of His Word) IN HIS RIGHT HAND; who walketh in the midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks** which are the Seven Churches.

With these unusual words of salutation, Jesus sought to impress the Pastor of the Church at Ephesus, and the entire Church with the DEITY and LORDSHIP, and THE AUTHORITY of the one who was speaking to them in the message.

This was in keeping with the truth presented in chapter one, where Christ is presented as the Lord and Judge among the Churches, and as the one who holds all true ministers of His Word in His own right hand.

Desired

The word Ephesus means “desired.” No doubt those early Apostolic Churches were very precious to our Lord, for to Him they were the beginning of an eternal plan and purpose! Jesus knew that it was God's plan to call out the Church, which is the Body of Christ, from among both Jews and Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel during this age of grace. And what for? "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which He proposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11).

Knowing, therefore, the great future and eternal purposes of God for the true Church, is it any wonder that Jesus looked upon those early churches with LOVE and PASSIONATE DESIRE for their success? They were to become a very part of Himself. He was Lord and Judge of all they did, and therefore He was in a position to commend them for their faith and good works. And he was also in a position to censor them and to rebuke them for any wrong, or failing, or short coming which He saw in them.

And so in all of these messages we find that our Lord both commends and rebukes the Churches, according to their state. And we may be assured that He rebuked them only because it was necessary, and because He desired their success, and that they might...
bear much fruit and be pleasing unto God.

The Lord opened His message to the CHURCH AT EPHESUS with words of commendation.

I Know Thy Works

The first thing He said was:

‘I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them, which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars;

“And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored and hast not fainted.”

What a sobering thought, my friends, when we are made to realize that Jesus, the true LORD and JUDGE of all the churches, knows our works! Indeed, there is not a thing in the PULPIT, or in the PEW that He does not observe and judge. He knows the sincere, loving desire of every true child of God. He knows their trials, and pain and heart aches. He knows their works, both good and bad.

Likewise Jesus knows all of the wicked unbelief, and the awful hypocrisy, and the hatred, and malice and backbiting of those who are hypocrits, and have received neither forgiveness of their sins, nor the grace of God in their hearts, yet who make a profession of religion.

Apparently the Christians at Ephesus had been faithful workers for Christ, for He seems to commend them for their work and labor of love, and for their Patience.

Commendation

He also commended them because they could not bear with those who were evil. Apparently there was a true spirit of Church discipline in that early Church at Ephesus. No doubt, if a man who Professed to be a follower of Christ, did not live right, and walk straight, and do the Lord's work, he was barred from the fellowship of the church, until he repented, and straightened up and behaved himself. And Jesus was well pleased with this condition at Ephesus.

But how about today? The churches today seem to have lost the idea of rejecting from their numbers those who are evil. Today the churches seem to want a large attendance at ANY PRICE! In consequence our churches today are filled with those who are evil at heart, who have only a mere profession of faith, and a form of godliness, that is all! And in most cases both the preacher and the official board, and the Christians of the Church, are afraid of saying anything about it, for fear of offending some one!

Indeed, how very sad that the churches of our day have lost their desire and POWER TO REBUKE EVIL and to reject those who bring shame upon the work of the church, by evil deeds.

Rebuke

Now, in spite of all the words of commendation which Jesus had for the Church at Ephesus, He also had some words of rebuke.

Therefore, in Revelation 2:4-5 He said:

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

How very sad indeed that a Church which had won so much commendation from their Lord was found to be at fault at this particular point, i.e., they had “left their first love.”

And, what, may we ask, is the nature of that FIRST LOVE which Jesus referred to here?

FIRST LOVE toward Christ, my friends, is not mere emotion, with tears and godly sorrow for sin. That is a part of it, of course. But FIRST LOVE toward Christ will consistently, day by day, PUT CHRIST FIRST in all of our lives. The newly converted man or woman, as a rule, is willing to do this. But WITH MANY who have known Christ in the forgiveness of their sins, and who have received an experience of grace in their hearts, IT IS NOT LONG until their FIRST LOVE dies, because they no longer put Christ, and His work, and God's will FIRST in their lives! Therefore they allow SELF LOVE, or SELFISH LOVE, to kill that FIRST LOVE which they had, when they were converted, which made them willing TO PUT CHRIST FIRST in their lives. Therefore, FIRST LOVE means CHRIST FIRST in everything, all the time! Jesus warned those Christians at Ephesus to repent and do the first works, or else He would come quickly and remove their Candlestick.

What an earnest call to repentance that was which Jesus gave—not to unconverted sinners—but to the professed followers of Christ
in that early Church!

And, my friends, the SAME CALL and the SAME WARNING have held true in every period of the Church Age.

Church History

Every period of Church History has been strewn with churches who received THIS SAME CALL, and who FAILED TO REPENT and return to their FIRST LOVE, and to their first works! In consequence their Candlesticks were removed, and the light of their testimony for Christ went out, and instead of being a blessing, they became a reproach, and a stumbling block to the cause of Christ.

God pity such churches when our Lord, who is judge of all we do, comes again. Alas! What then?

LECTURE 8 ON THE REVELATION

LECTURE No. 8 Words of Commendation for the Church at Ephesus — The Nicolaitanes, Were Troubling the Church, by Seeking to Divide It. Jesus Was Humble and Helpful and He Wants Us to Be Like Himself — Jesus Hates the Self-Seeking Spirit Among Christians and Condemns It — A Divine Warning and a Prophetic Promise

LET US REMIND you once again that the divinely given title of this book, as given in the first verse of the first chapter is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.” The word “Revelation” you will recall means to “reveal,” or make manifest, in the sense of unveiling something to view. Therefore, the entire Book which we are now studying is devoted to the task of making Christ more fully and completely known to us, than in any other portion of God’s Word.

Christ As Revealed In Chapter One!

In keeping with this general purpose of the book, Christ has been revealed to us already in the first chapter –

(1) “The Faithful Witness;”

(2) “The First Begotten of the Dead;”

(3) “The Prince of the Kings of the Earth;”

(4) Also as the ONE “who loved us, and who washed us from our sins in His own blood”

(5) He is also revealed in this chapter as the Son of Man, and as the LORD and JUDGE of all the Churches;

(6) In the first chapter He is also revealed as the ONE who liveth and was dead, and who is alive forever more.”

(7) Also as the ONE “who holds the keys of hell and death;”

(8) And as the ONE “who holds the Seven Stars (i.e., the Ministers of His Word) in His own right hand.”

The Seven Messages To The Seven Churches

Now in Chapters 2 and 3 we have a still MORE COMPLETE and DETAILED REVELATION of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the SEVEN MESSAGES to the SEVEN CHURCHES which we have recorded here. In these SEVEN MESSAGES to the SEVEN CHURCHES we behold Christ speaking as one in authority, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees!

We have already stated that these messages to the Churches constitute a very definite division in our study of the Book of Revelation, and that they are one of the most enlightening portions of Scripture which we have anywhere in the Word of God.

Let me remind you once again that these messages to the Churches have a threefold application—

(1) First to the local Churches addressed.

(2) Then to the entire Church, by which we mean all churches of the entire Church age,

(3) They also have a personal application to every individual Christian.

In our last message we began a study of the message which Jesus sent to the Church at Ephesus. He addressed Himself to this Church as the one who holdeth the Seven Stars in His right hand, and who walketh in the midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks.

In our last message we considered Jesus’ words of commendation which He had for the Church at Ephesus. He also rebuked them,
however, because they had left their first love. Therefore, He admonished them earnestly to repent and do the first works, or else He would come and remove their Candlestick.

The Nicolaitans

And now at this point we shall continue our study of the message of our Lord to this Church, by reading what is stated in Revelation 2, verses 6 and 7; where it says:

“But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate

“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.”

In these two verses we have some very suggestive truth, which well deserves our careful attention.

Who The Nicolaitanes Were

In the sixth verse Jesus commended the Church of Ephesus because they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, and in the same statement He announced His own divine hatred of the same group! This terse, pointed statement, against the Nicolaitanes naturally arouses our curiosity to know just WHAT SORT OF FOLK they were, and WHAT SORT OF SIN they had committed to arouse the enmity of the Church at Ephesus, and the announced displeasure of our Lord against them. A footnote in my Bible says that the word “Nicolaitanes” is taken from two words, “Nikao”—to conquer, and “Laos” which means the people or laity. The analysis of the word is very interesting because it reveals there were those who were trying to divide the Church of Christ, (which was at that time a COMMON BROTHERHOOD OF BELIEVERS) into a system of Ecclesiastical authority, by dividing the groups of believers INTO THE CLERGY and THE LAITY.

While He was yet on earth Jesus did not approve any spirit among believers which would divide them, by exalting some, to positions of authority, and reducing others to mere servants. In Luke the 22nd chapter and the 24th verse we read that a strife had arisen among the disciples as to who should be the greatest, and to all of their carnal strife Jesus answered saying, “The Kings of the Gentiles exercise LORDSHIP over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. BUT YE SHALL NOT BE SO: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

“For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? BUT I AM AMONG YOU AS HE THAT SERVETH.”

Jesus Was Humble

Thus, my friends, we see that Jesus Himself, as the spiritual leader, and as the founder of the True Church, even washed His disciples’ feet, and in no wise sought to exalt Himself, but won His place of leadership among them by humble service, rather than by self-exaltation. In Matthew the 23rd chapter, Jesus rebuked this same spirit in the Scribes and Pharisees, whom He said, “sat in Moses’ seat.” They were lifted up with pride of position, and because of this they put a difference between themselves and the common believers in Israel, and Jesus accused them, saying, “They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers! For all their works, they do for to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren, and call no man your father; upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven. NEITHER BE YE CALLED MASTERS; for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”

Thus, my friends, from these quotations which we have given, it is perfectly evident that Jesus hated and despised those who assumed positions of dictatorial leadership, and whose authority was not in any wise based upon true merit.

It is also perfectly evident that He hated and despised the Scribes and Pharisees AMONG THE JEWS because they had assumed an air of authority and leadership, which was based neither upon humility nor upon service. On the contrary they made themselves self appointed masters over God’s elect.

What Peter Said:

The Apostle Peter also warned of this in First Peter 5: verses 2 and 3, where he said: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock, and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”
From such passages as this, my friends, it is plainly evident that Jesus intends that positions in Church leadership should not be the result of HUMAN APPOINTMENT or self exaltation, but should be attained to because the one in charge has given real service and merits the confidence of the people whom he serves as leader of the flock.

Is it any wonder, therefore that Jesus commended the Church of Ephesus because they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, and that He joined sides with them by saying, “which I also hate.” I dare say, my friends, that the SEEDS OF NICOLAITANISM which were planted in that EARLY CHURCH by those who would use the work of the church as a ladder to climb to some position of self exaltation, have been manifest in EVERY PERIOD of the Church age and are prevalent in a very great degree in the religious world of today. In spite of all the titles which men assume, and which men in ecclesiastical authority bestow upon others, if these titles are not well earned through the divine, rather than the human call upon a man’s life, and have not been earned by humble and sacrificial service to their fellow men, in God's sight, they are not worth the paper it takes to write them on. We may assume therefore that the spirit and practice of the Nicolaitanes was a dangerous thing, and that it is something which Christ hates, and which some day He will destroy with a mighty hand. The truth of what I have just said will be confirmed as we continue our study of the Book of Revelation. In my judgment, (based upon the Scriptures) Jesus will, in the near future bring judgment upon the entire ecclesiastical world, which is shot through from top to bottom, and from stem to stern with a spirit of Nicolaitanism!

Korah An Example

Even in olden times, in the days of Moses, God was displeased with Korah, when He sought to challenge the authority of Moses and sought to trespass into the Priest's office. And because this man sought to assume DIVINE AUTHORITY which God had given to another, God sent a terrible judgment upon him and his followers, and it says, “the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, WENT DOWN ALIVE INTO THE PIT, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation.”

And thus, my friends, all the deeds and the works of the Nicolaitanes will SOONER or LATER perish under the terrible judgments of God. Those, who have assumed ecclesiastical authority by self exaltation rather than by divine appointment, and have used that authority for selfish purposes, and have made themselves LORDS OVER GOD'S HERITAGE, and have enriched their own coffers at the expense of the poor of the land, will yet feel the judgments of an angry God upon them. Indeed, my friends, ecclesiastical Babylon as well as Political and Commercial Babylon, MUST and WILL fall when God's time comes.

A Prophetic Warning

Therefore in this expression of our Lord in Revelation 2 and verse 6, where He said that He hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, we see not only a STATEMENT OF FACT, but one which carries with it a note of Prophetic WARNING TO ALL who belong to the Nicolaitanes of our day as well as then. And you may be assured that anything which Christ hates will eventually be destroyed, and may God hasten the day when the spirit of the Nicolaitanes SHALL BE DESTROYED out of the midst of the Church, and that it can be said once again of all who belong to Christ “WE ARE BRETHREN.”

He That Hath An Ear

We now turn our attention to the statement which Jesus made in Revelation 1:7, where He said: “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.”

It is interesting to note that the expression “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!” was repeated by our Lord in His message to each of the seven Churches. We have every reason, therefore, to believe that it is a statement of considerable importance, and that it carries a weight of truth, which rightly commands our attention.

First of all, let us note, that the word Spirit used in this expression is spelled with a capital “S”, indicating that it is the Holy Spirit through whom God is speaking to the churches.

Next let us note that Jesus said, “He that hath AN EAR, let him hear.” The very wording of this introductory expression would seem to indicate that there were some in the Church at Ephesus who having ears were UNABLE TO HEAR THE TRUTH which Jesus had spoken to them in this message. No doubt this was due to a lack of spirituality. Their spiritual state and condition are well described in Matthew 13, verses 13 to 16, where Jesus said: “Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and THEIR EARS ARE DULL OF HEARING, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal
Some Unable To Hear

This passage clearly reveals that there are those within every group of professed believers who are SPIRITUALLY DEAF and SPIRITUALLY BLIND, and this peculiar blindness and deafness is described as being the result of sinning against the light, and the truth which they have seen and heard. Jesus said, "Their eyes they have closed: lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart and should be converted, and I should heal them."

The very fact that Jesus said in His message to the Church at Ephesus, He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches would indicate that there were those in the church at that time who were UNABLE TO HEAR the message which God had for them.

And my friends, it has been so in every period of Church history, and it is even so yet today. I have found this to be true in my own personal experience in the ministry, and I know it is true, even concerning these messages that we are now giving out. There are many who are unprelared to receive them. Indeed there are thousands of churches over the land today who would not even allow such messages as we are giving out from God's Word to be preached in their pulpits. Why? Because "their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have been closed: lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted."

Faith Cometh By Hearing

Indeed, my friends, we must realize that THE EAR as well as the eye is an avenue to the heart. The ear, therefore, holds a very important relationship to the matter of individual salvation, for the Scripture says "that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." There can be no question but what thousands of people stay away from Church today simply TO KEEP FROM HEARING THE TRUTH. They are afraid that the truth which they might hear would uncover the secret sins of their hearts, and expose their evil practices, and their unjust dealings with their fellow men! They fail to realize, however, that it is necessary for the Word of God to expose their sins, because, - No man will seek the Lord who does not first feel his need of a Saviour. - No man will seek the REMEDY FOR SIN, until he has been made to feel the PAIN and the STRENGTH and the PENALTY OF SIN! - No man will seek for the grace of God (which is unmerited favor), until he has felt the GUILT OF SIN in his own heart. Such people fail to realize that the SAME BIBLE which teaches them about sin, and warns them against the judgments of God, also teaches them the way of salvation. It tells them of a Saviour who is well able to save from THE UTTERMOST to THE UTTERMOST; them that come unto God by Him. If all the Bible did was to condemn a man in his sin, and did not offer a remedy, and gave no promise of reward for repentance, and for faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then we could understand why men do not want to hear the Bible. But the Bible, not only teaches a man the SINFULLNESS OF SIN, but it also teaches him A WAY OF ESCAPE! This being true, the Bible contains THE GREATEST MESSAGE to the human heart that any man could ever hope to hear, and therefore, concerning these messages that we are now giving out over the Radio, we say with all the earnestness of our hearts, "he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Let us not forget the words of Revelation 1:3, where Jesus said: '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.'

It Was Necessary

We see therefore that it was necessary for Jesus, in addressing Himself to the Church at Ephesus, and subsequently to all churches throughout the entire Church age, in the strange language which He employed here: because the Church has ever been, in its present state, an admixture of those who TRULY BELIEVE, and are willing to hear the truth when it is preached, and those who are unwilling, and therefore UNABLE TO HEAR THE TRUTH, because they are mere professors and have no real experience of grace in their hearts. The expression which Jesus used makes allowance for this difference, and we may say that what He said was an admonition to some, and a warning to others! This condition of admixture was nothing new, but has existed from the earliest days of the church. Strange as it may seem there was a JUDAS among the Apostles, and there was an ANANIAS and a SAPPHIRA among the converts of the early church, and a little later on you will recall there was SIMON THE SORCERER, who tried to buy the Holy Ghost with money, and Peter was compelled to tell him that his heart was not right in the sight of God.

Admixture In The Early Church

And so, my friends, we see that this state of admixture existed in the early church, and has continued from then until now, and it will be so, even to the end of this present age, until the time of harvest, as Jesus stated in Matthew 13:36 to 43. There will be tares among the wheat, and they are to grow together until the harvest. Indeed, there is no place where God has caused the good seed to be sown, that the same ground has not been oversown with tares. This is a sad truth, which is hard to understand, nevertheless it is true, and so if anyone should be looking for a church that is perfect, and which has no tares in it, he will search all his life and die still searching. Somehow it seems there is no preaching, however pure and true to the Word of God it may be, and no church discipline, however strict or wise it may be, and no watchfulness, however faithful and diligent it may be, which can keep the tares from...
And therefore, in view of this condition of admixture, which existed then in the church at Ephesus, and which still exists today, Jesus found it necessary to say: “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” And, my friends, well may the churches of our day heed the admonition, which was given to the church at Ephesus by the risen and glorified LORD.

The Holy Spirit Speaks

This very same passage would indicate that Christ was then, and is now speaking to the churches, through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to abide in the hearts of all who had believed in Christ, and during this entire age, while Christ has been absent, and the Holy Spirit has been present here upon earth, the Lord has spoken to the Church through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the Holy Spirit speaks, convicting men of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, they would do well to take heed.

LECTURE 9 ON THE REVELATION

LECTURE No. 9 Overcomers to Eat of the Tree of Life Once Again in the Paradise of God — The First Garden — The New Paradise — The Message to the Smyrna Church — Christ Knows and Takes Notice of All That We Do — Jesus Also Knows What Our Enemies Think and Say and Do — A Comforting Promise to Those Who Overcome — The Second Death Defined

IN OUR LAST MESSAGE we continued our study of the seven messages to the seven churches, as recorded in the second and third chapters of this book. The first message was sent to the Church at Ephesus, and thus far we have learned that Jesus had both words of commendation and rebuke for that early Apostolic Church. He commended them for their works and for their patience, and because they could not bear them which were evil, but He rebuked them because they had left their first love. Because of this, He warned them that unless they should repent and do the first works, He would remove their Candlestick.

He further commended them because they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which He said, 1 also hate." In our last message we explained who the Nicolaitanes were, i.e., that they were a self seeking group within the Church, who sought to divide the Church of God into two groups, known as the CLERGY and the LAITY, and then by self appointed authority, make themselves Lords over God's heritage. The true Christians at Ephesus hated this spirit of those who loved the preeminence, and who sought to exalt themselves at the expense of others, and Jesus Himself also expressed His hatred of the Nicolaitanes.

The Special Promise

Now let us consider the special promise which the Lord gave to the Church at Ephesus. In Revelation 2 and verse 7, He said: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." All students of the Scriptures know that in the Garden of Eden, besides the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, there was also the TREE OF LIFE in the midst of the Garden. Man was forbidden, however, to take of the fruit of the tree, of the knowledge of good and evil. But we all know full well that Adam and Eve listened to the words of Satan, and disobeyed God, and partook of the forbidden fruit. And because they did this they were judged and driven out of the Garden; for it says in Genesis 3: in verses 23 and 24: “Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

What Man Lost

From this passage we see that through disobedience man lost his access to THE TREE OF LIFE, and having been driven out of the garden, for nearly six thousand years he has been barred from the tree of life. Death came upon the children of men as God had predicted, and from then until now, in spite of all that men do to preserve health, and to protect their lives from the scourge of disease and disaster, absolutely nothing has been found to take the place of THE TREE OF LIFE to which they had access in the Garden of Eden. MEDICINE may help to preserve life for awhile, but the time comes when medicine alone is not enough, and men die in a world that is full of medicine. Love and care and the fellowship of our friends are strong influences which surround us and help to preserve our lives for awhile, but none of these things can save a man from death. Therefore in spite of education, in spite of wealth, in spite of medicines and hospitals, and the aid of skilled physicians, and in spite of the sustaining love and fellowship of friends and loved ones, men die! All of these things are not enough! What man, therefore, is there among us, who would not, if he could, be glad to partake once again OF THE TREE OF LIFE in order that he might LIVE FOREVER! And that my friends, is exactly what Jesus promised in His message to the church at Ephesus. He said: “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”
Such a promise as this, my friends, should serve as an incentive to any man, and cause him to want to be a Christian. For what greater privilege could be offered to any man as a reward for faith in Jesus Christ, and for obedience to the will of God, than that which is offered here.

How History Began

It is interesting to note that the history of man began with man living in the midst of the Garden of Eden, in which was the tree of life, and that THE HISTORY OF MAN WILL END, with man living in the NEW PARADISE in which will be THE TREE OF LIFE, once again. This is confirmed in Revelation 22:1 and 3, where it says: "And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb. "In 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. And there shall be no more curse; but the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve him."

I am wondering what man there is anywhere who would not enjoy the grand and glorious privilege suggested here; of living in this NEW PARADISE wherein is the tree of life, and in which there is no curse, and where the throne of God is, and where Jesus dwells?

In Revelation 22:14, it says: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city."

The Message To Smyrna

Now in our study we come next to the message of our Lord to the Church at Smyrna. This is recorded in Revelation 2:8 to 11, and reads as follows:

"And unto the angel of the church of Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. "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. "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."

Historical Background

Now before we consider the spiritual significance of this message, let us refer briefly to the geographical location of this Church and to some interesting things concerning it. Geographically speaking, Smyrna was NEXT NEAREST to the Isle of Patmos, of the seven churches to whom these epistles were addressed. It is interesting to note that it is the only one of the seven places named, which retains anything like its ancient standing. We are told that it is located at the head of a beautiful bay about forty miles northeast of the place where Ephesus used to be. It has a population of about; 120,0000, most of whom are Greeks. We are told that Smyrna was originally founded by Alexander and is claimed as the birthplace of Homer. It was at one time considered THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITY IN ASIA, and was celebrated for its library and its heathen temple, and its sacred festivals associated with pagan worship. There is no mention made of Smyrna in the Bible except in the Book of Revelation.

It is not known just how or when Christianity was introduced into this city. It is supposed to have been started during Paul's stay at Ephesus. History confirms the fact that it was here that Polycarp, the Christian martyr, labored, and died for the Lord! We are told also that the hillside of Pagus on which Polycarp was burned, was at one time reddened with the blood of FIFTEEN HUNDRED Christians, and with eight hundred at another time, who died as martyrs because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Polycarp himself was the bishop of Smyrna, and although he took refuge from his enemies in a farm home, they searched him out and arrested him and prepared to kill him. Before they did so, however, they tried in every way to get him to blaspheme the name of Jesus, but he is quoted as having said: "Eighty and six years have I served my Lord, and He has been my truest Friend. How then can I blaspheme Him who shed His blood to wash away my sins?" And thus he died bravely for the Lord when they burned him at the stake, and many brave Christians followed his illustrious example, and died bravely for Christ.

Indeed, my friends, it cost something to be a Christian in those days.

The Salutation

Now let us notice how the glorified Lord addressed Himself to those persecuted Christians of this early church. He said, These
things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." How very striking and appropriate, my friends, that Jesus should have used this particular title, concerning Himself, when addressing these Christians at Smyrna. Jesus used this title, no doubt, to encourage them in their faith and suffering and persecution. Many of them were soon to die as martyrs for the cause of Christ, and as they went to the stake to offer their bodies as a sacrifice to Him, He wanted them to know and to remember that He also died upon the cross for them, and was dead, and that He was alive for evermore! This was just another way of testifying to them that He was the one who had been crucified and was dead and buried, and who had risen again from the dead! For them to recognize this great truth would surely impress upon them the divine authority of the one who was sending to them this message, and it would certainly serve to encourage them in their own faith, and make them WILLING TO DIE for Jesus, if necessary.

This was especially needful because the SMYRNA PERIOD of Church history is known as the period of great Persecution, which continued until A. D. 316. During that time many were slain as martyrs for the Lord Jesus Christ.

"I Know Thy Works"

Now let us notice in verse 9 that Jesus said to those Christians of the Smyrna Church, 1 know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of those which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”

From His exalted position, Jesus might have said, “I see thy works and tribulation and poverty.” But He did not say that. On the contrary He said, 1 know thy works and tribulation and poverty.” And, my friends, how do you suppose He knew these things? He knew them by actual experience. At the time this message was written, He had become the risen and exalted Christ. But while He was upon the earth, and had lived in Nazareth, and had walked the dusty roads of Galilee, He knew the weariness which comes from toil, and the suffering which comes from persecution or tribulation, and the reproach and pain which belong to poverty. Therefore to those suffering Christians at Smyrna He could say out of His own experience, “I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty.” But He said to the Christians at Smyrna, Thou art rich.” Indeed, my friends, what a comforting statement this was to those poor struggling Christians. It goes to show that Jesus, the exalted Christ, understands THE TRUE VALUE of a man’s life, regardless of His physical circumstances. Truly, my friends, a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesses. We know this is true, but somehow we just don’t act like it. As a rule the richer a man is in the world’s goods, the more we want to respect and do homage to him, but in the lesson which we are studying just now we discover that JESUS WAS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS! Those Christians of the Church at Smyrna, apparently were not men and women of wealth, or of social influence. They were poor, and despised and rejected by those about them, and were suffering persecution, and were under reproach. But Jesus who looketh not upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart, loved them as the apple of His eye, and as the chief desire of His heart, and sought to encourage them by saying, “But thou art rich.” Thus, my friends, does Jesus value the life of a man. Not by what he has, but for what he is! The Christians at Smyrna were materially poor, but spiritually rich in faith, and in the grace of God.

Personally, my friends, I had rather be financially poor, and live in humble circumstances, if need be for Jesus’ sake, and be SPIRITUALLY RICH, than to be FINANCIALLY RICH and spiritually poor!

Blasphemy

Next let us notice that Jesus said to the Church at Smyrna 1 know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”

This expression which Jesus used here, i.e., Synagogue of Satan” is interesting and very suggestive. It would seem to indicate that SATAN HIMSELF IS A RELIGIONIST, and that he also has a system of worship which Jesus here called the “Synagogue of Satan.” Jesus applied this expression to a group of professed believers in the Church of Smyrna, who said they were Jews but were not. No doubt they were a bunch of legalists, who claimed to be followers of Moses. Whatever they were teaching, Jesus called it blasphemy. Apparently, my friends, there is little hope for a blasphemer to be saved. How very sad indeed that this poverty stricken church in Smyrna should have been troubled in any way with a group of blasphemers. No doubt, they were causing the Church plenty of trouble and tribulation.

Fear None Of Those Things

In view of these things it is interesting to note that Jesus said in verse 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.”

It is very interesting to note that there were exactly TEN ROMAN EDICTS issued during the second and third centuries for the purpose of doing away with all true Christians. During those awful days many Christians were put to death in the Arena; others were forced to fight with the Roman gladiators, and still others were torn to pieces by the lions, and we are told that some were TIED TO
ANT NESTS, after their bodies had been covered with honey, and as we all know many died at the stake at the hands of the wicked Nero! We repeat again that it cost something to be a Christian in those days!

A Comforting Promise

Knowing these conditions which existed, Jesus sought to comfort them in their distress by saying, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer." He also said, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”

Ah, my friends, only a person in authority, and who is alive forevermore, and who is divine, could make such a promise as this, to those who were in danger of being killed because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Indeed, my friends, what a coronation day that is going to be, when not only those of the Church of Smyrna, but those in every period of Church history, who have been faithful unto death, are brought into the presence of their Lord, and crowned with a CROWN OF LIFE for having been faithful unto death! What! Death crowned with life? Yes, indeed, my friends, that is exactly what it says. No doubt that is what the Apostle Paul meant when he said in First Corinthians 15: verse 54, “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.” Indeed, my friends, what greater reward, and more blessed crown could the exalted Christ offer to any man for being faithful unto Him? This ought to serve as an incentive for each and every one of us, in our present lot and circumstance, whatever they may be, to press on in faith, looking always unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; for even though we are poor and poverty stricken, and persecuted, and rejected by many, we know that at the end of the way, if we have been faithful even unto death, we shall receive from Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, A CROWN OF LIFE!

The Second Death

Now let us notice the special promise which Jesus gave in the 11th verse to those Christians at Smyrna. He said: He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

Here again in this verse is the same admonition which Jesus gave to the Christians of the Church of Ephesus, i.e., “He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” He knew that they were not all prepared to hear, and to understand the truth which He had just spoken. His admonition, therefore, was also a warning to those who refused to hear and to heed the truth!

Now, I am sure, someone will ask immediately, what is the second death? The promise here is, “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” In John 8:21, Jesus said to the Jews who refused to believe in Him, “I go my way and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.”

Defined

The second death, my friends, has to do only with those who die in their sins. It is mentioned and defined in Revelation 20, verses 14 and 15, where it says, “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Also in Revelation 21: verses 7 and 8 it says: “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son; But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH.”

Comment and Summary

Now, concerning this subject of the second death, in the Scofield Bible, Dr. Scofield has given to us this very interesting and helpful summary, we quote: “The Second death” and the “lake of fire” are identical terms (Revelation 20: 14) and are used of the eternal state of the wicked. It is “second” relatively to the preceding physical death of the wicked in unbelief and rejection of God; their eternal state is one of ETERNAL “DEATH” (i.e., separation from God) in sins—(John 8:21-24). “That the second death is not annihilation is shown by a comparison of Revelation 19:20, with Revelation 20:10. “Note: After one thousand years in the lake of fire the Beast and False Prophet are still there undestroyed. The word “forever and forever (“to the ages of the aged”) are used in Hebrews 1:8, for the duration of the Throne of God, eternal in the sense of unending.”

LECTURE 10 ON THE REVELATION

LECTURE No. 10 The Book of Revelation Gives Us a Larger and a Better Understanding of the Nature and Person and Office Work of Christ — The Second Death Defined — The Lord’s Message to the Church at Pergamos — Satan’s New Method of Attack — Pergamos Was a Satanic Stronghold — The Church at Pergamos Was Troubled by the Baalmites — The Nicolaitanes Were Also
By the time we have concluded our study of the twenty-two chapters contained in this wonderful book, I am sure that many of us will have a clearer conception of the true nature and character and office work of the Lord Jesus Christ, than we have ever had from our study of any portion of God’s Word. There is no other book in the Bible which presents Jesus in his relation to THINGS PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE, as the Book of Revelation.

The Threefold Office Work Of Christ

Also, no other book in the Bible presents Jesus in His THREEFOLD OFFICE WORK as HIGH PRIEST, BRIDEGROOM and KING, such as we find here in the Book of Revelation.

Surely, by our study of this Book, our vision of the Christ will be increased, and our hearts will be warmed and set aflame with NEW HOPE, as we catch a vision of things which must shortly come to pass.

The Seven Messages

We are now engaged in the study of the Seven Messages to the Seven Churches, which messages were given by the risen and glorified Christ to the APOSTLE JOHN on the Isle of Patmos, with commandment that he should write them and send them to the Seven Churches which were in Asia.

We have already studied the important message which the risen Lord sent to the CHURCH AT EPHESUS, which was filled with both commendation and rebuke, and also with a special promise to him that overcometh.

In our last message we studied especially the message which the Lord sent to the CHURCH AT SMYRNA. While this message had a direct application to the local church addressed, we pointed out that it applied also in church history to what is spoken of as the “Smyrna period of the Church” which was one of supreme suffering and persecution.

Jesus who took note of their suffering and persecution sought to comfort them by saying in Revelation 2: and verse 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; Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

The Special Promise

Now let us notice the special promise which Jesus gave in the 11th verse to those Christians at Smyrna. He said: 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.

What Is The Second Death?

Now, I am sure, someone will ask immediately, what is the second death? The promise here is, He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. In John 8:21, Jesus said to the Jews who refused to believe on Him, I go my way and ye shall seek me, and shall DIE IN YOUR SINS: whither I go, ye cannot come.

The second death, my friends, has to do only with those who die in their sins. It is mentioned and defined in Revelation 20, verses 14 and 15, where it says, And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. THIS IS THE SECOND DEATH, whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Also in Revelation 21: verses 7 and 8 it says: He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son; But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH.

Now, concerning this subject of THE SECOND DEATH, in the Scofield Bible, Dr. Scofield has given to us this very interesting and helpful summary, quoting: ‘The second death and the lake of fire are identical terms (Revelation 20:14) and are used of the eternal state of the wicked. It is ‘second’ relatively to the preceding physical death of the wicked in unbelief and rejection of God; their eternal state is one of eternal ‘death’ (i.e., separation from God) in sins. (John 8:21-24). That the second death is not annihilation is shown by a comparison of Revelation 19:20, with Revelation 20:10. (Note) After one thousand years in the Lake of Fire the Beast and False Prophet are still there undestroyed. The word “forever and forever” (“to the ages of the ages”) are used in Hebrews 1:8, for the duration of the Throne of God, eternal in the sense of unending.”
The Message to the Church at Pergamos

Now let us consider the message to the Church at Pergamos, recorded in Revelation 2:12-17, where it says, 'And to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos write, These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

'I know thy works and where thou and thou holdest fast my name, and dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

'But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the DOCTRINE OF BALAAM, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

'So hast thou also them that hold the DOCTRINE OF THE NICOLAITANES, which thing I hate

'Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth

'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.'

It is very interesting to note that Jesus addressed Himself to each of the seven churches in a different way, and in each case His salutation was appropriate to the needs of that particular church. To the CHURCH AT EPHESUS He addressed Himself as the one, "that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks (or churches). TO THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA, where men were being persecuted unto death, because of their faith in Christ, He addressed Himself as, ‘the first and the last, which was dead and is alive’

The Salutation

The need at Pergamos, however, was different, and He addressed them, referring to Himself as the one, which hath the sharp sword with two edges.' This was not a very charming way for the Lord to introduce Himself, I am sure, but He felt it was necessary, or He would not have done so. The very wording of this salutation would indicate, not only the authority of the speaker, but that conditions existed in the Church at Pergamos, which deserved rebuke and correction.

Now looking at this message to the Church at Pergamos as a whole, we may say that it represents the church under IMPERIAL FAVOR! It represents a new and different method on the part of Satan to destroy and hinder the work and the influence of the church! At Smyrna, and during the entire Smyrna period of the Church, Satan sought to destroy the church by PUTTING CHRISTIANS TO DEATH, but this method did not prove successful. Somehow the Church seemed to thrive on persecution and martyrdom, and instead of becoming extinguished, it spread more and more. It is an old saying that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church." It was true then, and has been during every period of Church history. Somehow persecution strengthens the determination and causes men to avow allegiance to Christ as nothing else seems to do, and so the longer Satan persecuted the Church, the more powerful it became.

Satan’s New Method Of Attack

Having failed by this particular method of destroying the Church, Satan changed his method of attack from persecuting them from without, and by subtily he lead them unto an unholy alliance with the world.

It was about this time that Constantine came to the Throne of the Roman Empire. Constantine himself was a heathen, but there is a legend to the effect that he saw in a dream a fiery cross burning in the heavens, and that he heard a voice saying, "by this sign conquer." Because of this he professed to be a Christian, but there is every reason to believe that he was never truly converted. His profession of Christ was merely a shrewd political move. By this time the Christians had increased in numbers, and rather than to oppose them he thought it would be far better to make peace with them. That Constantine's profession of Christ was insincere, is evident from the fact that in the British Museum we are told there is a coin which was put out in the days of Constantine. On the one side are the Christian emblems, and on the other sides are emblems of the old Heathen Gods, and Constantine himself took the name of "PONTIFEX MAXIMUS," which being interpreted means, "The High Priest of the Heathen," and so we see what an admixture his profession of Christ really was, and since he adhered also to the pagan ideas of the heathen. We may truthfully say, therefore, that his supposed conversion and his profession of Christ were a spiritual tragedy, because it lead the church into a state of SPIRITUAL COMPROMISE WITH THE WORLD, which robbed them of their favor with God. Instead of henceforth looking for the Kingdom of Christ, the poor deluded church leaders of that day began to believe that under Constantine's reign, the Kingdom of God had already come, and the union of Church and State became an accomplished fact just as history reveals. Is it any wonder, therefore, that in His message to the Church of Pergamos, Jesus said in the 13th verse, "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.”

Satan's Seat

It is interesting and significant that Jesus referred to Pergamos as the place where Satan's seat is, and where Satan dwelleth. This would seem to indicate that Pergamos was one of Satan's strongholds. After all Satan is the God of this world, and there are certain places where he seems to center his influence more than at others, and Pergamos was one of those places.

Nevertheless in this stronghold of Satan, God had planted a Church, and there were Christians who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and because of their faith were doing all they could to turn men from darkness unto light, and from Satan unto God. Therefore, Jesus said to them, “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is.” Indeed, my friends, does it seem to you sometimes that you have been placed in the hardest circumstances of any Christian you know of? And does it seem to you that Satan is on every hand to trouble you, and to hinder your progress in your spiritual life, and to rob you of your witness and testimony to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, if this is the case, you can be comforted with the thought that Jesus knows exactly where thou dwellest. There is nothing concerning your life that escapes His notice.

Even though the Christians at Pergamos lived where “Satan's seat is,” Jesus commended them because there were those who, in spite of these things, held fast His name and had not denied His faith, even though Antipas had been slain as a martyr among them. There is no question but that it takes a great deal of courage to be a Christian in the midst of such circumstances as those which are described here.

He Also Rebuked Them

After having commended those who were faithful among them, for their works and their faith, Jesus also found it necessary to rebuke them because of certain conditions which existed in the Church at Pergamos. In the 14th verse He said, “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 stumbling block before the Children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”

The Doctrine of Balaam

In order for us to understand the doctrine of Balaam, referred to by our Lord in this passage, it will be necessary for us to refer to the Old Testament account of Balaam. It is one of the most interesting stories in the Old Testament. The Children of Israel were on their way from Egypt to the Land of Canaan, and had pitched in the plains of Moab on this side of Jordon by Jericho. Balac, King of Moab, was afraid of the Israelites, and fearing to meet them in person he called for Balaam, the Prophet, and requested that he come and curse the King of Israel. Almost every child knows the story of how Balaam went on his way riding upon an ass, and how he was met by an Angel in the way, who warned him against the purpose of his journey. Nevertheless he was allowed to go on his way, but was required to speak only those things which the Lord would require him to say.

Each time Balac, King of Moab, tried to get Balaam to curse the children of Israel, instead of cursing them, he blessed them and uttered great prophecies concerning the future of Israel.

Not being allowed to curse Israel, Balac the King of Moab was very angry, and Balaam himself was greatly disappointed, for being a hireling prophet, he had hoped to receive a great reward for cursing the Children of Israel.

Therefore, having been hindered in his purpose of cursing the Children of Israel, Balaam conceived another plan for securing the reward which he desired. Therefore, Balaam reasoned with the King of Moab that if he wanted to overcome the Children of Israel, he could do so by breaking down their separation with God. This he did by calling the people of Israel unto the sacrifice of their Gods, and by leading the Children of Israel to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

A Hireling Prophet

Thus, my friends, Balaam was willing to see Israel robbed of her glory, and thwarted in her purpose, for the sake of a monetary reward! Because of this unholy alliance with the children of Moab, God sent a plague among them, and twenty four thousand of them died of the plague before the judgment of God was stayed.

And thus was Balaam a hireling prophet, who was willing to do anything for the sake of reward, and in the Church of Pergamos there were those who held to the doctrine of Balaam. They were willing to do anything for the sake of reward. Therefore, Jesus said, He was against them.

Not All Dead Yet

Indeed, my friends, the Balaamites are not all dead yet, and there are those in many churches even yet today who are willing to do
anything for the sake of reward. In John 10, verses 12 and 13, it says, "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." Thus did Jesus give His estimate of the hireling shepherd.

In II Peter, the second chapter, and verse 15, the Apostle Peter speaks of those which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

The Apostle Jude also says in Jude 11, "Woe unto them for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."

Thus, my friends, we can see that the presence of Balaamites in the Church at Pergamos was a serious matter, and it is no wonder that Jesus spoke out against them in His message to the Church.

The Nicolaitanes

But the Church at Pergamos was not only afflicted with Balaamites, in verse 15, Jesus said, 'So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate!'

We have explained already in our study of the message to the Church at Ephesus just who the Nicolaitanes were and why it was that Jesus hated them. Therefore it will not be necessary to repeat the same discussion here. Suffice it to say, that which had its beginning in the Church at Ephesus, had now become a doctrine; for Jesus here speaks of the work of the Nicolaitanes as the DOCTRINE of the Nicolaitanes, and as we see that this group was determined to divide the body of Christ into two separate groups, known as the clergy and the laity, and take the preeminence themselves, so that they might act as Lords over God's heritage! Seeing the work of this pernicious group within the Church, Jesus could not restrain from calling them by name, and expressing His hatred for them.

Since these conditions existed in the Church at Pergamos it was natural that He which had the sharp sword with two edges should send forth a clear call to repentance. Therefore, in verse 16 He said, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."

Admonition

And then He spoke those same words of admonition, saying, 'He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.' He knew they did not all have ears to hear the truth which He had spoken unto them in this message, but to those who were able to hear and obey this truth, He said, "To him that overcometh I will 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."

This, my friends, is a wonderful promise. We all know how the Children of Israel were fed with manna in the Wilderness, and we know also that Jesus Himself is the bread from heaven, and that if we desire spiritual strength we must feast upon Him, for He said, "I am the bread of life." In this promise He also made mention of a white stone, which He would give as a reward to those who overcome, and in that stone "a new name written which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

No doubt, this statement was taken from the Hebrew custom giving to one acquitted on trial a white stone! The white stone, therefore, became the symbol of innocence and of deliverance. Indeed, my friends, what a joy it would be for you and for me to receive our white stone from Him who is the judge of all things; thus indicating our innocence in His sight, and indicating our deliverance from the judgments of those who would accuse us before the Throne of God. And on that stone there will be written a new name which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. No doubt, it will be the name of our adoption which we are to receive and to own according to our place and position in the great family of God.

LECTURE 11 ON THE REVELATION

Christ Speaks in These Messages to the Churches As One Having Authority — The Message to the Church at Thyatira — The Threefold Application of These Messages to the Seven Churches — The Meaning of Thyatira — The Triumph of Evil in the Church — An Unholy Union — A Promise of Power to Overcomers

OUR Study, thus far has proved to be very interesting and very helpful, and we are finding the book to be exactly what the introduction says it is, i. e., "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST." If there had been no need for this book, it surely would never have been given to John on the Isle of Patmos. Let us remember that the entire twenty-two chapters of this Book are a message from the risen and glorified Christ, "which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to
pass.” It is therefore of divine origin and is primarily a Book of Prophecy, which gives us a prophetic vision of the exalted Christ in his present and future relationship to things in heaven and upon earth, and this foreview of things yet future is exactly what we need! Somehow we must be made to understand that the death, burial and resurrection of Christ were in no wise the end of God's plans and purposes in redemption. The covenants and promises which God made in the Old Testament are many of them as yet unfulfilled, and therefore God's plan for the ages must continue and be worked out, or else His plans and purposes in redemption would be incomplete. What we have, therefore in this book is a revelation of God's plans and purposes for the future and as we study the Book of Revelation we can see that God is moving on toward a glorious consummation of all things! Without the Book of Revelation the Bible itself would be incomplete, and we would be compelled to stop short of having attained the things which God has promised in His word through the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we should rejoice and be thankful that God has given to us this wonderful book which serves as a telescope in our hands to enlarge and to clarify our vision until we can see to the very end of God's purposes, both in grace and in judgment. From this book on the far horizon of the future, we can even see the New Jerusalem and the new Paradise where those who are fully redeemed shall worship God and rejoice for ever more! But before we reach yonder distant city, and the wonderful new Paradise of God, there are many wonderful things in this book which require and demand our prayerful attention.

The Seven Churches

We are now engaged in a study of the seven messages, which the glorified Christ sent to the Seven Churches which were in Asia.

The Divine Spokesman

In each of these seven messages the Lord Jesus Christ spoke as one authority, and rightfully so, for in the first chapter He was revealed as the Lord and Judge among the Churches. He had the right, therefore, to commend each Church for the things He could approve, and to rebuke them for those things wherein they had fallen short, had in any way sinned against His will and He also had the power also to promise reward to the faithful believer remnant in every Church!

We have already studied the message of our Lord to the Church at Ephesus and we discovered that they had left their first love; and that they were troubled by a group within the Church whom Christ spoke of as Nicolaitanes. In other words, those who sought divide the Body of Christ.

In our study of the message to the Church at Smyrna we discovered that the Christians there suffered terrible persecution, and that many of them died as martyrs because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to this the Church there suffered from the presence of those who said they were Jews and were not, but were the synagogue of Satan.

Our study of the message to the Church at Pergamos revealed the Church under imperial favor, and that this particular church was troubled both the Nicolaitanes and the Balaamites. We explained the meaning of these two terms in our previous studies; so it will not be necessary to enlarge upon this point again today.

The Message to Thyatira

Now let us advance in our study by considering the message of Christ to the Church at Thyatira, which is recorded in Revelation 2:18-29, where it says,

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"And unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass; "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. "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, "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not,"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds, "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; "And He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they he broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father, “And I will give Him the morning star, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”
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Threefold Application
Now, before we undertake an exposition of this passage, let us remind you again that each of these seven messages have a threefold application,

(1) First, to the Local Church addressed,

(2) Then to the entire Church of the whole Church Age. The message to each Church we have discovered was representative of a certain period in Church history.

(3) The truth contained in these messages can also be applied to the individual Christian.

“Bruised”

The word “Thyatira” means “bruised.” The message of our Lord to this particular Church is of great importance, because it represents at least a thousand years of Church history, i.e., A.D. 500 to 1500 A.D. A comparison with secular history will reveal that this covers that period of time spoken of as “The Dark Ages.”

Even in the Church at Ephesus we found the leaven of the Nicolaitanes was at work in the church. The same thing was found in the Church at Pergamos, where it had become an established doctrine, held by a certain group within the Church. By this time the Balaamites had also crept into the Church.

The Triumph of Evil

In this message to the Church at Thyatira we discover the triumph of Nicolaitanism and Balaamism in the Church. Nevertheless there was a believing remnant who still believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who held to the doctrine of the Christian faith, as taught by the early Apostles.

Understanding these things, therefore, we do not wonder that Jesus introduced Himself to this Church as the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like unto fine brass. In this one statement Jesus declared His deity, and His divine intelligence, and that He was the one who had the right to judge them in all things! By His flaming eyes He searches out all evil, and with His feet, which are like unto fine brass, He will judge and tread under foot those who are guilty of breaking His law.

In the 19th verse, to the believing remnant at Thyatira Jesus said, “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.” From this statement it is evidence that Jesus wanted very much to commend them, but He found conditions there to be much the same as in many of our Churches today, that is, their works were greater than their faith. No one objects to good works, so long as they are kept in proportion to everything else, but we should not forget that faith is even more important than works, and the two must go hand in hand; for as James said “Faith without works is dead.” But many churches, like the Church at Thyatira, have many works and little faith. In Ephesians 2, verses 8 and 9, it says, “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Jezebel

After commending them as best He could, Jesus said in verse 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.”

In this one striking statement the Lord revealed the awful corruption which had crept into this Church at Thyatira, and which continued throughout the entire Thyatiran period of the Church Age. In this passage Jesus used the woman Jezebel to symbolize the terrible corruption and the low spiritual state into which the Church had fallen.

You will remember that Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, and that she herself was a heathen, who married a Jewish King. A very interesting comment is given in First Kings 16:30-31, where it says, “And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him, and it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam this son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, Kind of the Zidonians, and went and served, Baal and worshipped him.”

This, my friends, tells a sad story in the history of Israel which was climax ed in the contest between Elijah and the four hundred prophets of Baal upon Mt. Carmel. It is not difficult to see that by reason of this marriage between Ahab and Jezebel, a spiritual crisis was brought about in Israel, because Jezebel insisted upon introducing pagan worship in Israel.

This unholy union between Ahab, the King of God’s chosen people, and Jezebel, was very displeasing to God because by her subtle and pernicious ways, Jezebel caused Israel to commit spiritual fornication by worshipping Baal instead of the true God, and by eating things which had been sacrificed unto idols. Thus she assumed the position of a prophetess, and in doing so caused the
Children of Israel to sin.

An Unholy Union!

Therefore, Jezebel, the wicked prophetess shall always stand for that unholy union between the Church and state, which was accomplished in the Pergamos period of the Church under Constantine, and which led to the terrible corruption of the dark ages, represented by the Church of Thyatira.

Now, it is interesting to note in verse 31, that Jesus said, "I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not."

This was true of Jezebel the wife of Ahab, and we know the fearful end to which she came, when her blood was licked up by the dogs outside the palace before her body could be recovered.

Historical Application

Now the prophetic and historical application of the truth which was spoken by our Lord here occurred during the dark ages of the Church. As we know, the Church was married to the world and settled down under imperial favor, and this union between Church and State, which was nothing more than a compromise of all which the Apostolic Church stood for, led the Church of the dark ages to commit spiritual fornication with the world and with the Kings of the earth. Christianity was no longer a pure religion!

When men rebelled at the Tower of Babel, under the leadership of Nimrod, as described in Genesis, chapters 10 and 11, they went off into heathen idolatry. Nimrod's wife became a patron saint of their idolatrous system. In due time she claimed to have a son without a human father, and she herself became known as the Queen of the Heavens, and was worshipped. Thus was begun the system of idolatrous worship of Satanic origin, which was intended by Satan to be an exact counterfeit of the Christian doctrine of the Virgin birth of Christ. In this case, however, Nimrod's wife, instead of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, became the patron saint.

It was the triumph of Nicolaitanism and of Baalism in the Church, and the union of Church and state, which allowed the subtle teachings of this pagan system of religion to creep into, and to become a part of, the practice of the Church.

Understanding these things, from a historical point of view, we are not surprised to find in some branches of the professing Christian Church today erroneous doctrines and ceremonies, which can be traced back to their pagan origin.

They Refused to Repent

After the unholy union of the Church and state had been accomplished, and pagan practices had crept into the Church, God gave them a long space in which to repent, and to return to their former state of purity. But history is a sad comment upon the fact that they repented not. The fact is, that they have not repented until this day. In verses 22 and 23, Christ said, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Jezebel Persecuted the Prophets

Just here it is well to remember that Jezebel not only introduced pagan worship into Israel, and thereby caused Israel to commit spiritual fornication, but being wicked at heart, she actually persecuted the true prophets of God. This we know is true, because she sought the life of Elijah the Prophet. Even so, during the dark ages, and ever since then, those in the Church which have clung to the doctrines of Jezebel, have persecuted the true servants of God in every successive period of Church history. We are not surprised, therefore, to hear Jesus say, "I will kill her children with death, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation"

When God's time arrives this will be a just judgment upon those who have so wrongfully treated the true followers of Christ. Yes, indeed, my friends, tribulation is coming, and those who have followed the doctrines of Jezebel will suffer a plenty when it arrives.

A Prophetic Foreview

What Jesus has said here, is therefore a prophetic foreview of things which will yet come to pass, and should serve as a warning to those who are guilty of the things which Christ has mentioned in this message to the Church at Thyatira.

A Believing Remnant

But in the Church at Thyatira, as we have mentioned, there was a believing remnant, and in order to comfort them in their distress, Jesus said, "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden: But that which ye have already hold fast till I come."

In this statement Jesus declared unto them that He would come again, and so here in this unexpected place we find the doctrine of
the second coming of Christ clearly and definitely set forth by the Lord Himself. If it were not for the fact that Jesus is coming again the believing remnant in the Church of Thyatira would have had very little to look forward to, and it is even so today. We who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who cannot agree with the teachings of the Nicolaitanes and the Balaamites, and who cannot follow the teachings of Jezebel, have been for the most part ecclesiastically ostracized by those in the churches of today who still hold to these pernicious doctrines and if it were not for the promise of our Lord to come again, with power and great glory, and with a spirit of judgment, to put an end to ecclesiastical Babylon, we too would have very little to look forward to, but we know that Jesus is coming according to His promise, and therefore we are admonished the labor on and to hold fast till He comes!

He That Overcometh

And to the Church of Thyatira He said, “He that overcometh and keepeth my works until the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father, and I will give Him the morning Star. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith until the churches.”

Lecture 12 on the Revelation

Copyright © 1940 LECTURE No. 12 The Truth in This Book a Divine Revelation — Revelation Defined — The Message of Christ to the Church at Sardis — The Seven Spirits and the Seven Stars — The Church at Sardis — Had a Good Reputation with Men but Jesus Knew Their True Spiritual Condition — A Divine Admonition to Strengthen the Things Which Remain — Present Day Application of This Truth — A Call to Repentance — A Faithful Remnant in the Church at Sardis — The Divine Promise to the Overcomers

LET us not forget that the title of the Book is The Revelation of Jesus Christ. The word Revelation means to unveil or to make manifest. The great theme and purpose of this book therefore, is to make Christ known to us. If Christ had remained upon earth, after His crucifixion and resurrection, this book would have been unnecessary, but for those of us who have never seen the Lord Jesus Christ, this book is an absolute necessity, and we can truly thank God for such a revelation of His Son as He has given to us in the wonderful twenty-two chapters of this book. Let us remember that, a Revelation is truth which has come to us direct from God, in other words, a Revelation is truth, which man never could have discovered by individual study or collective research. And so in this book we have truth, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, which is contained nowhere else in the Word of God, and which we never could have known if God had not have given this revelation to Christ to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass. Considering the general contents of the entire book, we may say that we have here a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, (1)—In His relation to the earthly churches, (2)—Then in His relation to the glorified Church in the heavens, (3)—Then in His relation to the scenes of judgment upon the wicked, as they will be manifested here upon earth, during the opening of the seven seals, and the sounding of the seven trumpets, and the pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God, (4)—And last of all, Jesus is revealed in His relation to the final acts of judgment which include the destruction of death and the grave, and the introduction of the final state in which man, who has been perfectly redeemed, will live when the consummation of all things shall have been accomplished.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the third chapter, and are now engaged in a study of the Seven Messages of the risen and glorified Christ, to the Seven Churches, which were in Asia.

In our last message we made a study of the message to the Church at Thyatira, as recorded in Revelation 2:18-29. In our study of the message to this Church we discovered the triumph of Balaamism and Nicolaitanism in the Church, and that in spite of these conditions there was a believing remnant who were faithful to the Lord. During the entire Thyatiran period of the Church, the Church was filled with corruption, which condition continued throughout the entire period, known as “The Dark Ages.” It was natural to believe that since reform was necessary, eventually reform would come, and that leads us to a study of the next message of the Risen Lord to the Church at Sardis, which is recorded in Revelation 3:1 to 6, where it says:

“And unto the angel of the Church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the Seven Spirits of God, and the Seven Stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. “Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee, “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. “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 the Angels. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches"

The Seven Spirits of God

Now, first of all let us notice how Jesus addressed Himself to the Church at Sardis. He said, These things saith He that hath the Seven Spirits of God, and the Seven Stars: We do not need to be in doubt as to the Seven Spirits of God and the Seven Stars. In chapter 1: and verse 4, in the wonderful salutation to the Seven Churches, John made mention of the Seven Spirits which are before His Throne! By referring to Isaiah the 11th chapter and the 2nd verse, we discover that this refers to the sevenfold plentitude, or composite fullness of the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 11:2, speaking of Christ, it says, "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of Wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord." And thus did Jesus address them here as the one who possessed all these things, and also as the one who had the Seven Stars in His right hand, as stated in Revelation 1:16.

The Seven Stars

In Revelation 1, and verse 20, we are told that the Seven Stars are the Angels or messengers, or pastors of the seven churches. Therefore in His salutation to the Church at Sardis, Jesus revealed Himself to them as Christ the anointed one, who had been anointed with the sevenfold plentitude or fulness of the Holy Spirit, and who by divine authority held the messengers or pastors of the churches in His own right hand.

His salutation in this case was also quite abrupt; for He said, "I know thy works that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." Such a salutation as this, my friends, not only impressed them with the divine authority of the one who was speaking, but it no doubt made some of them very angry; for it was in fact an accusation against the spiritual state of the Church at Sardis.

The Spiritual Condition at Sardis

From the wording of this introductory statement it is evident that the Church at Sardis had experienced a real spiritual revival which had given it a reputation among the Churches as being very much alive, but by the time this message was addressed to them, all they had left apparently, was a reputation based upon what had been the condition in their church. By this time, instead of being spiritually alive, Jesus said that they were dead.

Indeed, my friends, what a sad comment upon the spiritual condition of the Church at Sardis.

It is only natural, therefore, that the second verse of this chapter, Jesus should say to them, Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

They Stopped Short of Perfection

The idea set forth here is that they had experienced genuine spiritual life in the Church, but they had stopped short of attaining unto, and performing the perfect will of God. This was true not only of the Church at Sardis, but it has been true of many churches throughout every age of Church history. When we have had a real revival we stop short of full and complete obedience.

Strange as it may seem, it is dangerous sometimes for a Church to attain unto too high a reputation, because, when they have done so it is often time difficult for them to maintain the reputation which they have acquired. It is so easy for men to live on their reputation, while the zeal and fervor, and their love for God, and their vision for the work, gradually die away, and become nothing but smoldering embers, as it were, on the hearthstone of their hearts, where once the fire of God's love burned brightly! And so I truly believe that there are thousands of professing Christians, and Churches also, who once had a zeal for God, and who made a reputation for themselves that they were spiritually alive with faith and spiritual fervor, but today, like those at Sardis, they are in a backslidden condition, and all they have left is a name, a mere outward profession, and they are, shall we say, spiritually dead!

The Things Which Remain

To the Church at Sardis, which was in this condition, Jesus continued His message by saying in verse 2, Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

No doubt there were those in the Church at Sardis, who still had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who still loved Him, because of the sacrifice which He had made for them, and who still prayed for the supply of their spiritual and material need, and who still worked perhaps in a half-hearted way for the salvation for those that were lost, but Jesus warned them to be watchful, and to strengthen the things which remained, that were ready to die.

What About Us?
My friends, there is no question but what this is a dying age. The day of grace is about over. The times of the Gentiles are about
ever. Political and industrial institutions are crumbling beneath our feet, and are falling into decay and disuse, and to me the saddest
thing of all, is when I am made to realize, and forced to confess, that the outward professing Church of Christ is also dying with the
age. As I travel up and down the land, I see great cathedrals in our cities, and churches in our towns, and country churches by the
wayside, which represent millions of dollars in property investment, and which at one time represented an invincible, spiritual force,
which was willing to do and dare, and sacrifice for the cause of Christ: but today, like the Church at Sardis, generally speaking, all
they have left is a name that they are alive, but in reality many of them are spiritually dead. It seems as if men in our churches no
longer believe the Bible as their forefathers did. They can no longer love with a fervency of spirit which attracts men to themselves
and to the Christ they profess to serve. Today men in these Churches pray, but the unction and the fervency and the power of prayer
is gone. Today men who worship in these churches work, but their works are no longer for Christ and the salvation of the lost, but on
the other hand their works are often times adulterated with selfish motives and purposes, which God can neither bless or set His
approval upon. Alas, therefore, for the churches of our day, which have only a reputation that they are alive! Surely, the statement
which Jesus made to the Church at Sardis, when He said, “I have not found thy works perfect before God” would apply to many
churches today, as much as it did to the Church at Sardis.

Hold Fast and Repent

To the Church of Sardis, therefore, Jesus said in verse 3:—”Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold
fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will
come upon thee.”

It is a sad comment upon the condition of any church, when He, who is the Lord of the Churches, calls upon professing Christians to
repent, but that is what Jesus did in His message to nearly all of these seven Churches.

Indeed, my friends, when professing Christians, who have accepted Christ as their Saviour and Lord, fail to walk in faith they should
repent of their unbelief. When a professing Christian fails to walk in love, as God has required, He should repent because of his lack
of love! When a Christian fail’s to pray as often as he should, in order that his own spiritual need and the needs of others might be
supplied, he should repent for his sin of omission. When a professing Christian whose duty it is to serve God, by serving his
fellowmen by good works, fails to work and to do his duty, by helping his brother in need, then he has much room to repent, and
should repent of his slothfulness.

And so, my friends, we see that professing Christians, as well as sinners, often times have many things which need to be repented
of. After all, we are all of us only sinners, saved by grace, and we who are Christians so often times sin against the will and purposes
of God, that there is no room for self righteousness, even in our profession of Christ: “For to him that knoweth to do good and
doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

They Are Worthy

Now in verse 4, Jesus said, ‘Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not denied their garments; and they shall
walk with me in white: for they are worthy.’ These words of our Lord were addressed to the believing remnant in Sardis, and how
these words must have comforted and encouraged their hearts. In these words He acknowledged their faithfulness, and gave them
promise of great reward! In Colossians 1 and verse 10, the Apostle Paul prayed for the Christians at Colosse that they might walk
worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, and that they might be
strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience, and long suffering with joyfulness;—And that, my
friends, was the desire of the Lord Jesus Christ for the Christians at Sardis, and it is also His desire for the believing remnant in
every Church in our age. Therefore, let us pray that God will help us to walk worthy, that we too may walk with Him in white.

He That Overcometh

And in the fifth verse, Jesus said ‘He that overcometh, the same shall clothed in white raiment; and I will no blot out his name
out of the book life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.”

Here, my friends, is a promise from the lips of our Lord which should interest each and every one of us.

White, is the symbol of purity. And we cannot now fully realize all that it will mean to be fully redeemed and robed in white, and to
share this joy with all who have been redeemed, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! And
then today there is that assuring promise to the redeemed remnant of true believers who are accounted worthy, that their names will
not be blotted out of the book of life! For Jesus said, “I will confess hid name before my Father and before His angels.”

My friends, it seems impossible for us to comprehend now, except in a very limited way, the full significance of such a statement. We
cannot realize what it will mean when we have been fully redeemed and are brought into the very presence of our redeemer; for Him
to call us by name and present us, as one of His blood washed throng to the Father, and then in turn introduce us to the mighty angels of heaven. Such hope, such blessing, such final reward, should serve to inspire the faith and confidence, and the courage, the heart of every true Christian! It should make us willing to labor on, even though there are Tares among the Wheat, and even though we are often persecuted and ill spoken of by those who know not God, and by those who have counted the blood of Christ an unholy thing. Such reward as that which is promised here should serve to encourage us to press on in this holy war, though friends forsake us, though poverty overtake us, and foes assail us from every side. May God help us therefore to look away from the cross to the glittering crown, and from the reproach of the present to the blessings and rewards of the future. For what joy unspeakable and full of glory it will be when Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, and the Saviour of the World, presents us before the Father and before His Angels, and promotes us to a place of royalty and fellowship with Him in the great plans and purposes of God throughout all eternity.

The Historical Application

Now there is also a historical application of the truth presented in this message to the Church at Sardis. Historically speaking, the message to the Church at Sardis represents the period of the reformations, as we have already suggested. The Church of Thyatira represented the Church in the dark ages, when Baalism and Nicolaitanism had triumphed in the Church. During the dark ages the Church was married to the world. In other words, the Church and State were united, and the Church was filled with corruption and spiritual fornication. God gave them space to repent, and they repented not.

And after a long time men such as Luther, and Melanchthon, Zwingly and others, were raised up of the Lord to lead the people in the great reformation, and help them to escape from the evils of the papacy. There is no doubt but what God was well pleased with their work in the beginning. The reformation which began in Germany swept over nearly all of Europe, and subsequently throughout many countries of the world; and just as the message to the Church at Thyatira gives to us God's judgment of the Church during the dark ages, just so does the message to the Church of Sardis give to us His judgment and opinion of the church of the reformation period.

Under the leadership of those who led the reformation, the protestant portion of the church, which had broken away from the dead ritual, and the putrifying corruption of the Church, soon gained for themselves the reputation of being very much spiritually alive, and it was even so, until the strong spiritual leaders began to pass off of the stage of action, and in due course of time even the Protestant movement, which stood for reform, began to lag in spirituality, and slowly but surely came to need a reformation within its own ranks and things have continued to grow worse from then until now! There is little wonder, therefore, that to the Churches of the reformation period, in estimating their work, Jesus said, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful therefore and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

And so, my friends, we see that the protestants who set out to reform the Church, have themselves come to need a reformation within their own ranks. In other words, many of the reformers need reforming themselves.

A Believing Remnant

But let us praise God and be thankful that in the midst of our decaying Protestantism there is still a believing remnant that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who are worthy, and shall walk with Him in white. Jesus closed His message to the Church at Sardis with these words: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

Lecture 13 On the Revelation

Copyright © 1940 LECTURE No. 13 The Message to the Church in Philadelphia — The Church of "Brotherly Love" — How Jesus Addressed Himself to This Church — An Open Door for Service Which No Man Could Shut — Jesus Has the Key of David, i. e., the Key to David's Throne — The Anti-Christ Will Seek to Occupy the Throne of David — Jesus Has the Key to That Throne and He Will Use It When the Time Comes — A Special Promise from the Lord to Those Who Keep the Word of God

In our studies thus far we have discovered that this marvelous book of the Bible is of divine origin, the same as all the rest, and that a special blessing is pronounced upon those who read and who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.

A Book of Prophecy

The Book, from its beginning, was primarily a book of prophecy, and as such it was intended to reveal, to the true saints of God, in advance those conditions and events which would come to pass during the Church Age, and during the Tribulation period to follow, and on through the Kingdom Age to the final consummation of God's redemptive plan for the ages!
Logically, in the first chapter we have recorded the apostolic salutation to the seven representative churches which were in Asia, and the wonderful vision of the glorified Christ, which God gave to John on the Isle of Patmos.

In the second and third chapters we have recorded the Seven Messages of the risen, exalted and glorified Christ to the Seven Churches.

These messages to the Seven Churches did not only apply to the local churches addressed, but were also prophetic of conditions which would come to pass during entire Church Age. The message to each Church, therefore, was representative of a certain period of Church history.

Messages to the Churches

We have already studied the message to the Church at Ephesus, which represented the Church at the close of the Apostolic period; And the message to the Church at Smyrna, which represented the period of great persecutions; and the message to the Church at Pergamos, which represented the Church under imperial favor settled in the world! We have also studied the message to the Church at Thyatira, which represented the Church in the dark ages.

In our last lesson we studied the message of Christ to the Church at Sardis, which represented the Church during the period of the great REFORMATION.

In His message to the Church at Sardis, Christ gave to us His judgment and opinion of the Church of the Reformation period, and His judgment can be summed up in these words, “I have not found thy works perfect before God!”

Protestantism

Under the leadership of those who led the reformation, the protestant portion of the Church, which had broken away from the dead ritual, and the putrifying corruption of the Roman Church, soon gained for themselves the reputation of being very much spiritually alive, and it was even so, until the strong spiritual leaders began to pass off of the stage of action, and in due course of time the Protestant movement, which stood for reform, began to lag in spiritually, and slowly but surely came to need a reformation within its own ranks, and things have continued to grow worse from then until now, until today there is very little difference between apostate Protestantism and the mother Church. There is little wonder, therefore, that to the churches of the reformation period, in estimating their work, Jesus said, “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, therefore, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”

And so, my friends, we see that the Protestants who set out to reform the Church, themselves came to need a reformation within their own ranks. In other words, many of the reformers needed reforming themselves.

A Believing Remnant

But let us be thankful and praise God that in the midst of our decaying Protestantism there is still a believing remnant, that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who are worthy, and shall walk with Him in white. Jesus closed His message to the Church at Sardis with these words, “He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches”

We are now ready to advance by studying the message of our risen Lord to the Church at Philadelphia; recorded in Revelation 3:7-13, where it says:

“And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth; “I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast not denied my name. “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. “Because thou has kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth, “Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown, Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the Churches”

The name Philadelphia means “Brotherly love”; the salutation which Jesus used in addressing this Church is especially interesting and very significant.
He said, “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.”

There is no doubt but what such a salutation as this brought strength and comfort to those to whom it was given.

**Jesus Was Holy**

When Jesus spoke of Himself as being holy, He was not making an idle boast, or a false claim! No, a thousand times, no! He was holy from the hour of His birth! Why? Because He had been conceived by the Holy Ghost and was born of a Virgin Mother. Therefore, He was rightfully called the Son of God. By His Virgin birth, Jesus, the eternal Son of God, when He became man, escaped the conditions of the Adamic curse. Therefore, Satan had no mortgage upon His soul, either because of a depraved nature, or because of any sin of transgression!

Jesus, speaking of Satan could say, *Now the Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.***

Indeed, my friends, Jesus was holy, for He had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression! He was holy because He had been conceived by the Holy Ghost, and because He had fulfilled all righteousness, as required by the law!

Therefore He could address Himself to the Church at Philadelphia, saying, *These things saith He that is holy* and no one dare question the truth of what He said, for it was the absolute truth! - He was holy apart from forgiveness; - He was holy without the need of the new birth; - He was holy without the sanctifying power of God's word; - He was holy even before He was baptized by God's Holy Spirit that day at the River Jordan! Indeed, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit, not to make Him holy, but because He was already holy! Having been conceived by the Holy Ghost, His very nature was pure, and God could trust Him with the fullness of the Holy Spirit!

Therefore, when Jesus addressed Himself to the Church as the one who was holy, He did so, not in vain glory to make a great show of Himself, but to impress them with the deity of the one who was addressing them.

**Jesus Is True**

Not only did Jesus address them as the one who is holy, but also as the one who is true!

This statement should have impressed them also. The outstanding characteristic of Satan is that he was a liar from the beginning. He is a liar, and the father of it, and the truth is not in him.

But this was never true of Jesus. Even while He was upon earth He said, *I am the way, the truth and the life.* And it was even so! Jesus never told a lie. He never acted a lie, not even to keep from being crucified. And He has given to the world more absolute truth than any man who ever lived. Therefore, when He said to the Church at Philadelphia, *These things saith He that is true* He was making a legitimate claim for Himself, in an effort to arrest the attention of those to whom He was speaking.

**Jesus Has the Keys of David**

But Jesus also said to them, *These things saith He that hath the key of David.*

Now, what do you suppose those Christians at Philadelphia understood from these words? What did Jesus mean when He spoke of Himself as the one that hath the key of David?

For an answer to this question we will have to turn to Isaiah 22:22-23, where it says (speaking prophetically of Christ): *All the key of the House of David will I lay upon His shoulder: so He shall open and none shall shut: and He shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten Him as a nail in a sure place: and He shall be for a glorious throne to His Father’s house.*

This passage would indicate that the key of the House of David has to do with the Throne of David.

This is confirmed in II Samuel the 7th chapter. There we have recorded the great Davidic covenant, in which God promised that the Kingdom, and the Throne would be established for ever within the Davidic household.

**Jesus Is Heir to David’s Throne**

That Jesus is heir to the Throne of David is confirmed in Luke 1:31-33, where it says:

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name JESUS

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the Throne of His Father David.”
And so, Jesus wanted the Christians at Philadelphia to know and to understand that He has the key to the Throne of David.

From the scriptures, and from history, and from current events, we all know that the Throne of David is the only Throne that God ever established upon earth, and therefore it represents the plans and purposes of God in the earth, relative to the future of the Kingdom.

The Throne Is Vacant

We know also that the Throne of David is now vacant, and that it has been so for more than two thousand years.

Why has it been vacant all these years? Because the Jews rejected Jesus as their King. And it has remained vacant all this time because Jesus holds the key to that Throne, and He openeth and no man shutteth, and He shutteth and no man openeth.

And history, my friend, confirms this fact. The Jews rejected Jesus as their King, and crowned Him with a crown of Thorns, and gave Him a reed as a sceptre, in mockery of His claims of Kingship.

But little did they realize that He whom they buffeted and spat upon, and caused to be crucified, held in His possession the Key to the Throne of David! Jesus had been born a King. He did not receive His Kingship from man, but from God. Therefore, neither rejection, nor persecution, nor even death by crucifixion could rob Jesus of His Kingship. And having risen from the dead, and being at the right hand of God, it can still be said of Him today, the same as to the Church at Sardis, that He is the one who hath the key of David. The Angel Gabriel promised to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, even before Jesus was born, in Luke 1:32 and 33, that God would give unto Him the Throne of His Father David, and that He should rule over the House of Jacob, and that of His Kingdom there would be no end!

When Jesus was born, therefore, He had the key of David with which to unlock the door to David's Throne, but because the Jews rejected Him, He refused to use the key at that time, except to shut and lock the door to that Throne against all others who would aspire to that high and exalted position. In consequence for more than two thousand years no man in Israel has ruled as King upon that Throne! For two thousand years Israel has been without a Temple, and without a King, and without a ruling High Priest, while their true King has been absent. For two thousand years the Children of Israel, and the land of their inheritance, has been ruled over by the Gentiles.

The Ambitions of the Antichrist

All students of Bible prophecy know that the coming Antichrist will aspire to sit upon that Throne, because it is the only Throne which, in the purpose of God, represents world dominion. And we know that under the permissive will of Him who has the key of David, Antichrist will usurp that Throne for a very brief space of time, and rule the world in wickedness! But when the time comes Jesus, who holds the key of David will come at His revelation, at the close of the Tribulation period, and destroy the Antichrist, and the false Prophet, and will Himself ascend to the Throne of David, and rule the world in righteousness!

Jesus Will Use the Key

Yes, indeed, Jesus is the one who hath the key of David. And when the time comes He will use it to unlock the door to David's Throne! And in spite of His rejection by the Jews two thousand years ago, and in spite of the final rebellion and anger of the nations, as described in the Second Psalm, Jesus will use that key, and open the door to that historical throne, which was divinely established, and upon that throne He will rule the world in justice and judgment, and reprove with equity for the meek of the whole earth.

All of these things were prophetically implied when Jesus addressed Himself to the Church at Philadelphia as the one that "hath the key of David," who "openeth and no man shutteth, and who shutteth and no man openeth."

And so we see that Jesus addressed Himself to the Church at Philadelphia with a remarkable and a very important salutation.

Imagine, if you can the feelings of those Christians when they read: '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.'

Greater Than Abraham

Surely one who could address Himself thus to the Church at Philadelphia was greater than Abraham, greater than Moses, greater than King David, greater than the Prophets, greater than John the Baptist, and greater than any man who has lived during the present Church Age!

To the Church at Philadelphia He said: '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!'
Door of Opportunity

There is no doubt but what Jesus was here speaking to them of the door of opportunity for spreading the Gospel which He would give to them, because they had been faithful, and because they possessed at least a little spiritual strength for the task!

We may rightfully say, therefore, that the Church at Philadelphia represented the true Church within the professing Church, and that, historically speaking, it represents the great Missionary period of Church history, which followed the great reformation period.

Jesus not only promised the Philadelphian Church an open door for service, which no man could shut, but He also promised them victory in advance! For He said in verse 9: “Behold I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, but are not, but do lie: behold, I will make them to worship at thy feet.”

This was to be a reward for their faith and service. In other words, God would exalt them to a place of high degree and respect, in the very eyes and estimation of those who had opposed them!

Kept from the Hour of Temptation

But that was not all! Jesus further said, “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.”

There is no doubt but what the “hour of temptation” spoken of here by our Lord refers to the coming time of Tribulation, spoken of by Daniel, in Daniel 12:1, and by Jesus in Matthew 24:21-22, which is to come upon the world in the end time of the present dispensation.

What a comforting promise this must have been to the Christians of the Church at Philadelphia! And in consequence, to all Christians in every period of Church history who have belonged to the believing remnant of God's true Church!

Because of this promise, many Christians believe that before the Great Tribulation comes upon the world, the rapture of the Church will take place, as described in First Thessalonians 4:13-18, and that we shall be delivered from that dark hour of temptation which is coming to try them that dwell upon the earth.

The Rapture of the Church

Just when the rapture of the Church will take place, no one knows but every true Christian hopes that it will take place very soon, before the awful time of Tribulation comes. If the Great Tribulation is near, then the rapture of the Church must be even nearer! Therefore, let all of us who believe in Christ, hopefully and patiently wait for the fulfillment of this glorious promise of deliverance from the hour of temptation. For we are not appointed unto wrath, but unto salvation!

Jesus closed His message to the Church at Philadelphia by saying,

“Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown, Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and He shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the Churches.”

LECTURE 14 ON THE REVELATION

Copyright © 1940 LECTURE No. 14 Christ in All the Scriptures — The Message of the Risen Christ to the Church at Laodicea — The Voice of the People — A Remarkable Salutation from the Lord to This Church — The Spiritual Condition of the Laodicean Church — What the Christians Thought About Themselves — Jesus Warned Them to Repent — Jesus Outside His Own Church Seeking Entrance

LET us remember that the true title of the Book is given in the first verse, where it says, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, WHICH GOD GAVE UNTO HIM, TO SHOW UNTO HIS SERVANTS THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS. — We have pointed out already that the word “Revelation” means, unveiling or making manifest; therefore, in this book, as in no other book of the Bible, we have a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ in All the Scriptures
Christ is not only revealed in this book, however, but He is revealed in all the Scriptures! The Old Testament reveals to us the Christ of Prophecy; and the Prophets spoke of His divine origin, and of the place and manner of His birth.

- The Gospels reveal the Christ of History.

- The Book of Acts reveals to us the Risen Christ, and tells us of His forty days of post-resurrection ministry, before He ascended into heaven.

- The Books of Hebrews reveals to us the Exalted and Glorified Christ who is now at the right hand of God, acting as our High Priest in the heavenlies.

- Other Epistles of the New Testament reveal Christ as the Head of the Church, which is His Body.

The Book of Revelation, however, which we are now studying, reveals the risen and exalted Christ to us in His relation to all things, past, present and future, also in His relation to things in heaven and upon earth. In the Book of Revelation we see the eternal Christ, as the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel and as the Saviour of the World; also as the Lord and Judge among the Churches, and as the one in divine authority who shall subdue all His enemies and reign in righteousness over the world.

In our last few messages we have been studying the Seven Messages to the Seven Churches, which the risen and exalted Christ gave to John on the Isle of Patmos.

In our last lesson, we studied the message which the Lord sent to the Church at Philadelphia. The message to this Church was unique and different from all the rest, because it was purely a message of commendation and of promise. We may say, therefore, that among the Churches, the Church at Philadelphia represents the true Church within the professing Church. In other words, it represents the believing remnant of the Lord’s people in every period of Church history.

The promises to this Church were many. First of all because they had kept the Word of His patience, and had been faithful in all their works. Christ promised to them an open door of opportunity for service. He also promised them the respect of their enemies, and that He would keep them in the hour of temptation, which He said, would come upon the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. To those who were overcomers He promised that He would make them a pillar in the Temple of God, and that He would write upon them the name of God, and the name of the City of God, which is the New Jerusalem, and that He would write upon them His own new name!

Jesus closed His message to this Church with the usual admonition, “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”

Laodicea

Now, let us advance in our study by reading the message of our Lord to the Church of Laodicea, which is recorded in Revelation 3:14 to 22, where it says,—

“And unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth, “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the I door, I will come in to Him, and will sup with him, and he with me, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His Throne, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches”

A brief historical and geographical survey of Laodicea will prove both interesting and helpful just here. Laodicea was at one time a place of considerable size, and was also a place of trade and wealth. The remains of theaters and Temples and public buildings still bear testimony to its former greatness.

It is supposed that Christianity was introduced into Laodicea by the Apostle Paul, although we have no record of any personal visit which the Apostle made to this place. We are told that in subsequent times it became a Christian City of considerable note, and importance. And was a meeting place of Church Councils. In his book on the Apocalypse, J. A. Seiss, says:
“It was destroyed by the Mohammedan invaders, and is now a scene of utter desolation. There is a small village in the neighborhood, the houses of which are built of its ruins. Emerson says it is even more solitary than Ephesus, for the later has the prospect of the rolling sea, or of a whitening sail, to enliven its decay; whilst Laodicea sits in widowed loneliness, its walls grass grown, its temples desolate, it’s very name perished. We left it in a thunderstorm, preferring to hasten on, through rain and tempest, than to delay in that melancholy spot, where everything whispered desolation, and where the very wind that swept impetuously through the valley sounded like the fiendish laugh of time, exulting over the destruction of man and his proudest monuments.”

Indeed, my friends, the description as given here, would seem to be almost prophetic of that which is to happen to the Laodicean Church of the latter days, of the present dispensation.

The Voice of the People

The word “Laodicea” means, “the voice of the people,” and this is quite in contrast to the Church of the Thyatiran period of Church History, at which time the Church was ruled by self-appointed dominating clergy, who did not allow the people of their Churches any voice whatever in the matter of Church administration.

Conditions Today

But now in the end of this present dispensation conditions have changed somewhat and in many instances are in the reverse order. In other words; many preachers today are completely dominated and ruled by the voice of the people in their churches, instead of obeying the voice of God. This perhaps would be all right, if the people themselves were right with God, and were spiritually minded, and were walking in the light, and were seeking to do the whole will of God, in their practice of religion, but, my friends, we know that quite the contrary is true. Our churches are filled with many professing Christians who themselves have never been born again, and who are worldly and their hearts are filled with unbelief and wickedness.

Alas! therefore, for the preacher and for the believing remnant in any church when they began to heed the voice of the people, instead of heeding and obeying the voice of God!

There is no doubt but what this spirit of compromise and weakness and lack of spiritual courage, which is allowing the voice of the people to rule our churches, is leading us straight into the final apostasy and the condition of lukewarmness, which our Lord described in His message to the Church at Laodicea.

The Lord’s Salutation

Now, let us note in particular the manner in which our Lord addressed Himself to the Church of the Laodiceans. In the 14th verse He said, “Unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.”

The Amen

In this salutation Jesus spoke of Himself first as the ‘Amen.’ In this instance the word ‘Amen’ is used as a personal name, and is therefore of special significance. The word “Amen” as ordinarily used; means “So be it” or “So let it be!” Now, in all things pertaining to redemption, and to the material universe, Christ is the AMEN of God. In other words, to all that God has spoken, Jesus, the Christ, says, unreservedly—“Amen!” Thus, in this one word, He expresses His complete subjection to the Father’s will.

A Faithful Witness

In the same salutation He also spoke of Himself as the Faithful and True Witness! This also was a title which should have commanded their attention and respect. Surely no one could accuse Jesus of having been unfaithful at any time. Even as a boy at Nazareth He was faithful in the matters of daily toil, and was subject unto Mary His mother, and unto Joseph, His foster father.

When He came to manhood and began His own ministry, He was faithful both to God and to His fellow men in all that He did. He was faithful in preaching the Word of God, and He did not compromise the truth of God to please the will or the voice of the people. He was faithful to the needs of the people, for He went about doing good; healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing the leper, and causing the dumb to speak. Even in this work He met with great opposition from the Scribes and Pharisees because He healed on the Sabbath Day. Nevertheless He was faithful to suffering humanity by doing all He could to alleviate all their suffering.

He was faithful also to His disciples, for He declared unto them the whole counsel of God. He protected them in times of danger, and saved them in the midst of the storm, and defended and shielded them during the terrible event of the Passion Week.

And we can truly say that Jesus was faithful even unto death, even the death of the cross, and by His faithfulness both to God and
man He became the TRUE WITNESS. There is no question but what Jesus gave a true witness concerning the nature of God, and the fallen nature of man! He witnessed also to the goodness and the grace of God and to the power of the resurrection. Jesus also gave a true witness concerning the wrath and terror of the Lord, and of the judgments of God and the dangers of hell. The Scribes and Pharisees disliked Him very much for this, and went about to kill Him; simply because He was a true witness, and testified against them.

Indeed, my friends when we compare many of our ministers today with the Lord Jesus Christ, how far short they fall in their witness and testimony, as compared with Him who was the true witness! No man can be a true witness who compromises the truth of God’s word, and who fails to declare the whole council of God to the people, regardless of consequences! Indeed, my friends, it takes real faith and courage, at all times, to be a faithful and true witness.

The Author of Creation

In this same salutation, Jesus also referred to Himself as the Beginning or author of the creation of God. We know this was true for in John 1:1-3 it says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God, All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.”

Neither Cold Nor Hot

Thus, my friends, with this unusual salutation, Jesus sought to impress upon the Christians of the Church of Laodicea; not only the fact of His deity, but also His authority, and that He had the right to rebuke them because of their spiritual condition. Therefore, in one sentence He revealed unto them their spiritual condition by saying, in the 15th verse, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert cold or hot!” There is no question but what this condition, which existed in the Church at Laodicea, has been multiplied many many times in local churches throughout every age of Church history. There is no question but what it is the most dangerous and despicable condition into which any Church could fall. A Church in this condition surely has lost its vision of the living and exalted Christ, and has forgotten the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, and the great purposes for which He died and rose again. A Church in such a condition as this has surely lost its spiritual burden for those who are lost, and are bound by the fetters of sin. A Church that is neither hot nor cold could not possibly have a true missionary vision that would compel them to labor and sacrifice in order to reach others with the Gospel. We do not wonder, therefore, that Christ said, “I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

Now, this we know was a figurative statement, yet we know from what is written later on in this Book of the Revelation, that this will be accomplished through the judgments which will come upon the Church of the Laodicean period.

What the Christians Thought

In the 17th verse Jesus referred to what the Church at Laodicea thought of itself. He quoted the Church as saying, I am rich, and increased with goods and have need of nothing. Truly, my friends, it would seem that a Church in such a position as that described here would be ashamed to confess it. Maybe they did not say so out loud, but that is what they thought in their hearts, which was just as bad. A Church so self-conceited and morally blind as they were, must have been an object of pity on the one hand and a subject of rebuke on the other; for Jesus said, “Knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable and poor, and blind and naked?”

And so, my friends, in this one verse, we have the Laodicean Church’s opinion of itself, and Christ’s opinion of the Laodicean Church.

A Call to Repentance

In view of their spiritual condition, Jesus admonished them saying, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be cloathed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent.”

The last portion of what we have just read would indicate that even in the Laodicean Church, where these awful conditions existed, there was a believing remnant whom Jesus both loved and rebuked, and chastened, and called to repentance in order that they might be saved.

Jesus Is Outside

In the 20th verse Christ reveals His relation to the Laodicean Church. He said, Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me.”
How very strange indeed that Jesus should be pictured as being on the outside and knocking at the door of the very Church which bears His name. But that was the case of the local Church at Laodicea, and the same thing is true, in a general way, in thousands of churches in every part of the world today. By their selfish and adulterated motives and by their own self-will, and their sad lack of consecration, many churches, even though they have a form of godliness, have crowded Christ entirely out of their midst. In many instances they no longer believe in His deity, nor preach the truth which He gave them, nor do they accomplish the work He left for them to do! There is no way of knowing how much these conditions grieve the Lord. He is so hungry for fellowship that He says, “If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me.”

I Am Rich

How very sad that the Church no longer feels the need of fellowship with the Lord. The reason for this, however, is clearly stated in the 17th verse, where the Church is quoted as saying, “I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.” - Alas, for any church which has substituted material prosperity for spiritual fellowship and communion with Christ. - Alas! for any church which has substituted human reason for divine revelation. - Alas! for any Church which is accepting man made theories and are rejecting the truth. - Alas! for the church which has substituted science for scripture, and Churchianity for Christianity. - Alas! for the Church which has substituted self-righteousness for regeneration, and mere profession, for possession. - Alas! for the Church which has substituted reformation for reconciliation, and which is depending upon socialability and substituting it for spirituality. - Alas! for the Church which has substituted programs for prayer, and many made plans for power, and good works for genuine worship.

What About This?

In his book on the “Harvest of Iniquity” Keith L. Brooks says,

“Such Church says: ‘We have no sin,’ but Christ says of it, ‘You are wretched.’ It says: ‘We are having a good time’; but Christ says: ‘You are miserable.’ It says: ‘We have need of nothing’ but! Christ says: ‘You are stricken with poverty.’ It says: ‘We have discernment,’ but Christ says: ‘You are blind.’ It says: ‘We are clothed in the best,’ but Christ says: ‘Your souls are naked.’

And so, my friends, we have considered Christ’s message to the local Church at Laodicea, and since these messages also have a prophetic significance, we know that the truth given here applies well to the very days in which we are living, and we confess that it is a very discouraging picture; but in the 21st verse of our lesson text, Jesus said, “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.”

The Throne of David

It is well for us to note that Jesus here referred to His Father’s Throne, which as we all know is in heaven, and He also spoke of His own Throne. And we all know that the Throne which He referred to as “my Throne” was none other than the Throne of David in Jerusalem. We do not have time to enlarge upon this thought, but when we consider the reward of those who shall be overcomers in the Laodicean period it is well to keep this distinction in mind. Those who overcome in the Laodicean period of the Church will be allowed to sit with Jesus in His own Throne, even as He overcame and sat down with His Father on the Throne in heaven. This promised reward should be sufficient to inspire many earnest hearts, to be faithful to the Lord in the midst of the great apostasy which is now upon us. And this message to the Laodicean Church closes with these same words, “He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”

The Second Coming of Christ

Now, before we conclude our study of these Seven Messages of our risen Lord to the Seven Churches, we wish to call your attention to this important fact; that the doctrine of the second coming of Christ is set forth in these messages in a very forceful manner. Thus proving that it is after all a vital part of the message which Christ committed to the Churches.

Conclusion

Now in conclusion I hope and pray that as we have studied these Seven Messages to the Seven Churches, you have been able to make the threefold application of the truth which they contain—i. e.,

1. To the local Churches addressed, 2. Prophetically to the Churches of the entire Church period, 3. Last of all to the individual Christian.

I trust that by this time we can all claim the promise which is given in Revelation 1:3, where it says, “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.”
LECTURE 15 ON THE REVELATION

We Now Approach the 3rd Division of the Book — The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter, i. e., After the Church Age Is Finished — Change of Setting — God's Plans Have Not Failed Either Under Law or Grace — What John Saw in Heaven — The Blessed Hope Is the Rapture of the Saints

I WISH to impress upon you once again the great importance of the truth contained in this Book. Every thoughtful man and woman recognizes that we are approaching a world crisis, and that great and mighty changes are soon to come in Government, in Industry and Religion; but few people recognize the underlying causes for all of these things, and only a comparative few have any conception or understanding whatever as to what the outcome will be.

For those who desire to know the final outcome of forces now at work, the Book of Revelation is of timely interest and importance; for this Book is a Revelation of the great consummation of all things recorded in the Word of God. It is primarily a Book of Prophecy, and as such it reveals the great purposes of God, both in grace and in judgment, to the very end of the plan of redemption!

In our last lesson we studied the message of the risen and glorified Christ to the Church at Laodicea, and every thoughtful person knows that we are now in the Laodicean period of the Church age, and because the Church is lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, Jesus will very soon spue it out of His mouth.

The Third Division of This Book

Now, having concluded our study of the Seven Messages to the Seven Churches, which were in Asia, as given in chapters two and three of the Book of Revelation, we now come to a study of the third important division of the Book.

The first division was found in chapter one, where we were given a vision of the glorified Son of Man, which rightfully falls under the heading suggested in chapter 1:19, where John was commanded to “Write the things which he had seen.”

Next he was commanded to write concerning “the things which are.” Under this heading we have the messages to the Seven Churches, which then existed in Asia Minor, and which, as we have pointed out, give us a prophetic outline of Church history from day of Pentecost to the coming translation of the Church!

John was also commanded to write concerning “the things which shall be hereafter,” i. e., the things which shall be after the Church Age is finished, and the Church has been raptured away to be with the Lord.

This third division of the Book of Revelation begins with chapter 4 and continues on to the close of the Book, and includes, of course, all of the events suggested under the opening of the Seven Seals, and the sounding of the Seven Trumpets, and the pouring out of the Seven Vials of the wrath of God. There are, however, some parenthetical passages which have to do with certain important events. - Chapters 17 and 18 tell us prophetically of the final doom of apostate Christendom, which will occur during the coming tribulation period! - The 20th chapter reveals to us the doom of Satan and the Judgment of the wicked dead, and speaks to us also of the coming reign of Christ, which is to be for one thousand years. - The last two chapters of the book, i. e., chapters 21 and 22, give to us a prophetic vision of the new Heaven and the new Earth, and the final state of those who have been full; redeemed.

Although we cannot in any wise cover all of the material suggested in the fourth chapter in our present lesson, it would be well for us to read the passage in preparation for things which we shall have to say later on. Therefore, let us give careful attention while we read the entire chapter, which contains only eleven verses John said:

“After this I looked, and, behold, door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. “And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, “And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the Throne, in sight like unto an emerald. “And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats II saw four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. “And out of the throne proceeded lightenings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the Seven Spirits of God. “And before the throne there was sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes, before and behind. “And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast has a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not, day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and which is, and is to come. “And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the
Throne, which liveth for ever and for ever, “The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the Throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the Throne, saying, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

Change of Setting

We cannot read this unusual and interesting chapter without recognizing that the drama of events has entirely changed, and that the setting of those things which are spoken of in this chapter are in heaven and not here upon the earth.

The time element of this chapter is also very important. Just as the messages to the Seven Churches gave to us a prophetic foreview of the entire Church Age, from its beginning to the Second Coming of Christ, even so, this chapter reveals to us the state of things as they will be between the removal, or rapture of the Church, and the sending forth of God’s terrible judgments upon the world of wicked men!

In other words what we have in this chapter is a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ in relation to His elect in heaven; after they shall have been caught up at the rapture; which is described in First Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The State of the Church

Now, before we undertake an exposition of this 4th chapter of Revelation we would do well to consider the state of the Church as described in the Seven Messages to the Seven Churches which we have just studied.

We have already stated that these seven messages were a prophetic foreview of the entire church age, and in our study we have seen how they reveal the internal corruption of the Church, and that in a progressive sense, the outward visible Church will go on and on until it reaches a final state of apostasy; it will go on in its present downward course until Christ will be compelled to spue her out of His mouth!

Have God’s Plans Failed?

Now this, my friends, naturally gives rise to the question, have God’s plans and purposes for the Church failed; or in other words is the Church itself a failure? If we were to judge the Church, only in the light of this present dispensation, and by conditions as they now exist, we would be prone to say that it has been a failure; but let us not be too hasty in our judgment, but examine the matter more carefully. The Age of Grace is not the only dispensation in God’s plan of redemption. Therefore, we must judge the Church, and its work, in relation to the whole plan, and not merely in relation to some part of it.

Where Sin Began

Every student of the Bible knows that sin did not have its beginning in the Church when the church first began nearly two thousand years ago. No, no, a thousand times no! Sin and moral failure began first in heaven among the angels, among those who followed Satan and kept not their first estate.

Then when God created Adam and Eve, and placed them in the Garden of Eden, in a state of perfect innocency, it was not long until sin and disobedience brought upon them the wrath, and the pronounced judgments of God, And so, ever since then among all men in every age, there has been a state of admixture of good and bad, and the whole history of man is but a record of the spiritual victories of a believing remnant, and the moral failure of the masses!

Was the Law a Failure?

Those who understand the dispensation of the Law know that while the Jews themselves failed to understand the language of their own prophets, and failed to accept Christ when He came, as the Son of God, and as the Messiah of Israel, we cannot say that the dispensation of the law was a failure from God’s point of view! God’s purpose in giving the law was in order to reveal to Israel, and subsequently to all men, the sinfulness of sin, and to use it as a school master to bring them to Christ.

And who can deny but what the purposes of God in this respect have been fulfilled. Therefore, even though the Jews were cast off, because of their unbelief, we cannot say that the Mosaic dispensation was a failure! God would not allow it to be a failure, even though the Jews themselves failed to accept Christ. What did God do about it? Well, He just broke off the natural branches and grafted in the Gentiles, into the old Olive Tree, as stated in Romans the 11th chapter.

From this we are able to see that in spite of man’s failure, God’s purposes under the law were accomplished, and that He made ample provision to retain and to conserve all the good, which had been accomplished under the law.

How About the Church?
Now let us apply this same principle to the Church, in the present age! We might have some right to say that the Church has been a failure, if it were not for the fact that God Himself foreknew, and foretold that the Church Age would end in exactly the manner which we now see. In the parables of the 13th chapter of Matthew, Jesus gave a sevenfold word-picture of the mystery state of the Kingdom as it would be during this present age, while the King would be absent. First of all Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven, during this a would be like unto a Sower, who went forth to sow, and we know from the parable that three-fourths of the seed sown became unfruitful. He also said that the Kingdom of Heaven in this age would be likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

In the parable of the grain of mustard seed, Jesus revealed that the Kingdom of Heaven, in this age, would have an abnormal growth, and that it would become a shelter for the wicked of every sort, to come and lodge in the branches thereof.

In the parable of the Leaven, Jesus revealed that the Kingdom of Heaven in this age would have hidden in it corrupting influence like yeast in the bread, until the whole was leavened, Leaven in the scriptures is always used as a symbol of evil, and not once is it used as a symbol of good.

In the parable of the Dragnet, Jesus revealed that the Kingdom of Heaven in this age would be as a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

By each one of these parables, Jesus Himself revealed the future conditions of the Kingdom of Heaven as they would be during His absence; and in every instance these parable revealed a state of admixture of good and evil, and that the tares would grow together with the wheat until the harvest.

Second Timothy the Third Chapter

In second Timothy the third chapter it is also prophesied that in the last days of the present dispensation, or Church Age, perilous times would come: "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful and unholy." and in second Thessalonians 2, and verse 3; the Apostle Paul says: 'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.'

They Agree

And so my friends, we can see that the prophetic, historic and present condition of the Church does agree perfectly with what God has foreseen and foretold in His word concerning the Church in this present age of grace. Can we say, therefore, that what God has foreknown, and foreseen and foretold is a failure? I hardly think so! It may be a failure if we look at it only from the human point of view; but we must not forget that God's plans and purposes are eternal, and therefore we must view the accomplishments of every age in the light of God's eternal purpose.

Grace

Even during this present age, from Pentecost until now, during which time God has been dealing with men, according to the terms of grace, we cannot say that the preaching of the Gospel has been a failure! We must not forget that the great purpose of the present dispensation is the calling out of the Church through the preaching of the Gospel of God's redeeming Grace, to the Jews and Gentiles alike.

And, this we know, that in every successive age of Church history, in spite of the state of admixture, which has existed in the Church, and in spite of the fact that some men have made themselves self-appointed lords over God's heritage, and that local Churches in many places have so utterly failed God that He has been compelled to remove their candlestick, nevertheless, God has seen to it that the Word of God has been preached in spite of the devil, and in spite of human failure. It is comforting to know that while the work of the Church has lagged behind in some places because of men's disobedience and unbelief, in other places because of faith and obedience the work has gone forward, and the light of Christian testimony has shown brightly and much fruit has been gathered in for the Lord.

A Faithful Remnant

And so, my friends, we see that God has always had a faithful remnant who have fully believed His word, and who have loved and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ even under suffering and persecution and reproach, and have borne faithful testimony to the grace of God, and the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must be made to realize that in His Word, God nowhere promises that the entire world will be converted during this present dispensation. In fact, the word teaches that quite the contrary is true. We should not forget that even the wonderful ministry of our
Lord with all that He spoke, and the mighty miracles which He performed, only resulted in a little flock who believed and trusted and followed Him; and even among them was Judas, who betrayed Him.

The full and complete revelation of the Church was given to the Apostle Paul, and with perfect knowledge of the dispensational plans and purposes of God in this age, his greatest expectation was that he might “save some!” Indeed, my friends, the gospel has been preached for nearly two thousand years, and there has been no place where all the people have been converted one hundred percent.

The Apostle James also declared in Acts 15:14 and 15, saying, “God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name, and to this (He said) agree the words of the Prophets.”

We Dare Not

And so, my friends, we see again, that we dare not say that the Church Age has been a failure from God’s point of view. True enough the outward professing church has become well nigh apostate from God; having only a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. True enough the Church has failed, and is failing to evangelize the heathen nations of the earth, so that today they are increasing more rapidly by natural birth rate than they are being reached with the gospel. Nevertheless, if, during the present age, through the preaching of the Gospel of the Grace of God to Jews and Gentiles alike, the Church, which is the Body of Christ, has been called out, we cannot say the age has been a failure.

This we know that in spite of present day conditions, there is still a believing remnant of God’s people who are truly born again of His Spirit, and who still love the Lord with all their heart, and who are willing to suffer and to sacrifice for the carrying on of “His work to the very end of the age!”

What About the Saints?

Now, since this is true, and since the shadows of earth’s darkest night are gathering about us, the question naturally arises, WHAT IS TO BECOME OF THESE TRUE SAINTS OF GOD, AS THE HOUR OF GOD’S WRATH, AND THE TIME FOR THE EXECUTION OF HIS JUDGMENTS UPON THE WICKED, DRAWS NEARER AND NEARER? The answer to this important question, my friends, is found in the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation, which we are now studying. Now, let us read again the first verse of chapter four, where John said: “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said. Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”

Hereafter

Now, let us not forget that the “them” of this passage is “The things which shall be hereafter.” i.e., after the completion and translation of the Church. The things which shall be hereafter include all of the events of the Tribulation Period, which is to immediate follow the rapture of the Church, and also the events of the millennial reign of Christ, and the judgment of Satan and the ushering in of the new age wherein dwelleth righteousness!

What John Saw

The passage now before us plainly teaches that a door was opened in heaven. It further shows that John himself was caught up into heaven in the Spirit and was given a vision of the Throne in heaven, which included a vision of the enthroned Elders and the four living creatures. And he was also given a vision of worship in heaven!

In fact he was given to see in one great panoramic vision, all the events which will transpire under the opening of the Seven Seals, and the sounding of the Seven Trumpets, and the pouring out of the Seven Vials of the wrath of God! And besides this he was given to see also the New Jerusalem and the new heaven and the new earth! How his heart must have thrilled as he was given to see these wonderful things, which revealed to his understanding, God’s plans and purposes for the future on through to the very close of the plan of redemption.

Now, what was the significance of this open door in heaven? And the sounding of the Trumpet which John heard, which said, “Come up hither”?

The Rapture

It is generally accepted in this instance, that the Apostle John was representative of the entire Church, and that which happened to him was symbolic of the fulfillment of what is spoken of in Titus 2:13, as “THE BLESSED HOPE.” In other words, every true child of God today is waiting for a similar event to happen to the entire Church of God. In other words, we who belong to Christ are waiting for the rapture of the Saints to take place.

The doctrine of the rapture is clearly taught in First Thessalonians 4:13-18, where Paul says: “But I would not have you to be
ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; ‘Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and we shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these Words.’

This, my friends, is indeed a very instructive and very comforting passage to every child of God. It means that if Christ should come in our day, we, like John on the Isle of Patmos, would also see a door open in heaven, and we too would hear the voice of a Trumpet, saying. Come up hither; and not in Spirit only, but in reality we who are alive and remain would be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we would ever be with the Lord.

What Paul Said

The Apostle Paul gives us added information on this interesting and important subject in First Corinthians 15:51 to 53, where he says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

These scriptures, my friends, should establish beyond the shadow of a doubt and beyond controversy that the true Saints of God will be caught up and raptured away to be with Christ suddenly at some time during the closing days of the present dispensation. No one knows just when this will be, but since it is so clearly taught in the Word of God, it is a prophetic certainty and will surely come to pass.

Why Will the Church Be Translated

Now, there is no question but what some will ask, Why will the Church be translated? And the answer is, so that sin may come to a head. We know that just as long as the true Church, which is being called out during this age, is still in the world, this cannot happen. Just as God would not allow the Angels to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah until Lot had been delivered; even so God will not allow iniquity to come to its full, and the righteous judgments to fall upon the wicked of the whole earth until the Church, which is the Body of Christ, has been completed and raptured away to be with Christ. This is confirmed in Second Thessalonians 2:7 and 8, where it says, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming;”

Another Reason

Another reason why the Church will be raptured away to be with Christ is so that we may escape the judgments which will come upon the earth during the Tribulation Period.

At the present time we are Ambassadors for Christ here upon the earth! We are pilgrims in a weary land, and we are His witnesses to the great truths of the Gospel; but we know that when two nations are about to go to war, the first step is for a nation to withdraw the Ambassador, and that such diplomatic action is virtually a declaration of War. And so, my friends, when God is ready to inflict His righteous judgments upon the wicked of the whole earth, one of the first things which He will do, will be to call us, who are His Ambassadors, to the Court of Heaven, and then, friends, the judgments of God will break forth in unrestrained fury upon the wicked, and there will be no escape until the purposes of God in judgment shall have been accomplished!
Now, there is no question but what some will ask, why will the Church be translated? And the answer is, So that sin may come to a head. We know that just as long as the True Church, is still in the world, this cannot happen. Just as God would not allow the Angels to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah until Lot had been delivered; even so God will not allow iniquity to come to its full, and His righteous judgments to fall upon the wicked of the whole earth until the Church, which is the Body of Christ has been completed and raptured away to be with Christ. This is confirmed in Second Thessalonians 2:7-8, where it says, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way and then shall that wicked (or wicked one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”

Another reason why the Church will be raptured away to be with Christ is that all true Saints may escape the judgmental which will come upon the earth during the tribulation period!

At the present time we who are Christians are Ambassadors for Christ here upon the earth. We are Pilgrims in a weary land. And we are witnesses to the great truths of the Gospel. But, we know that when two nations are about to go to war, the first step is for a nation to withdraw its Ambassador, and such diplomatic action is virtually a declaration of war. And so, my friends, when God is ready to inflict His righteous judgments upon the wicked of the whole earth, one of the first things He will do will be to call those of us, who are His Ambassadors to the court in heaven. This will be a sign of His wrath and displeasure with the wicked and will let them know that God is going to wage war against them, which He will do by inflicting judgment upon them.

Hereafter

Let me remind you, however, that this chapter has to do with the things which shall be hereafter, namely, after the resurrection and rapture of the Church!

Scenes in Heaven

The scenes and persons described in this entire chapter are in heaven. We therefore should feel, as we approach a study of this chapter that we are upon high and holy ground. With what reverence, therefore, we should give attention to these things recorded here for our instruction. Truly, my friends, it would seem as if the things mentioned in this chapter were rather a subject for Angels than for those of us who are still here upon the earth surrounded by sin of every sort; but since God has caused these things to be written, let us study them with all sincerity and diligence, and strive to learn those things which this passage was intended to teach.

After beholding the door that was opened in heaven, and hearing the voice which said, “Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter,” John said: “And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a Throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the Throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a Jasper and a Sardine Stone; and there was a rainbow round about the Throne in sight like unto an Emerald.”

God’s Throne

Now, this, my friends, was what John saw immediately after being transported in the Spirit to heaven. When it speaks of heaven in this passage, let us remind you that the heaven spoken of here is the one where God’s Throne is. You will remember that Paul speaks of having been caught up into the third heaven, where he heard words which were unlawful for man to speak. The atmospheric heavens immediately above the earth are also spoken of as heaven, but the heaven referred to here is without a doubt the highest heaven above all principality and power where God’s Throne is now situated.

The first thing which attracted John’s attention was the Throne itself, and the one who occupied the Throne. The nature and purpose of this Throne must be derived from the description which is given here in the word itself.

First let us notice that He who sat upon the Throne was to look upon like a Jasper and a Sardine Stone. This is very suggestive because a Jasper is a clear stone like a diamond, while a Sardine Stone is blood red like a ruby. A Jasper stone, therefore, suggests the clear majestic and resplendent glory of the risen Lord. And since the Sardine Stone is blood red, it reminds us of the cross of Christ where He shed His blood to make an atonement for the sins of the world.

Stones

The use of these two stones to describe Him who sat on the Throne, are of even greater significance when we refer to the meaning given to these stones by the Israelites. In his book “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” Louis T. Talbot, quotes a statement from Dr. H. A. Ironside of Chicago, on this point, as follows:

“Remembering that many of the first readers of The Revelation were converted Jews, we might ask what would these stones suggest to them? Surely every instructed Hebrew would instantly recall that they were the first and last stones in the breastplate of the High Priest (as stated in Exodus 28: 17-20). As these stones bore the names of the Tribes of Israel,
arranged according to the birth of the twelve Patriarchs, the one would suggest at once, the name ‘Rueben,’ which means "Behold a Son;" and the other ‘Benjamin’ meaning "The Son of my right hand." It is Christ enthroned, the Son about to reign in power, who is before the seer’s vision.

And so, my friends, we see that these two stones used here, to describe Him that sat on the Throne, do in reality describe the nature and character of the risen and glorified Christ, seated upon the Throne in heaven, in preparation for the impending events which are to follow immediately after the rapture of the church.

The Rainbow

Now, it says, there was a rainbow round about the Throne in sight like unto an Emerald. The color of an emerald is green! The appearance of a rainbow here in this heavenly scene is also significant. The rainbow, as we know, is of historical importance, as pertaining to the covenant which God made with Noah. From the record given in Genesis, we know that it was a sign of God’s covenant with Noah, wherein He promised never to curse the earth. again with another flood, such as that which destroyed the whole earth. This is confirmed in Genesis 9:13-16, where it says, “I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth, And it shall come to pass, when I bring cloud over the earth, that the bow be seen in the cloud: ‘And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”

Thus, my friends, do we see that the rainbow encircling the Throne in heaven was a symbol of the Noahic covenant which God made with Noah after the flood; wherein He promised that He would not again destroy the earth with a flood, and that as long as the earth remained, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and Summer and Wintel and day and night, would not cease! Therefore, under this great covenant God’s purpose was to bestow grace upon man, and to bless the earth with seed time and harvest until His ultimate purposes, both in grace and in judgment could be accomplished, in behalf of man’s redemption.

The Rainbow a Sign

The presence of this Rainbow round about the Throne in heaven, therefore indicates that, although it is a Throne of Judgment, it is not a Throne of destruction, but one of conservation. And that all of the ministrations of this Throne are to be carried out under the symbol of the covenant which God made with Noah, which we know is one of the three unconditional covenants of the Bible, and which is to stand forever.

Emerald

Let us remember that the rainbow round about the Throne in heaven was like unto an Emerald, that is, its prevailing hue was a light green. As already suggested the Jasper and the Sardine Stone represent the radiant and majestic glory, which flashed from Him that sat upon the Throne, and the presence of green in the rainbow round about the Throne, indicates that, in the midst of judgment, which is to proceed from this Throne, God will remember mercy!

A Judgment Throne

The Throne is further described in the 5th verse, where it says, “And out of the Throne proceeded lightning and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the Throne, which are the Seven Spirits of God. And before the Throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal, and in the midst of the Throne, were four Beasts (or living creatures) full of eyes before and behind.”

The fact that from this Throne there proceeded lightnings and voices and thunders, would indicate that it was to be a Throne of Judgment, and that the wrath of God was about to proceed from it.

In olden times when God was about to inflict judgment upon Egypt, you will remember that He sent thunder and hail, and that fire ran along upon the ground, and when Pharaoh had seen these things he besought Moses to intreat the Lord that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail. Thus he recognized that these things had come from God as an evidence of His wrath and displeasure!

You will also recall that when God came down upon Mt. Sinai “It came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people—in the camp trembled.”

These, and many other scriptures could be cited to show that lightnings and thunders and voices are symbols of God’s wrath and displeasure, and substantiate the fact that the Throne, here in question, which John saw, was a Judgment Throne.

The Seven Lamps
This is further confirmed when we consider the seven lamps of fire which John saw burning before the Throne, which were declared to be the seven Spirits of God! We have learned already from Isaiah 11, and verse 2, that these seven Spirits refer to the sevenfold plenitude or fulness of the Holy Spirit. In other words, at this Throne in the heavens, John saw also the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is the third person of the Trinity. We know when Jesus was baptized the Spirit descended upon Him from heaven as it were a dove, and during His earthly ministry, it rested upon Him as the Spirit of grace, and it has continued as such throughout this entire Church Age. And we know that the great work of the Holy Spirit in this present age is the calling out of the Church from among both Jews and Gentiles! But the time is coming when the Church will be completed, and when this task is finally accomplished, the Holy Spirit, now present in the world, will return to heaven with the Bride of Christ, which has been called out, and which will be translated to heaven before the events of this chapter come to pass! What John was given to see here was the presence of the Holy Spirit before the Throne, symbolized by the seven lamps of fire burning before the Throne. Here the symbol of the Holy Spirit has changed, and it is no longer the Spirit of grace, but the Spirit of burning, as symbolized by the burning lamps before the Throne. The Holy Spirit will therefore become one of flaming indignation, as when men go forth in preparation for battle. In Isaiah 4, and verse 4, God speaks of washing away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and of purging Jerusalem by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning. The work of the Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of burning, is suggested in Malachi 4 and verse 1, where it says: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts and it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

We may expect, these things, my friends, to take place during the Tribulation Period, which it would seem is very near at hand. During the Tribulation Period the same Spirit which is now operating as the Spirit of Grace, will then operate as the Spirit of the Throne and shall go forth as the Spirit of Vengeance!

The Holy Spirit Will Work

Many people wonder how souls will be saved when the Holy Spirit returns to the Throne in Heaven. The Book of Revelation plainly teaches that many people will be saved during the Tribulation period, and there is no question but what the Holy Spirit will work during that Age very much the same as He did during the Old Testament period, at which time He came upon the Prophets of God with special power, anointing and preparing them to serve as God’s witnesses to the people. The Holy Spirit is now working upon earth through the words and testimony of those whose hearts He indwells, and empowers for service. But during the Tribulation Period He will operate from His own place before the Throne of God in heaven. Let us remember that the Holy Spirit is not limited to time or space, such as we poor creatures are here upon the earth! If He chooses to do so, being omnipresent, and all powerful, He can operate as well from the Throne in Heaven as here upon the earth.

The Sea of Glass

In verse 6, the Throne in Heaven, is further described as having before it a sea of glass like unto crystal. This statement, my friends, is in keeping with what we read in Exodus 24:9-10 where it says, "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the Elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet, as it were, a paved work of a Sapphire Stone, and as it were the body of Heaven in His clearness."

Also in Revelation 20:1, we have description of the New Jerusalem, it says that the street of the City was pure gold, as it were transparent glass!

And so, my friends, we see from such statements as these, given in the Word of God, that Heaven is more than a place of disembodied Spirits, and of mists of shadows! On the contrary it is to a place of substance, and of beautiful realities.

The Enthroned Elders

Now, having learned the nature, a the character and the purpose of the Throne in Heaven, which John was given to see, let us give our attention to what is said in the fourth verse of the chapter where it says: "And round about the Throne were four and twenty seats, a upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns gold."

This, my friends, is a very interesting and important statement, and one which rightly demands our earnest study, a careful attention. In this verse the word translated "seats," means "Thrones." In other words, his vision, John was given to see, not only the Throne of Deity in the center of the scene, which was filled with majesty beyond description, but in a circle around the great Throne were twenty-four lesser seats or thrones, and these lesser Thrones were occupied by twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and it says they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Glorified Saints

Now this, my friends, is not a word picture of the disembodied spirits of those who are redeemed, but what we have here is a
revelation of the glorified saints of God, who will be raised from the dead, or changed while living, and caught up to be with the Lord at the time of the rapture! This is confirmed in Revelation 5, and verse 9, where these same elders which John saw, sing a new song, saying, “Thou are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou hast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” This is positive proof that they were not Angels but human beings who had been redeemed from the earth. Neither must we look upon them as being the Patriarchs, or Jews, or the twelve Apostles only; for in the verse just read they speak of themselves as being from every kindred, and tongue and people and nation.

Crowned

It is important also for us to notice that John saw them clothed in white raiment, with crowns of gold on their heads, and they were already enthroned! This very fact would indicate that the time of this vision is still future, and will not take place until after the resurrection and rapture of the saints; for no one could be robed, and crowned and enthroned until he had received his resurrected and glorified body.

The Apostle Paul did not expect his crown until after his resurrection. This is confirmed in Second Timothy 4:6 to 8, where he said: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

And so, my friends, we see that the idea which some people have that the disembodied souls are already crowned and enthroned, is not true to the scriptures. True enough, they are at rest in the Paradise of God, but they will not be crowned until after the resurrection and rapture of the Church. The rewards which the Saints are to receive, Christ is to bring with Him, and will not be given out until the morning of the resurrection. This is confirmed in Revelation 22:12, where Jesus is quoted as saying, “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be.”

Many Crowns

As a reward for service, the Bible promises five different kinds of crowns, i.e.

(1) The Crown of Righteousness,

(2) The Crown of Glory,

(3) The Crown of Life,

(4) The Crown of Rejoicing, and

(5) The Incorruptible Crown. Therefore, according to the Scriptures the time of our own coronation will not be until the resurrection, for no one can be crowned until he is either resurrected from the dead, or translated while living.

Now, you may wonder why there were twenty-four of these elders. From the scriptural point of view the number twenty-four is very important, and was used here, no doubt, as a representative number. This is confirmed in First Chronicles the 24th chapter, where we have a record of the divisions of the Sons of Aaron into twenty-four different orders. The purpose of this was so that each group could serve for two weeks at a time in the service of the Sanctuary. Please remember that in Israel all the Levites were considered as Priests for the service of the Tabernacle, and there were several thousand of them. Therefore, they were divided into twenty-four courses, or divisions, and while one group or division was serving in the Tabernacle they were representing the entire body. What John saw, therefore, was a representative body of twenty-four elders standing for the entire company of men and women who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

12 Patriarchs — 12 Apostles

Let us not forget that in the Old Testament days there were twelve Patriarchs, and in the New Testament period, there were twelve Apostles of the Lamb, and so we may rightfully declare that these twenty-four Elders are a representative body, representing both the Saints of the Old and of the New Testament periods, who have been saved through faith in the blood of Christ. The Old Testament Saints looked forward to the Cross, just as we who are saved today look backward to the Cross!

John saw them with Crowns of gold upon their heads. Now, some will ask, why did they have these Crowns of Gold upon their heads? In answer to this we must not forget that what John saw here was merely a prophetic foreview of the things that shall be hereafter. The scene presented here presupposes resurrection and the rapture of the Saints, and they are looked upon as the Judgment Seat of Christ had already taken place, and rewards for service ready meted out! Hence John saw these twenty-four elders robed and crown and seated upon their Thrones, which were situated around the Great Throne upon which the ONE sat who was to look upon like a Jasper and Sardine Stone.
In Conclusion

In his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss, says on this point,

“I find, then, in these enthroned Elders, the highest manifested glory of the risen and glorified saints. They are in heaven. They are around the Throne of Deity. They are pure and holy, wearing white, which is the righteousness of the Saints. They are partakers of celestial dominion. They are kings of glory, with golden crowns! They are settled, and at home in their exalted dignities; not standing and waiting as servants, but seated as royal counsellors of the Almighty. They are assessors of the great Judge of quick and dead, the spectators of all that transpires in heaven and earth, and participants in the judgment of the world for its sins, the Church for its apostasies, Babylon for her impurities, Antichrist for his blasphemies, and that old Serpent and his brood, for their ungodliness and wickednesses during all these weary ages! They are the Elders of the glorious house of the redeemed, and kings and priests in the temple and palace of the Lord God Almighty, whom all the earth shall obey, and all the ages acknowledge.”
Now, it is perfectly clear that they could not have joined in singing this song with the elders unless they were also among those who had been redeemed by the blood of Christ out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation!

Their Appearance

In verse 7, these living creatures are described as being like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third as having a face like a man, and the fourth living creature, it says, was like a flying eagle. Each of the four living creatures had six wings about him, and each of them was full of eyes. And another thing about them was, they did not rest day or night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is to come.

It is very interesting to note that the Lion, and the calf, and the face of a man, and the flying eagle were emblems used by the Children of Israel as they marched from Egypt toward the Land of Canaan. - On the standard of the Tribe of Judah was a Lion, - On the standard for the tribe of Ephraim was young Ox, - A Man for the tribe of Rueben. - An eagle for the tribe of Dan. These were the representative tribes, and according to Numbers the 2nd chapter which gives to us the order of the host and the arrangement of the camp, all the other tribes were marshaled under these four standards. Thus did Israel march in the wilderness under the banners of the Lion, the Ox, the Man and the flying Eagle, as they journey from Egyptian bondage to the promise land, and we know that the Tabernacle in Israel, and everything pertaining their religious and national life were patterned after the true Tabernacle in the heavens.

The fact that these four living creatures are described as having wings, and as being full of eyes, reminds us of Ezekiel's vision which he had of the heavenly cherubim, as given in Ezekiel the first chapter. Cherubim, as revealed in the Old Testament, acted as the executors of the Heavenly Father's will as in the case of Adam and Eve, when God drove them out from the Garden of Eden, He placed at the East of the garden Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life.

Cherubim

When we compare Ezekiel's vision o the cherubim with the description of the four living creatures, given by the Apostle John, which he saw in heaven in the midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne, we are constrained to believe that they represent those from among the redeemed who have receive their special appointment as executor of the Father's will in the new dispensation and order of things, which is to follow the resurrection and rapture of the Church. In other words, they will be a new kind of Cherubim of the new order, which will then be ushered in.

Ezekiel in his vision saw but four Cherubim, and John also saw four living creatures, and there is little doubt but what they were representative in either case of multitudes who belong to the same class. Otherwise, these four living creatures would not say to Him that was on the Throne, ‘Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation:—”

Worship in Heaven

Now, chapter four closes with a description of worship in heaven. The four living creatures are described as having no rest day or night, and they are busy saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty which was, and is, and is to come" and in Revelation 1:9-11, John said, ‘And when those beasts (or living creatures) give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever. The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the Throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the Throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

From this passage, my friends, it is perfectly clear that both the elders and four living creatures worshipped Him that sat on the Throne, because of His creative power. And this, my friends was reason enough why they or anyone else should worship Him that sat on the Throne! Throughout the entire Bible, God appeals to His creative power as a reason for our faith, and as a just reason why we should worship Him.

We, Too, Have Been Called

Having considered these enthroned elders which were seated upon Thrones round about the Throne, and the four living creatures in the midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne, we are made to realize that these are the high positions, and the celestial glories, to which you and I, and all the redeemed, who have obeyed the Gospel of Christ, have been called.

Who, my friends, can express the grandeur and blessedness of the gospel whereby we are called to these high and holy places with Christ in the heavens. When we understand these things we are made to realize what the Apostle meant, when he said in Colossians 3:1-4, “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in
God. When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."

I Can’t Understand

The mystery to me has always been, how men and women, who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, and who are thereby called to turn from sin and from Satan to the true and living God, and have been called to such celestial regencies, can continue on in sin as if no such blessings and honors were offered as a reward for faith and right living during their sojourn here upon the earth! Frankly, tell me, what can unsaved men and women hope to gain in the end from a life of sin and shame here upon the earth?

With such blessings and rewards offered to us in the Word of God for a life of faith and obedience, and good works, it seems to me that multitudes of men and women would consider the error of their ways and turn from the terrible sins, and the follies of this world, which now occupy their time and possess their hearts, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and cry for mercy in order that they too might join those who belong to the household of faith, and who are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Surely nothing in this life would be too dear to give up, be it worldly friends, or pleasures, or the comforts of this life, in order that we might gain for ourselves a place among those who are here represented by the enthroned Elders, and the four living creatures, whom John saw in the midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne. I am sure, my friends, that no sacrifice would be too great, when compared with the reward, and the glories which are to follow and that,

“The toils of the road will seem nothing When we get to the end of the way.”

The Seven Sealed Book

Now having considered these things, we are ready to begin our study of the 5th chapter; the subject of which is The Seven Sealed Book."

Continuing an account of his vision on the Isle of Patmos, the Apostle John said, in Revelation 5:1 to 7—

"And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the Throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals, “And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon, “And I wept much, because no man is was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon, “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 the seven seals thereof, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst the Throne and of the four beasts, in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, “And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat up the Throne.”

Now, it is not difficult to understand that what we have before our attention here is a continuation of those thin which John saw in heaven. This, my friends, is a high and holy scene, an one which well deserves our careful and prayerful attention. The object which seems to have attracted the Apostle attention, from the very beginning, was the book which he saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the Throne, written within and on the backside, and sealed with seven seals.

A Symbol of Redemption

It may be helpful if we state just her that the book in question, which John saw, was not a book such as you and are acquainted with, but rather it was a scroll such as that used by the ancient Hebrews.

The next thing necessary is to discover, if we can, what this book or scroll symbolized in the vision which John saw. It is generally conceded by most Bible students that the book here described was a symbol of redemption, and that it refers to the redemption of the purchased possession. This is confirmed in verses 8 to 10 of this same chapter, where the living creatures and the elders fell down before the Lamb and worshipped when the book was taken out of the hand of Him that sat upon the Throne.

Now, when we speak of this book as a symbol of redemption we must explain what we mean by this term. When the word redemption is used the minds of most men go back to the birth and to the life and death and the resurrection of Christ, and they think of that phase of redemption which was accomplished by the Lord Himself when He died for us upon the cross. And it is well that we do this; for the cross is indeed the very center of God’s redemptive plan, but when we view the whole subject of redemption, we must realize that it can only be described in the past, present and future tenses. No sooner had man sinned in the Garden of Eden than God made provision for their redemption by giving to them the promise of a Saviour who was to be the seed of the woman, and one who would bruise the serpent’s head! Therefore, throughout every dispensation which has followed since then, through
miracles, and signs, and wonders God has been working out His plan of redemption.

In the fulness of time Christ Himself came and died upon the cross, and rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven; but even the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross, although it was the very heart and center of God's redemptive plan, was not enough because the Gospel was yet to be preached to all nations during the age of grace. Also the judgments of God must be accomplished upon the wicked, and Christ Himself must return and rule over the nations, and the earth must finally be renovated by fire, and Jesus must deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be all and in all, before the great work of redemption is fully and completely accomplished.

Therefore, as we review the work of redemption, as set forth in the entire word of God, we can readily see that much of the work of redemption is yet future. The word “redemption” includes all the works of God in every dispensation, which He has wrought, whether by grace or judgment, in behalf of our deliverance.

Jewish Custom

Now, we will not be able to understand the symbolism used concerning the Seven Sealed Book unless we go back and make a study of what is written in Jeremiah the 32nd chapter. A careful study of this chapter will reveal that a sealed book, according to Jewish custom, represented a titled deed to a purchased possession.

We all know that according to Jewish custom every fiftieth year in Israel was a year of jubilee, at which time every man was required to return unto his own possession. During the fifty years a possession might be bought and sold, but at the end of the fifty years it reverted back again to its original owner. In the meantime if anyone in Israel, because of poverty or distress or discontent, sold their inheritance to another, a secondary law provided that such inheritance which had been disposed away could be redeemed and bought back. If the nearest of kin to the one who had sold the property would step in and redeem it. On this particular point, J. A. Seiss, in his book on the Apocalypse says,

“When an inheritance was thus disposed away by its rightful possessor, there were two books or instruments of writing, made of the transaction, the one open and the other sealed, specifying the price and particulars. These books or deeds went into the hands of the one to whom the property was thus made over. A sealed book thus became a standing sign of an alienated inheritance, but so held as to be liable to be recovered on the terms specified, and when any one legally representing the original proprietor, was found competent to lift and destroy that sealed instrument, and thus to buy back what had been disposed away. He was called the Goel, or redeemer, and the inheritance was considered redeemed so far, that he now had full right to dispossess of it whoever might be found on it, and to enter upon its undisturbed fruition.”

An Example

All we need to confirm this is to turn to the 4th chapter of the Book of Ruth, where we have the beautiful story of how Boaz acted as the kinsman redeemer in behalf of Ruth and Naomi.

Now, to apply the truth which we have learned to the account given in Revelation the 5th chapter, which John was given to see concerning the seven seal book in the hands of Him that sat on the Throne, we can safely say that the seven sealed book represents the title deed to the earth. We all know that when God created the earth and had created man in the Garden of Eden, He gave to Adam, the title deed to the earth, and told him “to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

But we also know that when Adam and Eve sinned, man lost not only his dominion, but he lost the title deed to his original possession, which title deed, shall we say, reverted back once again to God. The fact that God now holds the title deed to the earth is confirmed in Psalm 24 and verse 1, where it says, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof.” God also represented Himself to Abraham as the possessor of heaven and earth, as stated in Genesis 14, and verse 19. Therefore, He and He alone is the only one who has the right to open the Seven Sealed Book, representing the title deed to His own possession.

Satan a Usurper

Now there is something here that we must not overlook, i. e., that Satan’s present possession of the earth is what we might call a usurpation, which God has permitted for a time within limits of His own permissive will, which in no wise effects God's original right and authority over the earth! The redemptive plan of God allows that when a proper redeemer can be found to deem it by paying the price, and driving out the one who now occupy the earth as a usurper, it may be now turned to man who under God was the original owner.

Who Is Worthy

With these things in mind, let us now return to Revelation 5, and verse where John said, 1 saw a strong Angel proclaiming with a
This, my friends, was a very important question. This is confirmed by the fact that when John heard it, and no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book, he wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book neither to look thereon. Surely a man such as the Apostle John would not have wept over a circumstance which was of little importance. The very fact, therefore, that he wept much, would impress upon us the fact of the importance and solemnity of the event of opening the Seven Seals of this Seven Sealed Book, which represented the title deed to man’s lost inheritance, which we as the posterity of Adam lost when our forefather sinned.

**Man’s Efforts a Failure**

Ever since man first sinned, and was driven out of the Garden, men in almost every age, even in their lost and fallen estate, have tried in vain, both through politics, science, philosophy and religion to regain the inheritance which was lost in Adam. The original lie of Satan to Adam and Eve was, “ye shall be as God,” and ever since then men have lived under the influence of this Satanic delusion and men have sought to bring about a Utopia of peace and plenty, wherein they could regain the forfeited perfection, and the supreme good which Adam and Eve possessed in the beginning. But the curse which God placed upon the man and the woman, and upon the ground, has been too great for them and every effort of man in every age to rise above the curse, and to build for himself a world of perfection, has utterly failed. Now and again in world history different nations have taken it upon themselves to perform this task, and to act as the world’s redeemer.

Long centuries ago Egypt sought to act as the world’s redeemer, but became corrupt herself, and finally went down in shame before the world. Babylon also tried to become the world’s redeemer but all who are familiar with the history of Babylon know, that while she was powerful for a time in governing the nations of the earth, she also became corrupt and impure and was finally overthrown. In due time Greece arose and became the great overlord of the nations and by her wisdom and culture sought to remedy all of the world’s ills, but in spite of her boasted wisdom, she herself could not withstand the corruption of the world, and she also fell to the lowest levels of moral depravity. Then came Rome, who sought to rule over the nations and to redeem them by subjugating them with an iron hand. The overlordship of Rome will always stand for uncompromising severity. But again history reveals the fact that even the authority of Rome could not save the world nor bring in the Utopia, and Rome herself became corrupt and lost her power over the nations, and today such nations as Italy, Germany, Russia and Japan all feel that they have the solution to all of the world’s ills, and that if only they could rule the world, the Utopia surely would be ushered in, under their leadership and power.

**Democracy, Fascism, Communism**

The nations of the Western Hemisphere are still clinging to the hope that democracy is the royal road to the Utopia; While Fascism and Communism deny the claim, and are fighting with the sword, both in Europe and in China to prove that their theory is right, and that they are willing and able to act as the world’s redeemer by suppressing all who oppose them in their belief.

And thus, my friends, we see that throughout more than six thousand years of human history, that no man, or group of men, not even whole nations have been able to lift man above the conditions of the curse which were placed upon Him when Adam and Eve first sinned, and were driven from the Garden of Eden.

Present day efforts of Democracy, Fascism and Communism; although they take the open field and fight with the sword, and spill the blood of earth’s millions, will as utterly fail to bring in the Utopia as all those who have attempted it before them.

**The Kingdom of Antichrist**

We know that it is prophesied that in due time Antichrist will come and reign as the world’s last great dictator, which will be during the Tribulation Period. He will subdue all of his enemies, and will unify the world politically, religiously and industrially for a short time, but even the coming worldwide Kingdom of the Antichrist cannot and will not last long, because it will not be based upon divine standards of righteousness. The Word of God plainly teaches that when Jesus Christ comes again, He will destroy the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and the Kingdoms of this world shall fall and become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

And so, my friends, we see that every effort on the part of man, both past and future, to usher in the Utopia, which men have so long dreamed of and sought for have and will fail.

**No Wonder John Wept**

Is it any wonder, therefore, that in Revelation 5 and verse 4, John said, “I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the Book, neither to look thereon.”

Indeed, my friends, when John considered the long history of man, and the constant and futile efforts which been made to lift man above the curse and to restore to him those things which were lost in the fall, and that no in heaven nor in earth, neither under the
earth was able to open the book neither to look thereon, it was enough to make the heart of a strong man weep.

And now let us close our message reading what is written in Revelation 5, and verse 5, where it says, “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.”

LECTURE 18 ON THE REVELATION

The Seven Sealed Book Continued — In the Beginning Man Was Given Dominion over the Earth — Noah Was a Type of Christ — Nations Have Failed to Lift the Curse — Jesus the Only One Found Worthy to Open the Books — One of the Most Sublime Acts of All History — Christ has a Right to Possess the Earth — This Act of Christ Will Promote Worship in Heaven

I AM more and more impressed with the fact that the material contained in this last Book of the Bible is of timely importance to all Christian people everywhere!

The truth contained in this book should be a blessing and comfort to the believing remnant of God’s children everywhere throughout the world today. The book also carries a distinct message of warning to those who are unsaved, and to professing Christians who are lukewarm and indifferent, concerning their relationship to God, and the work which He has for them to do.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 5th chapter and the 5th verse, where our present lesson will begin.

In our last lesson we considered the four living creatures, who were described in Revelation 4:6-8 as being in the midst of the Throne and round about the Throne, which was in Heaven. After considerable research, and by comparing scripture with scripture, we concluded that they represent a class among the redeemed from the earth, who will be associated with the Throne of God, and receive their appointment as executors of the Father’s will in the age to come.

Chapter 4 closed with a description of worship in Heaven, when the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before Him that sat on the Throne, and cast their crowns before the Throne, saying, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

The 5th chapter opens with a description of the Seven Sealed Book, which John saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the Throne.

In our last lesson we made rather an exhaustive study to determine the nature of the Book brought to our attention in this passage. By comparing scripture with scripture, and by referring to the ancient customs of the Jews, concerning property rights, we came to the conclusion that the Book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat on the Throne represented the title deed to the earth!

Man’s Original Position

The scriptures clearly teach “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” and that in the beginning, when God had created man, He placed Him in the Garden of Eden, and exalted him to a place of dominion over the earth! When man sinned, however, he forfeited his right to rule over the earth, and the title deed reverted back to God: and in the permissive will of God, Satan now governs the earth as a usurper. And he will continue to do so until such a time as someone can be found who will act as man’s kinsman-redeemer, and expel Satan from the earth, and restore to man his original right to rule over the earth and to have dominion.

In Revelation 5 and verse 2, John said, “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof.”

This, my friends, was a very important question. And this question is the theme of our present study. Indeed, WHO is able and WHO is worthy to open the seven seals of the Seven Sealed Book, which stands for man’s forfeited inheritance, and restore unto the human race its lost inheritance? Indeed, my friends, WHO among men is able to redeem the earth from the curse which was placed upon it when man first sinned, and to lift man above the curse, and usher in the Utopia, which men have hoped for in every successive age since man was driven from the Garden of Eden to till the ground which had been cursed because of sin?

Noah a Type of the Redeemer

In Genesis the 5th chapter we have the Book of the Generations of Adam, and in the 28th and 29th verses, we have a very interesting comment concerning Noah, who was the Son of Lamech. It says, “And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years and begat a son; and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”

This is a very interesting passage because it reveals that even at that early period man had grown weary under the necessity of toil
which was the result of the curse that had been placed upon the ground because of sin. Already they had begun to long for someone to come who would be able to lift them above the curse, or remove the curse itself, and when Noah was born, his Father Lamech called his name Noah, saying, “This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.” In other words he thought that Noah would be the earth’s redeemer, and that he would be the one who under God would redeem the earth and lift man above the curse.

We all know that Noah did fulfill this prediction in a limited sense; for he and his family were the only ones who lived through the flood, and then began life again in the earth which had been renovated by water; but even in the renovated earth traces of the curse still remained, and man still found it necessary to labor on under the conditions of the original Adamic covenant, and from then until now man has been compelled to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and the women of the earth have continued to suffer pain and sorrow as God predicted in the Adamic covenant.

And therefore even Noah, as great as he was in God’s sight, was not able to redeem the earth, or to lift man above the curse because he himself was a descendant of fallen Adam.

In the preceding chapter we pointed out how in every age certain man and certain nations, such as Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and Rome, and others have, each in their turn, sought for world dominion in order that they might act as the world’s redeemer, and usher in the Utopia, which men in every age have longed for.

Today both Fascism and Communism are struggling for world supremacy, and each one is willing to pay a great price, both in men and in money for the right to act as the world’s redeemer, and to correct all of its present ills.

The Coming Antichrist

We know it is prophesied that in due time the Antichrist will come and reign as the world’s last great dictator, which will be during the Tribulation period. He will subdue all of his enemies, and will seek to unify the world politically, religiously and industrially, which he will succeed in doing for a short time. But even the coming worldwide Kingdom of the Antichrist cannot and will not last long, because it will not be based upon divine standards of righteousness.

And so, my friends, we see that every effort on the part of man both past, present and future, to redeem the earth, and lift man above the curse, and to usher in the Utopia, which men have long dreamed of and sought for, has failed and will fail, and the question still remains, “Who then is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” The answer to this question is given in Revelation 5:5-7 where it says,

“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David hath prevailed to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof. “And 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 God sent forth into all the earth, “And He came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.”

Glad News

It is interesting to note here that after John had wept much because no man was found worthy to read the Book, neither to look thereon, that one of the elders announced to him the glad news that one had been found who was worthy and able to open the Book and to loose the seven seals thereof. And from the language used in this description we know that the one in question was none other than Jesus Christ, the glorified Son of God. In this brief passage Jesus is spoken of as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David and as the Lamb of God. Under this threefold title He is declared to be the ONE, and the only ONE in heaven and in earth, or under the earth, who is able to open the book and to loose the seals thereof.

Now let us inquire diligently into the meaning of each one of these three titles given to us here concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah reminds us at once of the Kingly character of our Lord. Also in Genesis 49:8-10, there is a very interesting prophecy, which was given by Jacob, when he was blessing his sons, concerning the future history of the Tribes of Israel. Among other things he said, “Judah is a Lion’s whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The 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.”

Jesus Was from the Tribe of Judah
The New Testament confirms the fact that Jesus Christ sprang out of Judah. This is very definitely stated in Hebrews 7:14, where it says, "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah.'

In John 1, and verse 3, we are told that all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Therefore, we may rightfully judge that He is the heir of all things, and as such He is the only one who is worthy to redeem the earth from the curse, and to rule and reign over it in righteousness.

The Root of David

The elder announced to John also that the Root of David hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. And what do you suppose is the significance of this title given to our Lord in this passage.

The Apostle John knew that in Second Samuel the 7th chapter, and verses 7 to 16, God had promised that Israel’s King was to come through the House of David; for He said, "And thine house and thy Kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever.”

Also in Isaiah the 11th chapter, and verse 1, it says, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots." And in the 2nd verse it says, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

Jesse, you remember, was David’s Father, and by connecting these two passages of scripture with Revelation 5, and verse 5, we are able to see that Jesus was not only the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, but that He was also the Root and offspring of David, and therefore, since He was connected with the Davidic covenant concerning the Throne of Israel, He had the right to take the book and open the seals thereof.

The Lamb of God

Now, in the 6th verse of our lesson text the Apostle John was given to see a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And He came and took the Book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne.

We all know that Jesus is described in the Word of God as a Lamb. In Isaiah the 53rd chapter, it says prophetically of Christ, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”

You will also recall that when John the Baptist had looked upon the Lord Jesus Christ, he said to those who were about him, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” Christ as the Lamb, therefore, reminds us at once of Calvary where as the true Pascal Lamb He shed His own blood to make an atonement for the sins of the world, and according to the vision which John saw, that very Lamb which had been slain was seen in the midst of the Throne and in the midst of the four living creatures and the elders. It is evident therefore that the Lamb which was slain upon the cross had been translated to the Throne in heaven, which is confirmed in Acts 1:9 to 11, where it says of Christ, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight, And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 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.”

Seven Horns

When John saw the Lamb as it had been slain before the Throne in heaven, it had seven horns and seven eyes. The symbolism here is significant. Horns in the scripture are used as symbols of strength, and of aggressive power to subdue one’s enemies. Seven, as we have stated before is the number of perfection or completeness. Therefore, the seven horns as used here would indicate the fullness of strength and power which belonged unto the Lamb.

The Eye, as we know, is a symbol of intelligence, and here again the No. 7 is used, indicating that the Lamb before the Throne possessed the seven fold intelligence of the Holy Spirit, as indicated in Isaiah the 11th chapter, verses 1 to 3. The Seven Spirits of God referred to by Isaiah are none other than the sevenfold plentitude of the Holy Spirit, with which the Christ was anointed. Therefore, in announcing that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the Root of David, and the Lamb before the Throne, as the one who was able to open the book and to loose the seals thereof, the elder in heaven who made this report, announced three grand qualities of our kinsman redeemer, namely,

(1) That He was one who had strength to conquer and to overcome all His enemies.
That He had perfect and universal intelligence to undertake the task that no one else could perform,

That He possessed sacrificial virtue, having died upon the cross to make an atonement for the sins of the world.

Indeed, my friends, no other such kinsman redeemer, possessing such qualities as these could be found anywhere in heaven or upon earth to open the seals of this book.

A Sublime Act

And it says, in verse 7, that He came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. Seiss in his book on the Apocalypse, says, quoting,

“This is the sublimest individual act recorded in the Apocalypse. It is the act which includes all that suffering creation, and the disinherited saints of God have been sighing, and crying, and waiting for, for all these long ages—for six thousand years of grief and sorrow. It is the act which carries with it all else that is written in the succeeding part of this glorious revelation. It is the act of virtue by which the world is subdued, Babylon judged, Antichrist destroyed, the dragon vanquished, death overthrown, the curse expunged, the earth made new, and the reign of everlasting blessedness and peace made to cover its hills and illumine its valleys, and transform it into an unfading paradise of God. It was the lifting of the title-deeds of the alienated inheritance—the legal act of repossession of all that was lost in Adam, and paid for by the blood and tears of the Son of God. Heaven looks on in solemn silence as that act is being performed. The universe is stricken with awe, and grows breathless as it views it. And the living ones, and Elders, and all the hosts of angels, are filled with adoring wonder and joy, as if another fiat had gone forth from God for a new creation.

“And when He took the book there went a thrill through the universal heart of living things.”

The Lamb’s Right

Now, let us consider briefly the right of the Lamb to possess the earth, and to execute the judgments indicated by the opening of the seven seals.

First of all He has the right to do this because He created the earth. This is confirmed in Colossians 1:16 and 17, where it says, For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Therefore, who dare say that Jesus does not have the right as man’s kinsman-redeemer to take the book and to open the seals thereof, and to restore unto fallen man his lost estate, which was forfeited when man sinned and was driven out of the Garden nearly six thousand years ago?

Another Reason

Another reason Christ, as the Lamb of God, has the right to take the book out of the hands of Him that sat upon the Throne, is because He had redeemed the earth through His sacrificial death upon the cross. Let us remember there were no thorns in the Garden of Eden, there were no thorns until the earth was cursed because of man’s sin. It was then that God said, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee—”

But a Saviour had been promised in Genesis 3:15, and after centuries of waiting, in the fullness of time, Christ came and died upon the cross to make an atonement for the sins of the world, and we should not forget that there was upon His head a Crown of Thorns, which was a symbol of the curse. Thus in His suffering and death Jesus bore in His body the marks of the curse. It was apparent, therefore, that He came to make an atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and to redeem man from under the curse of the Adamic covenant. Therefore, through His death upon the cross He won for Himself the right to take the book out of the hands of Him that sat upon the Throne, and to open the seals thereof.

We know that He has not done this as yet, but that He is now tarrying, as it were, in the heavenlies, waiting for the Church, which is His Bride, to be completed. Meanwhile we are told in Romans 8:19-22, that “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God— because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now . . .”

The Desert Shall Blossom

From what is stated here we are made to realize that when Christ has opened the Seven Seals of this Book, and has lifted the curse, and has restored unto man his lost inheritance, then the desert shall blossom as the rose, and instead of the thorn shall come up the
and the earth shall be returned unto its Eden state, and will be beautiful and fruitful beyond compare. No wonder the Apostle Paul said, “O depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”

Is it any wonder, therefore, that when He, who is here described as the Lion of Judah, and the root of David, and as the Lamb of God came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat upon the Throne, those who were in heaven were filled with a spirit of reverence and thanksgiving?

For more than six thousand years men have labored under the curse and all of creation has likewise groaned under the burden, waiting for someone to appear who could redeem man and lift the curse from off the earth; and now, according to the vision which John saw, Christ came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the Throne! Such an act, my friends, was enough to cause all heaven to worship, and all men upon the earth to rejoice because this act on the part of the Son of God symbolizes the beginning of God’s judgments, whereby the lost inheritance shall be restored to those to whom it rightfully belongs.

**Worship in Heaven**

In Revelation 5:8 to 10 it says,

>“And when He had taken the Book, the four beasts or living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full or odours, which are the prayers of saints, And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And has made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.”

But that was not all! The Apostle John not only witnessed this glorious scene of worship! He not only heard the voice of those who sang this new song! But in verses 11 to 14, he said

>“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, And the four beasts said Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever.”

**LECTURE 19 ON THE REVELATION**

The Opening of the Seven Seals — Not an Outline of History Except in a Very Vague Sense — The Seals Belong to the Tribulation Period — The Prophecies of Daniel and Christ Concerning the Great Tribulation — The Seals Will Be Opened Following the Rapture of the Church — The Opening of These Seals a Work of Judgment — The White Horse Goes Forth Conquering and to Conquer — Who the White Horse Rider is — Evil Will Increase

THE subject of chapter 5 which we have just finished was the 7 sealed book, which John saw in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. This book we have stated, represented the title deed to the earth, and since it was in the hand of Him that sat on the Throne it represented man’s forfeited inheritance.

We have learned that Christ under the threefold name of the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, and as the Lamb of God, was the only one in Heaven or in earth or under the earth who was counted worthy and who had power to open the seals thereof. In other words Christ is the only one who is able to act as man’s kinsman redeemer and restore unto him his lost state, which was forfeited when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, and thereby lost their dominion.

By prophetic vision John saw Christ take the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne in preparation for breaking the seven seals! And in our last lesson we pointed out that this is to be one of the most momentous events in all the history of the universe! When Christ had taken the book out of the right hand of Him that at upon the throne the four living creatures and the 24
elders fell down before the lamb and worshiped, and they sang a new song saying: “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and has made us unto our God Kings and priests and we shall reign on the earth.”

The 5th chapter closed with a universal peon of praise in which the angels cried saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor and glory and blessing!” And John also said, “Every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and Honor, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever.”

Thus my friends, was the consummation of the scene which John saw in heaven. Concerning the seven-sealed book which was in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne and the one who was declared worthy to open the seals thereof.

Let us continue our study by reading what is written in Revelation 6:1-2 where John said, “And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

“And I saw and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer!”

General Remarks

Now before we begin our study of the opening of the first seals, a few general remarks will be helpful in preparing us for a better understanding of those things which are to come to pass under the opening of these seven seals.

First of all let us remember that in the book of Revelation there are not only seven seals but also seven trumpets and the seven last vials of the wrath of God. The breaking of the 7th seal introduces the sounding of the seven trumpets and the sounding of the seventh trumpet precedes the pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God. Both the opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God are followed by a parenthetical passage. This orderly ongoing of events plainly shows that back of all which is to come to pass, God has a well ordered plan, and also an ultimate purpose which he desires to accomplish.

Not an Outline of History

Now it is important for us to realize that what we have under the opening of the seven seals is not an outline of history except perhaps in a very limited or a very vague sense. The events referred to here belong to those things which shall be hereafter as indicated in Revelation 4:1, i. e., after the close of the Church age. The events, therefore, indicated by the opening the seven seals belong to the future.

During the Tribulation Period

It is perfectly clear from the text that what John saw take place when the seals were opened, happened on the earth and not in heaven, and that the time when they will take place will be during the tribulation period.

To confirm this it will be well for us to remember that the prophet Daniel prophesied of a time of trouble in Daniel 12:1 where he said: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.”

In Matthew the 24th chapter, Jesus Himself, also spoke of a time of trouble when he said: For then shall be 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, but for the elects sake those days shall be shortened.”

New Testament Prophecy

We should remember that all of the 24th chapter of Matthew was spoken in answer to the disciples’ question given In Matthew 24 and verse 3 where it says: “And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives the disciples came unto him privately saying, tell us when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world” (or age). It is generally conceded by most students of prophecy that the events of Matthew the 24th chapter are closely associated with what is spoken of as Daniel's 70th week of unfulfilled prophecy. In Daniel the 9th chapter the prophet was given a vision of the weeks, sometimes spoken of as the prophetic calendar. In Daniel 9:24 says: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." A careful study of what is stated in the remainder of this chapter will reveal that 69 of these prophetic weeks have already been fulfilled, and that the last or
70th week of seven years remains yet to be fulfilled!

The Period Divided

Now, from what is stated in Daniel 9:27, we understand that this prophetic week is to be divided into two separate periods of 3 and 1/2 years each, and according to the statement of Jesus in Matthew the 24 chapter, the first 3 and ½ years will be what he termed "That beginning of sorrows," and the last 3 and 1/2 years will constitute the actual period of the Great Tribulation referred to by our Lord in Matthew 24:21.

Understanding these things, therefore, we may say that the opening of the seven seals will take place during the coming time of the tribulation referred to, both by the prophet Daniel and also by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before

It is an old and familiar saying that "coming events cast their shadows before." And who would dare say, as they study current events in the light of scripture prophecy, that the world is not even now preparing for just such a time of tribulation as the Word of God has prophesied will surely come! But let us not forget that before the opening of the seven seals and the terrible judgments which they represent come to pass, we expect the rapture of the Church as also prophesied in First Thessalonians 4:16 and 17 where it says: “For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Not Until After the Rapture of the Church

From what is stated here we do not expect the opening of the seven seals to begin until after the glorious event of the resurrection and the rapture of the Church has taken place! Then the 70th week of Daniel will begin, during which the seven seals of the seven sealed book will be opened. And through the events which will come to pass the lion of the Tribe of Judah and the root of David and the Lamb of God will redeem and restore to man his lost estate.

Now let us remember the fact that seven is the number of perfection or completeness. This is true whether it refers to grace or to judgment or to any other subject, for that matter! Since the theme of the seven seals is that of judgment the fact that there are seven seals indicates that by the time the seven seals are opened the work of God in judgment will have been completed! By that time Satan who now occupies the earth as a usurper will be dispossessed and the earth which was man’s original inheritance will be restored and man will again reign over the earth and have dominion as he did in the beginning.

A Work of Judgment

The fact that the opening of these seals pertains to a work of judgment is confirmed in Revelation 6, and verse 1 where it says: 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." We have already pointed out that thunder is a symbol of God’s wrath and displeasure as when God came down upon Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law. This is confirmed in Exodus 19 and verse 16 where it says: “And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.” Thus we see that thunders and lightning and the sound of the trumpet indicate the going forth of the judgments of God.

The Spokesman of Each Event

It is interesting to note that before the opening of each of the six seals, the spokesman, which announced the event, was one of the four living creatures. We have already studied concerning the 24 enthroned elders and the 4 living creatures which were in the midst of the throne and round about the throne in chapter 4. From our previous study we learned that both the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures represent those who have been redeemed from the earth. Each of these groups were represented as being in positions of power and authority, but the four living creatures were more closely associated with the throne than the 24 elders, for they were represented as being in the midst of the throne.

Therefore, we have reason to expect that they would have the right to speak with authority concerning the events which will come to pass under the opening of the seven seals.

THE COMMAND

Now let us give our attention briefly to the command given by the Living Creatures before the opening of each of the first four seals. In each instance the living creature is quoted as saying: “Come and see.”

To Whom Addressed?
Now, to whom were these words of the living creatures addressed? At first thought we might be led to think that they were spoken to John the Apostle, but at second thought, it would be rather unreasonable to believe this! For as we know, John must have already been at least in the spirit, where he could both see and hear all that was transpiring in the vision which God was then giving unto him. If the living creatures had been speaking to John asking him to merely come a little closer in order to see and hear these things, it would not have been necessary for him to speak with the noise of thunder, as the passage indicates. To whom then were the words of the living creature in each case addressed? There is no question but what they were addressed to the several horsemen of this chapter, who were to be the executors of the judgments symbolized under the opening of the seals. In his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says:

“*The expression ‘come and see’ is really nothing more or less than a bid of power, calling the several horsemen into action.*”

**Went Forth Conquering and to Conquer**

Now let us consider what is stated in the second verse where John said: “*I saw and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow: and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer.*”

**The Horse a Symbol of Power**

I suppose that the first thing necessary for us to do as we approach this subject of the four horses of the Book of Revelation, will be to discover, if we can, from the Word of God the symbolic significance of horses as they are referred to in the scripture. In Job 39, verses 19 to 25 we have a very interesting comment concerning the horse, which reads as follows: “*Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? *Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men *He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. *The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. *He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet *He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting*”

Thus my friends, from the scriptures we see that a horse is used as an earthly symbol of God’s swift and irresistible power! The horse is used in connection with war and conflict which are always works of judgment. In our present study, therefore, we may expect the going forth of these four horses and horsemen to be associated with God’s judicial power and his work of judgment.

**The Rider of the First Horse**

Now let us give our attention to the rider of the first horse. He is described as having a bow and a crown was given unto him, and it says, “*He worth conquering and to conquer.*” First of all let us call your attention to the fact that the going forth of the rider on the white horse does not represent the going forth of the Gospel as it is being preached today in this age of grace. In the present age, the preacher of the Gospel is symbolized by the sower, which went forth to sow, and we know from our study of the parable of the sower given by our Lord in Matthew the 13th chapter, that the Gospel was not intended to conquer and subdue all men during this present age of grace. For the parable itself teaches that three-fourths of the seed sown became unfruitful. True enough, some of the seed did fall in good ground and brought forth an abundant harvest, but all we can hope for as a result of the preaching of the Gospel in this age is that the church which is the body of Christ, will be called out from both Jews and Gentiles as a people for His name. Then when the Church is completed, the dead in Christ will rise first and those who are alive in Christ will be changed and caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air! We have pointed out that all this will take place before the rider on the white horse goes forth conquering and to conquer.

**Judgment Not Grace**

The theme of the entire 6th chapter of the Revelation which we are now studying is one of judgment and not of grace, as in the case of the Gospel. Therefore, the expression used here, “*conquering and to conquer,*” could not possibly refer to the preaching of the Gospel. It must, therefore, refer to the fact that evil will go forth, “*conquering and to conquer,*” and the time and the events and the circumstances of this Revelation seem to sustain us in this position!

**The White Horse**

Now, the fact that the first of these four horses is white is rather significant! Some have hurriedly concluded that because Jesus is described as coming on a white horse that the rider on this horse is the Lord Jesus Christ. But this is not true because the appearance of Jesus on the white horse is not given until Revelation the 19th chapter, verses 11 to 16 which will be a long time after those events described in the 6th chapter.

**The Antichrist on the White Horse**
Who then could the rider of this white horse be? If he does not represent the Gospel, and if he does not represent the Christ, then who is he? Most students of the Revelation now agree that the one described here upon a white horse is none other than the coming antichrist, the man of sin. The reason for this belief is that the antichrist is to be the exact opposite of the true Christ. We all know that Satan is an imitator and that he will seek in every way to imitate the true Christ. Therefore, when the true Christ is described as coming on a white horse, Satan will cause the Antichrist to do the same thing. In Revelation the 19th chapter when Christ comes upon the white horse it is plainly stated that in righteousness he will judge and make war. This may be a new thought to some of you, but the Bible plainly teaches that Jesus will subdue His enemies.

**Christ on the White Horse**

When Christ comes forth on the white horse, he is described in Revelation 19, and verse 12 as having many crowns upon his head, thus signifying his kingly power and authority. And when the Antichrist comes forward, he also is described as being crowned. We do not need to be surprised at this for we are told in Revelation the 13th chapter that the dragon, that is Satan, is to give to the Antichrist his full seat of power and authority. Naturally, therefore, he would be crowned as a symbol of his authority, even though it is to be derived from Satan instead of God.

In Revelation 19, and verse 15 it says of Christ that out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Now in Revelation 6 it says of the rider on the white horse, that he had a bow. The bow is also a symbol of conflict, which would indicate that the purpose of the rider on the white horse will be to smite the earth and bring the world in subjection to his power.

Thus by comparing scripture with scripture we see that the rider of the horse of Revelation 6:2 is none other than the Antichrist whom Satan will send forth in advance of the coming of the true Christ, and it says “He went forth conquering and to conquer.” And this is exactly what other scriptures tell us the Antichrist will do. This is confirmed in Daniel 11:36 to 45 where it speaks of the willful king. In verse 36 it says: “And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished for that that is determined shall be done.”

**Tidings out of the East**

Also in the 44th verse of the same chapter it says: “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

Thus, my friends, do the scriptures confirm the statement in our lesson text for today, i. e., that the rider on the white horse, who is the Antichrist shall go forth conquering and to conquer.

We have already stated that coming events cast their shadows before, and I am sure that any thoughtful man or woman who is studying current event in the light of scripture prophecy is able to see that the forces of evil throughout the world are rising up as never before and have already begun to conquer against those who stand for the right! In Jeremiah 25 and verse 32 the prophet said: “Thus saith the Lord hosts, behold evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind (or tribulation), shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

**Evil Will Increase**

And so, my friends, as we approach the end of the Church age and as the times of the Gentiles are drawing to a close, we may expect, under the permissive will of God, that for a short time the powers of evil will increase. And especially so, when the Antichrist appears on the white horse to lead the unregenerate masses of the earth in another great rebellion against the Lord, even as they rebelled at the tower of Babel long centuries ago.

In this lesson we have only considered the opening of the first of the seven seals. We shall continue our study of the seven seals in our next message.
IN the preceding chapter we considered the opening of the first seal of the seven-sealed book which the lamb of God took out of the
hand of him that sat upon the throne. We have already pointed out that this seven sealed book represented man’s title deed to the
earth which was forfeited when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. According to the vision which John saw Christ, as the
Lamb of God, was the only one in heaven or upon earth or under the earth who was found worthy to act as man’s kinsmen
redeemer and to open the seven seals thereof.

We have already discovered that the opening of these seals is to be a work of judgment whereby Christ as our kinsmen-redeemer
will dispossess Satan as the usurper and restore unto man his lost inheritance.

In our last lesson we saw that under the opening of the first seal there went forth a rider upon a white horse: and it says that he
that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him:

and he went forth conquering and to conquer.”

By comparing scripture with scripture we discovered that the rider on the white horse will be none other than the coming Antichrist,
who as a mighty warrior will go forth conquering and to conquer. All this will be done in order to imitate the true Christ who is
described in Revelation the 19th chapter as coming forth on a white horse in righteousness to judge and make war.

What we have represented therefore, under the opening of the first seal is the coming forth of the Antichrist, who as the final great
leader of the atheistic, godless masses of the earth, will go forth conquering and to conquer.

All this, of course, will take place after the rapture of the church and during the early part of the tribulation period, and because it is
to be the hour of darkness it means that for a short time, under the permissive will of God, those that are right will be dethroned and
that evil will go forth conquering and to conquer!

The Second Seal: The Red Horse

It is time now for us to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 6:3 and 4 where it says: ‘And when he had
opened the second seal, I heard the second beast, or living creature say, Come and see.

“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth,
and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.”

In our last message we called your attention to the fact that horses in prophetic vision symbolize the going forth of God’s judicial
power against the wicked.

In his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says:

“In these four different horses and horsemen, we are to see four different forms of the coming forth of the judicial power of
God upon the inhabitants of the earth, looking to the breaking up of the dominion of wickedness, the punishment and casting
out of transgression, and the consummation of that long-pending revolution, whose accomplishment is at once the fulfillment
of all prophecy and all prayer.”

We should have no difficulty whatever in deciding what is to happen under the opening of the second seal. The very wording of our
lesson text would indicate that since the horse was red and that power was given to the rider who sat thereon to take peace from the
earth, that the going forth of the red horse and his rider could represent nothing else but war!

Universal War Has Been Prophesied

Every careful student of prophecy knows from the word of God that universal war has been prophesied. This is confirmed in Daniel
12 and verse 1 where Daniel said: “There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that
same time:—” Jesus, as we know, was the greatest prophet of all times, and in Matthew 24:7-8 he said: “For nation shall rise
against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famine and pestilences and earthquakes, in divers
places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”

And then again in the 22nd verse of the same chapter he said: “For then shall be 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; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” Jeremiah also prophesied of universal conflict. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 25 and 27 where it says: “Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of
Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.”
Also in the 29th verse it says: “I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth saith the Lord of hosts” and again in
the 31st verse says: “A noise shall come even to ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he plead
with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword saith Lord.” And in the 32nd and 33rd verses it further says: ‘Thus
saith the of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind (or tribulation) shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth, and the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried they shall be dung upon the ground."

The prophet Joel also prophesied Joel 3:9 to 11 as follows: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

‘Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong

‘Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord."

Thus, my friends, do we have the combined testimony of the prophets concerning the fact that in due time when preparations have been made the rider on the red horse, as indicated in our lesson text, will ride forth to take peace from the earth by stirring up war throughout the world.

Current Events Confirm the Scriptures

Not only do the scriptures confirm the fact that war is coming as indicated by the red horse, but current events also testify to the same fact. Every student of world affairs knows full well the tremendous preparations that are being made by almost every nation for the continuation of the war which is now in progress.

In order to impress this upon your minds we wish to quote just here an article which appeared in the Bible advocate for January, 1938. This article was condensed from W. D. Herrstrom's splendid new book, "War Preparations and International Suicide" published by Fundamental Truth Publishers, and taken from the Christian Reader's Digest. The article is entitled, DEADLY INSTRUMENTS OF DESTRUCTION and we quote as follows:

Giant Airplane Torpedo!

"The most appalling weapon of war ever devised by man, defying all defense and raining merciless death from the skies, is now being forged in secret in England," according to the London Daily Mail.

"This new war terror is a giant torpedo operating without a crew, its engine and course controlled by clockwork and its hull a mere receptacle for bombs. The clock work control is set beforehand to operate at a certain moment and a specific place. On arriving at the appointed moment, the engine stops and the whole machine with its deadly load crashes to the ground."

The Human Torpedo!

The Japanese have perfected a torpedo which is one of the most deadly instruments of destruction developed in recent times. A man is locked in the torpedo to guide it to the hull of the ship. Upon arrival at the ship, both the ship and the man are blown to pieces. With this deadly instrument of destruction every ship that sails the seven seas could be blown up in short order.

Gas That Stops Motors!

The Germans have developed a gas that will stop the motors of airplanes. This gas can be released to bring down an entire fleet of planes.

Destructive Gases!

Deadly gases which will penetrate any gas mask and phosphorus which will burn the flesh to the bone almost instantaneously, will be used in the next war. Clothing and gas masks will afford no protection. More than 1,000 kinds of poison gases are now being manufactured.

Bacteria Emanations!

British scientists are experimenting with a "life-death" ray, "capable of projecting bacteria emanations which will destroy humans, animals and crops."

J. J. DeBarry, a germ expert, says, "A single airplane could carry sufficient botulinus toxin to destroy the entire population of the world."

Robot War Ships!

Robot war ships controlled from a keyboard on another ship can be manipulated to perfection. At the proper time the keys are
touched, the guns go into action from a boat without a human occupant, and the enemy ship is destroyed.

The Beam of Death!

Dr. Nikola Tesla has announced the invention of “a super death ray—a manmade, invisible streak of 56,000,000 volts, capable of destroying an army without a trace. He said it could cause an army of 1,000,000 men to drop dead in its tracks; bring down a fleet of 10,000 airplanes at a distance of 250 miles; surround an entire country with an impenetrable, invisible ‘Chinese Wall’”

These instruments of destruction are significant in the light of Bible prophecies concerning a war that will involve 200,000,000 soldiers and destroy one-third of the world’s population. “And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.” (Revelation 9:16-19). The world is evidently preparing for such a conflagration at the present time.”

Four Groups of Nations in the End Time

Now besides what has been stated here we must recognize also that the Bible teaches that in the end time of the present dispensation the nations of the world will be divided into four groups in preparation for the final conflict.

According to Bible prophecy these four great powers will exist contemporaneously at the close of the present age, and each group will have its part in the last great struggle of the nations. The alignment of these powers, which is now taking place, is a unique sign that the end of the age is upon us!

The Roman Empire to Be Revived

The prophetic scriptures foretell of the revival of the Roman empire. This is indicated in Daniel the second chapter, where, under the symbolism of the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw and which Daniel interpreted, we have a prophetic foreview of the march of empire during the times of the Gentiles! The last stage of the fourth world empire, which was Rome, is indicated by the ten toes of the image. Thus indicating that the Roman Empire will be revived and will be ruled over by ten kings which correspond to the ten toes of the image.

Just how the Roman Empire will be revived is given more in detail in Daniel the 11th chapter, verses 36 to 45 where it speaks of the rise of a willful king, who shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God, and who shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished.

King of the South — King of the North

In this very same passage in the 40th verse, mention is made also of the king of the South and the king of the North.

The King of the South will no doubt be some ruler whose dominion lies to the south of Palestine which, as we know, is the geographical center of the earth. It is also understood that the King of the North is none other than the King of Russia, whose dominion lies to the north of Palestine.

Kings of the East

And last of all, mention is made Revelation 16:12 of the kings of the East’

Opposing Ideas of Government

Now we haven’t time in our present lesson to enlarge upon the vast amount of prophetic material connected with the rise of these four groups of nations in the end time, but we do want to say that each group has a form of government which is in direct opposition to the other three groups. - The Northern group headed up by Russia adhere to Communism, - The Mediterranean group headed up by the Roman Empire adhere to Fascism, - The Southern group headed up by the King of the South adhere largely to the principles to Democracy. - The Far East under the leadership of Japan the people are being compelled to adhere to Emperor Worship!

Now with these four groups of nations already in existence and each one adhering to a form of political power which is diverse from the other three and each one extremely antagonistic to the other, what can we expect but War? BBB Comment: Even though this book was written in the forties, as the war clouds were forming for the Second World War, the principles have never really changed. These events are yet very possibly on the horizon even now as we see a world threat arising, except that in this era we are seeing Islam as one of the players. Despite the “dated” aspect of this book, his facts regarding the full scope of the Book of Revelation is
quite worthy of a serious study.

An Inevitable Conclusion

Our conclusion therefore is that war has been prophesied and that unusual preparations for war are being made, and that war, therefore, is inevitable, and the time will come, sooner or later, when the rider on the red horse will go forth to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another.

The Third Seal: The Black Horse

Now in Revelation 6:5 to 6 it says: \textit{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.}

\textit{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.}

Here again we should have no difficulty in understanding what is symbolized by the going forth of the black horse and of him that sat thereon. The fact that the rider on the black horse had a pair of balances in his hand would indicate that a time of famine and scarcity will come upon the world following the terrible conditions which will come to pass under the opening of the second seal.

This is the natural order in which we would expect things to occur. War always results in scarcity and high Prices!

The rider on the black horse cried saying, \textit{A measure of wheat for a Penny, and three measures of barley a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.} Now in the margin of my Bible I am told that the measure deferred to here was about the equivalent of one quart and that the penny deferred to here was the word \textit{denarius} of the penny which was used in New Testament times. The \textit{denarius} was worth about 24 cents American money. According to these figures, when the rider on the black horse goes forth wheat will be worth about $7.88 a bushel or thereabouts, and barley will be worth about one-third this price.

So here we are reminded again of conditions as they were during the World War, only, when this time comes, they will be very much worse than they were then, and there is no doubt but what many will perish because of hunger.

Famine

Black is the color of dearth and famine. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 14:1 and 2 where it says: \textit{The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth. Juda mourneth and the gates thereof languish. They are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.} Also in Lamentations 5 and verse 10 it says: \textit{Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine.}

Also in Lamentations 4 and verses 8-9 it says: \textit{Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick. They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.}

Thus are the words of the prophet and thus were the conditions which existed in Jerusalem and Palestine, long centuries ago.

Now imagine if you can what conditions will be like under the opening of the third seal when the black horse rider goes forth with a pair of balances in his hand, announcing that scarcity and famine have returned to the earth on a world wide scale!

Hurt Not the Oil and the Wine

It is interesting to note that it says in this passage, \textit{See thou hurt not the oil and the wine} Oil and wine as we know would be listed as luxuries which only the rich could afford, especially in a time of scarcity and hardship. This would seem to indicate that during these early judgments of the tribulation period the poor of the earth will suffer first, and that the rich, because of their hoarded wealth, will escape the pains of hunger for a time, but this does not mean that they will escape forever, because of their riches! For the scriptures teach that they will not escape, but will suffer in due time. The Apostle James said in James 5:1 to 5: \textit{Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.}

\textit{Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten}

\textit{Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.}

\textit{Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.}
“Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.”

Thus, my friends, we see that when a time of scarcity comes, both the poor and the rich will suffer. The poor will suffer first and in due time the rich shall not escape, as we shall see later on in our study.

**The Fourth Seal: The Pale Horse**

Now in Revelation 6:7 and 8 it says,

“And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see

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

Here again, we can see, that coming events occur in consecutive order.

**Conditions Will Grow Worse**

What is stated here under the opening of the fourth seal seems to indicate under the ongoing of God’s judgment conditions will continue to grow worse and worse! To war and famine will added pestilences such as followed World War, only worse. We know the awful plague of the “flu” which follow the World War which we are told killed more than three times as many people as were killed by the war itself.

And so we do not wonder that it says, when the rider of the pale horse goes forth that death and hell followed with him. We know that death and hell, or Hades, are not persons, but we do know that they are powers which follow as a natural consequence upon the heels, in the wake of war and pestilences and famine.

And so this is what we may expect under the opening of the fourth seal.

Now in this lesson we have considered the opening of the second, third, and fourth seals of the seven-sealed book which the lamb of God took out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne; and by such terrible works of judgment our kinsman-redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, will begin the great task of redeeming and restoring unto man his lost inheritance whose right it was to have dominion and rule over the earth. Three more seals yet remain to be opened so far as our present study is concerned.

**LECTURE 21 ON THE REVELATION**

The Fifth Seal — The Souls Underneath the Altar — The Martyred Remnant of the Tribulation Period — The Intermediate State Between Death and Resurrection — There Is Hope for us — The Question Is “How Long?” In the Meantime the Souls Beneath the Altar Have Rest

WE have already studied in the fourth chapter concerning the vision which John had of things in heaven, namely, the enthroned Elders and the four living creatures. In the 5th chapter we studied concerning the Seven Sealed Book, which John saw in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. This book, we have learned, represented the Title Deed to the earth, which man forfeited when he sinned in the Garden of Eden. According to what was stated in the 5th chapter, Jesus, under the threefold title of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the root of David, and the Lamb of God, was the only one in heaven, or upon earth, or under the earth who was found worthy, and who was able to open the seals thereof, and to act as man’s kinsman-redeemer, and restore unto fallen humanity their lost and forfeited inheritance.

Thus far in the 6th chapter we have studied the opening of the first four seals of this Seven Sealed Book. The opening of these seals we have discovered to be a work of judgment, whereby the Lord, acting as our kinsman-redeemer, purposes to disposess Satan of the earth, and to judge the wicked, and restore unto man his lost inheritance.

Under the opening of the first seal there went forth 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. By comparing scripture with scripture we learned that the rider on the white horse was none other than the coming Antichrist, who shall go forth conquering and to conquer; thus imitating the true Christ, who is also described as coming forth on a white horse in Revelation the 19th chapter, which will not occur until the close of the tribulation period.

Under the opening of the second seal, there went forth a red horse, 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. There is no question but what the red horse was symbolic of universal war and bloodshed.

Under the opening of the third seal there went forth a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. This we said was symbolic of famine and scarcity and high prices for the necessities of life.

Under the opening of the fourth seal there went forth a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. This we said was symbolic of pestilences and plagues, which shall come as a result of the conditions described under the opening of the preceding seals.

The Fifth Seal

We are now ready to advance in our study by considering the opening of the fifth seal. In Revelation 6: verses 9 to 11, it says,—

> "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held; "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? "And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

The Scene Changes

It is of striking interest to note, that upon the opening of this seal the scene changes from earth to heaven. The four horses, representing God’s judicial power and wrath against the wicked, have already gone forth, and the judgments which they represent must be looked upon as having taken place before the opening of the fifth seal. All that the Apostle John saw upon the opening of the fifth seal was merely the result!

From what is stated in our lesson text, it is not difficult to discern that the opening of the fifth seal represents the martyred remnant of the tribulation period, which as we know is yet future.

The scene presented here could not represent the martyrs of the past ages; because we have already seen in chapters four and five that the saved of past ages were represented by the enthroned elders and the four living creatures, which were already in heaven.

Things Hereafter

What we are studying in this chapter, therefore, belongs to those things which shall be hereafter, i. e., after the resurrection and the rapture of the Church. Therefore the time of those who shall suffer martyrdom, as set forth in our present lesson is still future, and will be done during the Tribulation Period.

The fact that they are to be martyrs is one of the central thoughts presented, in our lesson, but what, may we all is a martyr? Someone has said, "It is not death, but the cause in which death is incurred which constitutes a martyr." There is no question but what under the opening of the first four seals millions of people will be killed, but they are not spoken of as martyrs; because when they die they will only be receiving what was justly due them because of their sin and wickedness.

But those who are mentioned in our lesson text were called martyrs because they were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held!

Now let us enlarge on this point just a little, and find out if we can, why it was they were slain.

There is no question but what thousands upon thousands of people today are hearing the Word of God with an attitude of indifference and unconcern. They hear the Word of God and only half way believe it. They look upon those of us who preach the Gospel, and who present the prophesies of God's Word to the people, as being just a little off balance, and they think we are going to unnecessary trouble to make to things known.

The Time Is Coming

But, my friends, the time is coming when the Church will suddenly be resurrected and raptured away to be with Christ, and then the opening of the seals will begin, and God’s judgment will go forth with unrelenting power against the wicked of the whole earth. And then many who were careless indifferent and skeptical, and somewhat unbelieving, will wake up to the fact that all they had heard concerning these things was true after all. They will discover then that the Bible was the literal and infallible word of God, which can no longer be denied.
And although they will have missed their opportunity to be a member of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, which by that time will have been caught up to be with Christ, they will realize that if they are to be saved at all, they will have to be true to the Word of God, and seal their testimony with their own blood.

We can well imagine, therefore, that in the midst of the Tribulation period, when this believing remnant arises to witness and testify to the truth of God’s Word, and preach to the wicked all about them, that the judgments, which are coming upon the earth are justly deserved by those upon whom they are falling, they will be hated by the unregenerate mass of humanity who, even in the midst of judgment, will refuse to repent.

Conditions Now

These conditions exist now to some extent; for one of the signs of the end of the age is that men shall be despisers of those that are good. Any one today who, with faith and courage, and without fear or compromise preaches the whole truth of God’s Word, is hated and cast out even by some of those who call themselves Christians, but who are not real Christians at heart.

But during the Tribulation period the feeling against those who witness a good testimony for the Lord, will be much more intense than it is now, and those who disapprove their witness and testimony, and who become angry at them for preaching the truth, will rise up and slay them in cold blood, and thus multitudes will be slain and become Martyrs of the Lord Jesus Christ during the awful time of Tribulation, which is still future.

Now let us consider their condition as John saw them at the time of the opening of the fifth seal. In Revelation 6:9, John said, “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.”

What John saw, therefore, was the disembodied souls of those who shall be slain during the coming Tribulation Period, for the Word of God and for their testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

About the Altar

There is no question but that the Altar referred to here was in heaven. This is not inconsistent with scriptural teaching, because we know that the Tabernacle of Moses, with its altar and all of its furniture, was a pattern of the true tabernacle in the heavens. Later when the Temple was built in Jerusalem to take the place of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the altar was still preserved and was a necessary part of the worship of Israel.

Now, in the exercise of worship, according to Leviticus 4, and verse 7, the Priest was required to pour all of the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering, which was at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation.

There was such an altar before the Temple in Jerusalem, and beneath it was a large opening into which the blood of the sacrifice was poured. Concerning this altar in Jerusalem, Seiss, in his book on the Apocalypse says,—

“I have myself stood in the opening, under the rock, on which the altar had its place, and stamped my foot upon the marble slab which closes the mouth of the vast receptacle, and satisfied myself, from the detonations, that the excavated space is very deep and large. And as the life of the animal was in its blood, this vast subterranean cavity was, naturally enough, regarded as the receptacle of the lives of the victims which there were slain. The Mohammedans, to this day, as I was told on the spot, regard it as the place where spirits are detained until the day of judgment. They call it THE WELL OF SPIRITS. It is in the center of the Mosque of Omar, whose interior had, for ages, been most rigidly guarded from the visits or eyes of any but Moslems, but, by permission from the Government, can now be seen. And as the deep cavern under the earthly altar was the appointed receptacle of the lives of the animal sacrifices, so the souls of God’s witnesses, who fall in His service, are received into a corresponding receptacle beneath the heavenly altar.”

Light for Us

This explanation, I am sure, throws some light upon the scene which is described in our lesson text. What the Apostle John saw, therefore, in prophetic vision, was the disembodied souls of those who are to die as martyrs during the Tribulation Period, beneath the Altar in heaven. From what is stated here it is perfectly clear that death does not end all, and that even though the body dies and goes back to the earth, the souls of men live on in an intermediate state, awaiting the morning of the resurrection.

This truth is also confirmed in Matthew 10:28, where Jesus said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” What stronger proof, my friends, could we have for the immortality of the soul. In this statement the Lord plainly teaches that those who kill the body, cannot kill the soul, and from this we understand that when the body dies, the soul lives and since it can no longer inhabit the body, it must go somewhere! We
know this is true from what is stated in Ecclesiastes 12:5 to 8, where it says,— “Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

There is another very interesting passage in Luke 20, verses 37 and 38, where it says, “Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him.”

Now, why do you suppose Moses spoke of God as being the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; when they had already died in the flesh? The reason he did this was because the souls of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were still living in the intermediate state between death and resurrection, and therefore Moses could rightfully declare that He is not a God of the dead, but of the living. For Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were then, and are still, living unto God, awaiting the morning of resurrection. If this were not true, how could we ever hope for the ultimate and final fulfillment of the covenant which God made with Abraham, and which He confirmed to Isaac and Jacob? Indeed, my friends, only because we believe that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still live in spirit, and because we believe that they will share in the resurrection, are we able to believe that every promise of the Abrahamic covenant will be eventually fulfilled!

The Intermediate State

Another interesting and important passage, relating to the intermediate state of the dead, is found in Luke 16, verses 19 to 31, where Jesus gave the account of the rich man and Lazarus. In this story given by the Lord Himself, it is perfectly clear that after death the disembodied souls of both the rich man and Lazarus were perfectly conscious, and that while one was suffering conscious torment, the other was enjoying peace and rest. It is also revealed that while they were in this disembodied state, the rich man had living relatives upon the earth; for he said, “I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”

And so, my friends, we see there is an intermediate state for the wicked dead as well as for the righteous dead.

The Dying Thief

This thought is further confirmed in the case of the dying thief upon the cross. As the thief hung there upon the cross, He said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom, and Jesus said unto him, verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” And so we see that when Jesus and the thief had died upon their respective crosses the souls of both went immediately to Paradise. This is further confirmed in First Peter 3:18 and 19, where it says, “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;—”

We Have Hope

When we understand these things, can any one dare say that our hope of immortal life and our hope of a resurrection from the dead are mere hallucinations? Indeed, my friends, our faith in these things and our hope for the future, are based upon the teachings of the infallible word of God, and God pity the man who does not have faith enough to believe them.

When we understand these things, we are not surprised that when He had opened the fifth seal, John said, “I saw under the Altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they had.”

How Long?

Now, let us give our attention to what is stated in the 10th verse, where it says, “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.”

It is very significant that they were crying to the Lord for vengeance. This would be very much out of place in the present dispensation of grace, but it will not out of place at the time when these things come to pass, because at that time the attitude of God Himself will be one of vengeance against the wicked of the whole earth. The very fact that they ask God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth would indicate that they were martyrs, who had been recently slain, and that their murderers were still upon the earth. These facts help us to locate the time of these events and we see that they belong to the coming time of tribulation.

These disembodied souls of the martyred remnant, cried saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.”
The very wording of this statement would indicate that they understood that it was God’s intention to do just this very thing! They had no fear whatever that in due time God would avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth, but they wanted to know how long that was going to be. To them it seemed as if God was too slow about the matter, and they could hardly wait for the plans and purposes of God in judgment to be carried out!

White Robes

And so in verse 11 it says, “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest for a little season, until their fellowservants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

It is interesting to note that the Lord gave heed to their cry, and that He answered them with words of comfort and assurance; and to confirm His good intentions toward them, it says that “White robes were given unto every one of them.” We know that white is a symbol of purity, and of acceptance with God, and the fact that God gave to each of them a white robe indicated His favor and full approval.

“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.”

Rest

This answer, which was given to them, revealed two things— First, That these souls beneath the altar were at rest. How comforting it is to know that death, even by martyrdom, brings the soul into a haven of rest; that is, for those who are saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The intermediate state, therefore, for the souls of righteous is one of peace and rest. For the most of us, life is one weary found of toil, and many of us are weary in body nearly all of the time, and truly the burdens of this life are many; so much so that we some times long for the time to come when we can lay our burdens down, and enter into that rest which is prepared for the people of God. The answer which was given to the souls beneath the altar, also revealed the purpose of their waiting. In other words, there were others who were to enter into their same estate. There were others among their fellowservants, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were. Thus we see that God has certain purposes to accomplish, and that He will not allow even the impatience, or the cry of those who have been redeemed, to hinder Him in the accomplishment of those things which He has planned to accomplish, both through grace and also through judgment.

To illustrate this point we know that Christ has promised to come in the clouds of heaven with the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the archangel, at which time the dead in Christ shall rise first; “then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

We Can Hardly Wait

Knowing these things, many of us who belong to Christ, can hardly wait for that time to come; for we know that it will mean a sudden and sweet release from the trials and tribulations of earth; but let us not forget that “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Therefore, every day that the Lord tarrieth, and delays His coming for His Church, it is a day of delay for us, but it is also one more day of grace for those who are unsaved, and so it was with those souls beneath the altar! They could hardly wait for the judgments of God to be accomplished, but if the Lord had done their bidding, their fellowservants and their brethren, whom God had intended should enter into rest with them, could not have been accomplished. And so from what is written in our lesson text, let us also learn to be patient, and allow God time enough to accomplish His purposes, both in grace and in judgment, and in the end we know that all will be well for those who are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

In our present lesson we have considered only the opening of the fifth seal. In our next lesson we shall consider the opening of the sixth seal, of the Seven Sealed Book.
IN our preceding lesson, based upon Revelation 6, and verses 9 to 11, we considered the opening of the fifth seal, of the Seven Sealed Book, which John saw in the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne. Jesus was the only one in heaven or upon the earth or under the earth, who was worthy or able to open the seals thereof.

A Work of Judgment

We have already stated that the breaking of these seals, indicates the terrible judgments from God which will come upon the earth, whereby Christ, acting as our kinsman-redeemer, will set about to restore unto man his lost or forfeited inheritance, which was lost when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.

In our last lesson we discovered that under the opening of the 5th seal, many will become martyrs because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and because of their testimony for Him. John saw the disembodied souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held underneath the altar which was in heaven, and there they were represented as waiting somewhat impatiently for God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth; but it was said unto them, “That they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled.”

Not Yet Finished

The very wording of this answer, which was given unto them, would indicate that even after the opening of the Fifth Seal, the work of God in judgment would not yet be finished. This is confirmed in what is written in Revelation 6:12 to 17, where it says,

“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 onto 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. “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; “And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; “For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

Truly, my friends, in this passage we have a startling description of future events. It is therefore, in fact, a prophecy to which each and every one of us may well take heed. I know that because the events described here are yet future, many who read and study these words will be prone to discount them as being unworthy of present consideration. Nevertheless the Apostle Peter said, in second Peter 1:19, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your heart.”

We should also remember that in Revelation 1, and verse 3, it says, 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.”

Therefore we may rest assured that the things which are spoken of here are just as sure of fulfillment as if they had already come to pass.

The First Question

Now I presume the first question that man will ask concerning this passage is, Are we to take these things literally, or symbolically. After a careful consideration of the text I am constrained to believe that the things spoken of here are to be accepted both literally and symbolically. What is stated here seems to describe a state of confusion and anarchy, both in nature and society.

Under the opening of the Sixth seal, the first thing called to our attention is that when the Seal is opened there will be a great earthquake, and other physical disturbances.

Everything to Be Shaken

We are told under good authority that the word translated Earthquake here refers not only to an earthquake such as we ordinarily think of, but that it refers to a general shaking of everything, and this interpretation is more in keeping with the general conditions described in the entire passage.

It would seem from what is described here that not only the earth, but the heavens also are to be shaken.
We do not need to be surprised at this, because in many places in the scriptures it tells of great convulsions which occurred in nature in connection with special manifestations of deity when God revealed His presence and His power. When God came down to Mt. Sinai at the giving of the law, it says in Exodus 19, and verse 18, that “Mt. Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly.”

Elijah

You will remember that when Elijah was on Mt. Horeb, when the Lord passed by, the earth did quake and rocks were rent! You will recall also that when Jesus had expired on cross, it says, that “the earth did quake and the rocks rent”

Matthew

In Matthew 24, and verse 7, Jesus Himself said that some of the signs of the end of the Age would be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.

Haggai

Now these things all apply to the earth, but in Haggai 2, verses 6 and 7, the Prophet said, For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come—

Joel

Also in Joel the 2nd chapter, the Prophet spoke of the invading host from the north, saying, The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Hebrews

To what we have already learned, let us add the testimony of the Apostle, which he gave in Hebrews 12:25 to 27: where it says, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken, may remain. Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; For, our God is a consuming fire.”

Such, my friends, is the testimony of the Word of God concerning conditions as we may expect them to be at the opening of the Sixth Seal.

What Else?

Now, to the awful conditions already described, in Revelation 6:12, the Apostle John said, ‘And the Sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.”

It is interesting to note that when this event takes place, it will not be the first time that the Sun has been darkened in local areas on the earth’s surface. This is confirmed in Exodus 10:22, where it says, “And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.”

You will recall also that when Jesus hung upon the cross, a mysterious darkness came upon the land. This is confirmed in Luke 23, verses 44 and 45, where it says, “And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the Sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.”

To the events already described, we have the testimony of the Prophet Isaiah in the 13th chapter it says: Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the earth desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth.” This is confirmed also by Joel in Joel 3:15, where it says, The Sun and the Moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.”

What Jesus Said
In Matthew 24, and verses 29 and 30, we have the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, saying, **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 power of the heavens shall be shaken. 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.**

With all of the combined testimony of Jesus and the other Prophets to the fact that the time is coming when the Sun shall be darkened, who could doubt or disbelieve the words of the Apostle John in Revelation 6:12, where he said, **The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.**

### Sun Spots

Now, in addition to all of the scripture testimony which we have given, we call your attention to the fact that only recently spots have appeared on the Sun which have been visible to the naked eye when looking through a smoked glass of some kind, and we all know how these sun spots have affected climatic conditions here upon the earth, and of how they have also affected Radio and telegraphic service. Now just imagine, if you can, what will happen when much larger portions of the sun become affected, and the sun shall become black as sackcloth of hair.

### The Moon

It also says that the moon became as blood. This is not difficult to understand because we all know that the moon derives its light from the Sun, and if the Sun should become darkened, the moon would correspondingly refuse to shine. We can well imagine the psychological effect that such a phenomena will have upon the people of the earth! Joel prophesied, saying: **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.**

Understanding these things, we are not surprised to read in Revelation 6:13 that **the stars of heaven also fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.**

There is little question but what the event referred to here refers to what we speak of as falling stars. It is likely that it refers to the actual stars of the upper heavens, because in chapter 8, and verse 12, it speaks of the stars as still being in their places, saying, **The third part of the Sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day shown not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.**

But even if this event only refers to a shower of falling stars which has occurred as we know in times past, and which will occur again on a much larger scale, it will have a tremendous effect upon those who witness these things.

### The Mountains Will Be Moved

Now in Revelation 6:14, it says, **The Heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.**

The wording of this passage would seem to indicate that these two events will take place simultaneously. In other words, there will be a great convulsion in the heavens and upon the earth at the same time!

The Apostle Peter seems to allude to some such event in Second Peter 3:10 to 12, where he said, **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and Godliness.**

Surely, my friends, God is able to do these things, and all of the unbelief of the combined forces of wickedness cannot hinder Him from doing so.

Not only will the heaven depart as a scroll when it is rolled together, but it says, **That every mountain and island were moved out of their places. This would seem to indicate an earthquake of universal scope and of greater severity than has ever been known. No one doubts any more the geographical changes which can be wrought by an earthquake. In earthquakes that have already happened, great cities have been destroyed and mountains have walked right into the sea, and so we may expect an earthquake of great proportions that will literally accomplish the things which are stated in our lesson text, having lived in Tokyo, Japan for more than five years, after the great earthquake of 1923, we know exactly what an earthquake can do.**

Now having considered the terrible convulsions in nature which will occur at the opening of the 6th seal, let us consider the impression that these things will have upon those who will be living at that time. In verses 15 to 17 in our lesson text it says, **And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every
bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

A False Hope

I know that there are those who are preaching peace, and who are looking for the ushering in of the Utopia by human effort. They dream of a day when all the present ills of the world will be done away with by those in authority!

But from what is stated in our lesson text, it is plain to see that the present ills of the world, and the present inequalities, and the same conditions of society, will continue right on to the time of the opening of the Sixth Seal. There will still be Kings ruling over the earth. There will still be great men, and those who are rich. There will still be great armies with chief captains, and mighty men leading men to war. And there will also be men in bonds. Thus, my friends, we may expect the present condition of society to continue right on as it is, unchanged to the very end.

Now They Scoff

We all know that at the present time men are hearing the Gospel with an attitude of indifference and unconcern, and in spite of the truth which they hear, and the warnings which they receive from the Word of God, they go right on in sin with an air of confidence and self importance, as if neither God nor man dare to interrupt them in the course which they have chosen to take. Now they scoff at those who believe the Bible as the Word of God. Now they laugh at those who pray, and look with disdain on those who practice righteousness, and who refuse to run with them to the same excess of riot.

But when the Sixth Seal is opened, and the earth begins to quake beneath their feet, and the sun becomes black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon becomes as blood, and when the stars fall from heaven, and the heaven itself departs as a scroll, and every mountain and island are moved out of their places; then conditions will suddenly become changed. When they see these things coming upon the earth all men from the least to the greatest will be stricken with fear, and their attitude of self composure, and rebellious pride, will completely give way, and become one of confusion and desperation!

Lofty Looks

All this is in keeping with what is stated in Isaiah 2:11-12 where it says: "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day; for the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.”

We are not surprised, therefore, that when these things come to pass, even the Kigns of the earth and the great men, and the rich men and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, irrespective of their state or position in life, will hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

What They Will Pray For

Not only will they do this, but let us notice the prayer which they will utter. When that time comes, it says they will pray to the mountains and rocks. This will be in perfect keeping with the philosophy which they have held, and the doctrines which they have believed. Millions of people throughout the world today, instead of worshipping the God of Creation, are worshipping the Creation of God. They are what we might term materialists, and evolutionists, who refuse to believe that there is any God apart from the material universe, which they see with their naked eye. Therefore when the crisis hour comes, and nature herself goes into convulsions, all of these men who have been wise in their own conceits, will pray; not to God, but to the rocks and mountains, saying "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

How Foolish

Indeed, my friends, what a foolish thing it will be for them to think that they can escape the wrath of God by fleeing into the dens of the earth, or by calling upon the mountains to fall on them.

In the 139th Psalm, David said, “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”

But these men who shall flee to the dens of the earth, and seek to hide from the presence of God, and to escape from the terror of His wrath, would not believe the teachings of God’s Word.
How foolish it was for Adam and Eve to even think that they could hide from the Lord among the trees of the Garden! And it will be just as foolish for these men to think that they can hide from God in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

**Men Are Mistaken**

Today men are defiant, and they misinterpret God’s grace, and long suffering toward them, as a spirit of weakness and indifference on His part. Their attitude of rebellion is well expressed in the Second Psalm, where it says, *“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.”* But in the very same Psalm, it says,

*“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in his wrath and vex them in his sore displeasure.” And it will be even so!*

**God Will Refuse to Heed**

Indeed, my friends, will not God laugh at men who have been so foolish as to disbelieve His Word, and who have been so unbelieving and so rebellious as to reject Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, as their Saviour? Will not God laugh at those who laughed at other men because they prayed to the God of heaven, when he sees them rushing like mad men to the rocks and mountains, and praying to the rocks and mountains to fall on them?

It is interesting to note that those who will flee to the rocks and mountains will do so because they are afraid of Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and want to hide themselves from the wrath of the Lamb. And their last words will be a confession of the fact that the great day of His wrath has come, and their last question will be, “Who shall be able to stand?”

Now, for those of you who wish to accept our lesson text as being purely symbolical, let me say that whether you apply it to industrial, political or religious conditions, it can mean nothing more or less than an utter breakdown of present day civilization, ending in total anarchy, and no doubt these things will come to pass.

**A Prophetic Warning**

So what we have in our lesson text here is a prophetic warning of things that will actually come to pass under the opening of the Sixth Seal of the Seven Seal Book. These words should be received with solemn concern by all who study the word of God; for current events are only an index finger pointing to the ultimate fulfillment of these very things. These words should serve to awaken the Church of Christ everywhere to a sense of her duty and responsibility of reaching men with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ while she yet has time and opportunity for doing so.

And these words should also be a warning to all who are unsaved! They are not an overdrawn picture of things contrary to fact, but they are a clear statement of those things that shall come to pass upon the wicked of the whole earth who refuse to believe in the Bible as God’s Word, and in Jesus Christ as God’s Son.
and by the eye of faith through the help and illumination of God’s Holy Spirit, we are able to see Christ as He now is, and as He will be when He appears at the rapture and later at the revelation!

Slowly but surely we are advancing in our study of this last Book of the Bible; and as we advance, new light is bursting in upon our hearts and is shining upon our pathway to show us the way. The truth which we have already learned in this Book concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, and future events, only prepares us all the better to understand the other truths written in this same book, which we are yet to study.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 7th chapter, where our lesson will begin for today.

Review

In our last lesson, based upon Revelation 6:12 to 17; we studied concerning those things which will come to pass under the opening of the Sixth Seal, of the Seven Sealed Book, which John saw in the right hand of Him who sat upon the Throne. Under the opening of the Sixth Seal we discovered that there is to be a great shaking of the earth and the heavens. Nature itself will go into convulsions, and as a result, the heart of all men upon the earth will be stricken with fear, and the Kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men and the chief captains, and the mighty men and every bond man, and every free man will hide themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and will pray for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

The 144,000 Sealed Israelites

Now let us advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 7:1 to 8, where it says,

“And after these things I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. “And I saw another Angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea. “Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. “And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. “Of the Tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. “Of the Tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. “Of the Tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. “Of the Tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the Tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.”

A Parenthetical Passage

First of all, let us remind you that what we have here is a parenthetical passage which describes the continuation of events signified by the breaking of the Sixth Seal.

From what is stated here we must recognize that in spite of the shaking of the heavens and the earth, which will occur under the opening of the Sixth Seal, as we studied in our last lesson, the earth will continue, and there will be a lull in the storm, as it were, which will continue until certain things have been accomplished. And then the storm will break forth again with added fury! Even though the judgments of God will already have begun to fall upon the wicked of the whole earth, a restraining hand will be placed upon them, as indicated in our lesson text for today. The reason for this delay in the ongoing of God’s judgments will be in order that the one hundred and forty four thousand, described in our lesson text, may be sealed.

Before we take up our study of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, however, let us consider briefly what is stated in the first three verses of our lesson text.

A Divine Command

In the first verse of chapter 7: the Apostle John said, ‘And after these things I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.’

Now this comment may be unnecessary and unwarranted, but let us not think for one moment that because it speaks here of the four corners of the earth, that it means to infer that the earth is flat; for such is not the case. The use of such language here merely refers to the four points of the compass, namely, north, east, south and west, which terms apply to the earth, which we know is round.
The Four Restraining Angels

The important thing for us to notice in this verse is, the four restraining Angels. Apparently at that time, these four Angels will have power over the forces governing the earth! According to our lesson text they will stand in readiness to hurt the earth at the command of the other Angel, which is also described in this passage. In Daniel 7, and verse 2, the prophet said, "I saw in my vision by night and behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea."

The Great Sea

We are told that the sea in scripture symbolism stands for the populace, or the mere unorganized mass of mankind. Whether we interpret the four winds suggested here as literal or symbolical, they possess destructive power, which will be released upon the earth at the command of the Angel described in the second verse of our lesson text. The word "winds" could well symbolize certain movements which will exist at that time.

The Sealing Angel

It seems that there is no way of telling who the Angel is, referred to as the one ascending from the East, having the seal of the Living God, and who gives command to the other four Angels not to hurt the earth, or the sea, nor the trees, until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads! Many assume that this Mighty Angel is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We know that in the Old Testament Christ is often spoken of as the "Angel of the Lord." When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, you will remember that His Star appeared in the East. We know also that Jesus is called the "Bright and Morning Star." Also in Malachi 4:2 it says, "The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings." Nevertheless, since the scriptures seem to give us no absolute clue as to who the Angel may be, we shall make no effort to give a definite decision in the matter. If the Angel referred to here is not the Lord Jesus Christ, He is, nevertheless, an Angel of great power, to whom the other four Angels will give obedience, and it is to be by reason of His command that the other Angels, who control the four winds of the earth, will restrain from hurting the earth until the servants of God have been sealed in their foreheads.

Our Next Task

Our next task will be to consider those who are to be sealed. In other words, who are these one hundred and forty four thousand sealed ones? This is a very important question, but it should not be difficult to answer, providing we are willing to take the Word for what it says. In the 4th verse of our lesson text the Apostle John plainly says, "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty four thousand of all the Tribes of the Children of Israel."

Israel Means Israel

Is there any use, therefore, to search elsewhere for an answer to our question? And the answer is, NO! The word "Israel" as it is used here means exactly what it says: i.e., the Tribes of Israel, and does not in any sense refer to the Church, which is an entirely distinct and separate body of believers. It is estimated that there are between sixteen to eighteen million Jews in the world today, and even though they are dispersed among the Gentiles, there is no question but what every tribe is represented. I know they speak of the ten lost Tribes, and from a historical point of view, they may be lost, but there is no question but what God knows exactly where they are. That God knows exactly where the Tribes of Israel are today, and that He will bring them back and join them together in the Holy Land, is confirmed in Ezekiel the 37th chapter, verses 15 to 28. Time will not allow a reading of this passage, but we invite you to look it up. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to believe that the one hundred and forty four thousand will be sealed from among the twelve tribes of Israel.

What People Think: What God Says

I know that there are a lot of people that are adverse to the idea that God will ever bless the Jews again with spiritual blessings. They seem to think that God has cast away His people forever; but if this be the case, then why has God miraculously preserved the Jews throughout more than two thousand years of dispersion among the Gentiles? With the Apostle Paul, we say, "Hath God cast away His people?" and we also answer with the Apostle Paul, saying, ‘God forbid – God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew.’ Let us not forget that all of the Prophets were Jews, and that Jesus Himself was a Jew, and that the writer of the Book of Revelation, which we are now studying, was a Jew! Also let us not forget that God made an unconditional covenant with Abraham, and confirmed it to Isaac and Jacob, and in this covenant, recorded in Genesis 12:2 and 3, God said to Abraham: "I will make of thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families [or nations] of the earth be blessed." Since God is not a man that He should lie, we have every reason to believe that the race of Israel will be preserved until every condition, and every promise has been fulfilled!

Because of Unbelief
Because of their unbelief and disobedience, however, the race of Israel has not yet become a universal blessing. During all their long and eventful history, in spite of the fact that many of the Jews have walked in unbelief, nevertheless there has always been a faithful believing remnant among them. Dr. C. I. Scofield gives us a very interesting comment concerning the believing remnant in Israel, in his footnotes on Romans the 11th chapter, saying:

“In Elijah's time seven thousand had not bowed the knee to Baal. In Isaiah's time it was the very small remnant for whose sake God still forbore to destroy the nation. During the captivities the remnant appears in Jews like Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Esther and Mordecai. At the end of the seventy years of Babylonian captivity it was the remnant which returned under Ezra and Nehemiah. At the advent of our Lord, John the Baptist, Simeon, Anna and ‘them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem’ were the remnant. During the Church Age the remnant is composed of believing Jews. But the chief interest in the remnant is prophetic. During the Great Tribulation a remnant out of all Israel will turn to Jesus as Messiah, and will become His witnesses after the removal of the Church. Some of these will undergo martyrdom; some will be spared to enter the millennial Kingdom. Many of the Psalms express, prophetically, the joys and sorrows of the tribulation remnant.”

Therefore we have every reason to believe that the one hundred and forty four thousand spoken of in our lesson text, who are to be sealed, after the opening of the Sixth Seal, of the Seven Sealed Book, will be none other than a believing remnant in Israel, who will still be looking for the coming of their Messiah.

False Claims

We know that quite a number of religious cults and sects today claim to be the one hundred and forty four thousand of Revelation the 7th chapter, but we know their claims are false, because John plainly said that they were to be of the Tribes of Israel. And we know that they will constitute a believing remnant during the tribulation period. They will not be called out, therefore and sealed, until after the rapture of the church. We know that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so after the Church has been completed and raptured away to be with Christ, no doubt many in Israel will believe, and their blindness will be taken away, and then when the sealing Angel comes, they will be sealed in their foreheads, as well as in their hearts, as our lesson text today teaches us.

The Tribes of Dan and Ephraim

It is very interesting and important for us to note that in enumerating the Tribes of Israel in this chapter, the names of Dan and Ephraim were omitted, and the names of Levi and Joseph were substituted in their place. There was a reason for this! In Deuteronomy 29:18 to 21, the Lord had warned that any man, woman, family or tribe who introduced idolatry into Israel would have their name blotted out from under heaven, and that they would be separated out of the tribes of Israel. And we all know that the tribes of Dan and Ephraim were guilty of this very thing, when they permitted Jeroboam to set up the golden calves to be worshipped, which fact is confirmed in First Kings 12:25 to 30.

Understanding these things we are not surprised to find the names of these two tribes missing in this list of the tribes given in Revelation the 7th chapter.

The Twelve Tribes

In his book on the Apocalypse Seiss gives us a very interesting comment concerning the Twelve Tribes, saying,

“JUDA means Confession, or Praise of God; REUBEN, Viewing the Son; GAD, A Company; ASER, Blessed; NEPTHALIM, A Wrestler, or Striving with;—MANASSES, Forgetfulness; SIMEON, Hearing and Obeying; LEVI, Joining or Cleaving to; ISSACHAR, Reward, or what is given by way of reward; ZABULON, A Home or dwelling place; JOSEPH, Added, or an addition; BENJAMIN, A Son of the Right Hand, A Son of Old Age.”

Now, put these several things together in their order, and we have described to us: Confessors or praisers of God, Looking upon the Son, A band of blessed ones, Wrestling with forgetful Hearing and obeying the Word, Cleaving unto the reward of a shelter and home. An addition, Sons of the day of God’s right hand, Begotten in the extremity of the age.

This certainly is very remarkable, and cannot be taken as a mere accident particularly as the order of the names, and some of the names themselves, are changed from the numerations of Twelve Tribes found in other places.

Thus, my friends, we have a wonderful picture of those attributes which will belong to the believing remnant in Israel in the days when this sealing is to be accomplished.

The Nature of the Seal
Now, having discovered who these one hundred and forty four thousand are, let us now turn our attention to the nature of the seal which they are to receive. This should not be difficult because our lesson text plainly says that they are to be sealed in their foreheads. There is little question but what this will be a visible mark which can be seen every one, which will serve as a mark of identification. It will be different then than it is now. Today the Tares and the Wheat dwell together, and no visible mark is placed upon either one because they are both to grow together until the harvest. But before the opening of the Sixth Seal we expect that the Church will have been raptured away to be with Christ and then a mark of identification will become necessary.

From what is stated in Revelation the 13th chapter and the 16th verse, know that Antichrist will mark followers with a visible mark. Speaking of the False Prophet it says, “He causeth all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead: 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.”

And so, my friends, we see that during this period of time both the righteous and the unrighteous are to be marked, some by the sealing angel, as indicated in our lesson text, and some by the False Prophet, as the representative of the Antichrist!

A Moral Aspect Also

There is no question but that there is a moral aspect to this sealing also. We all know that the seal of God is the Spirit of God Himself. This is confirmed in Ephesians 1:13 and 14, where it says, “After that ye believed, ye were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.”

Also in Ephesians 4, and verse 30 it says, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Therefore, understanding these things, we have every reason to believe that the sealing of the one hundred and forty four thousand out of the Twelve Tribes of Israel will include also the pouring out of God’s Holy Spirit upon them, so that their spiritual eyes will be opened, and the veil that is now upon their hearts, will be taken away.

Outwardly and Inwardly

We may expect, therefore, that after the Church has been completed and raptured away, and these one hundred and forty four thousand are called out from among the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and sealed outwardly with a mark upon their forehead, and inwardly with the seal of God’s Holy Spirit, they will become the flaming Evangelists of the Tribulation Period, who will witness for God against all the opposition of the Antichrist, and those who follow him.

The Message of the 144,000

Now, since this is true, many will ask, What sort of a message will these one hundred and forty four thousand converted Jews have to preach during the Tribulation Period. Surely it would not be the same as the Gospel of Grace, which we are now receiving. The purpose of the Gospel of Grace, which is now being preached, is to call out from among both Jews and Gentiles the Church, which is the Body of Christ, as a people for His name. The calling out of the Church, therefore, is the great task and purpose of this age, and when this is accomplished, the Church will be caught up to be with Christ, as described in First Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

But God has never left Himself without a witness in the world. Therefore, He will call out and seal the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who will go forth into all the world preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom!

The Message of John the Baptist

You will remember that when John the Baptist came preaching he said to the people, “Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” By the Kingdom of Heaven he meant that the rule or authority of heaven was soon to be administered upon the earth. Notice he did not say that the Kingdom of Heaven had come, but that it was at hand, and that it would come on condition of their repentance. The Kingdom of Heaven was at hand at that time, in the person of the King from Heaven, namely in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had come from Heaven, and who was declared by the wise men to be King of the Jews from the very moment of His birth. But we know full well that the Jews did not receive John’s preaching.

They did not believe His witness and testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ! They refused to believe that Jesus was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world! They refused to believe that he was the Saviour of the world and the Messiah of Israel. In consequence they rejected Him and caused Him to be crucified. After Jesus was buried, on the third day He arose again, and ascended into heaven, and today He is, as a Nobleman, who has gone into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom and to return. And while He is absent, the Church, which is His Body, is being called out. And when the Church has been completed and called away, it will then soon be time for the King to return with authority to establish His Kingdom and to fulfill the blessings of the
Abrahamic covenant by making the seed of Abraham a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

A World-Wide Proclamation

All this will necessitate a proclamation to all the world that the absent King is coming back again to the earth, and that the long promised Kingdom of righteousness will soon be established over all the nations.

Therefore, in Matthew 24:14, in answer to the disciples question, i. e., "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the world (or age)"—Jesus said, "The Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Watchman: What of the Night

When we understand these things we can see why under the opening of the Sixth Seal there will be a calm in the storm by reason of a restraining influence, which will then be placed upon the forces at work in the world while the one hundred and forty four thousand out of Israel are chosen and sealed for the great work of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom during the coming tribulation period.

We know that the gifts and calling God are without repentance, and that what God has promised, both to Israel and to the Church, He will ultimately fulfill. Therefore, in conclusion we say, "Watchman, what of the night? The Watchman saith, the morning cometh and also the night."

Indeed, my friends, here is the promise of the morning, but we also know that the morning will be preceded by earth’s darkest night! Therefore, in view of these things let us gird up our loins and be ready for impending events by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ our own personal Saviour.
these things in their present order come to a consummation or a close. So let us realize that we are studying concerning the consummation of all things pertaining to God's plan of redemption.

Review

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 7th chapter, and the 9th verse, where our lesson will begin for today. In our last lesson based upon Revelation 7:1-8, we saw that under the opening of the 6th seal of the seven sealed book, which John saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, there would be a lull or calm, as it were, in the midst of the storm of God's judgments, which will then be falling upon the earth in rapid succession. This interruption in the ongoing of events will be brought about by the command of the angel, which John saw ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God, who shall command the four angels who are described as holding the four winds of the earth, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

From our last lecture study we learned that those referred to as the servants of our God, who are to be sealed, were none other than the 144,000 who are to be sealed out of the twelve tribes of Israel. The time of this sealing, we stated, would be during the tribulation period after the church, which is the body of Christ, has been raptured away to be with the Lord. The nature of this sealing, we discovered, was to be with a visible mark for outward identification, and also, a spiritual anointing in preparation for the work which they were to do.

The great reason for the sealing of these 144,000 Jews, will be in order that they may become the flaming evangelists of the tribulation period, who will go out and preach to all the world the Gospel of the Kingdom, announcing to all men everywhere that the King will soon return from Heaven to reign over all the nations of the whole earth.

Our Lesson Text

Now at this time, let us continue our study by reading what is written in Revelation 7:9-17, where it says, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, "Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. "And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

A Threefold Result

First of all, let us call your attention to the fact, that three things are mentioned as a result of the breaking of the 6th seal of the Seven Sealed book. The first result was the terrible commotion or shaking which will take place in the earth and in the heavens above, which will strike fear to all men then living upon the earth. And the second result was, the sealing of the 144,000 from among the 12 tribes of Israel. And the third vision that John saw, was that of the great multitude which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands.

Who Are the Sealed Ones?

Now, the first thing for us to decide is, who those of this great multitude are, and from whence they come. And if we confine our study to the lesson text, we should have little difficulty in doing this. What we have here is a millennial scene! The things described here belong to the earth in the kingdom age which is to follow the tribulation period. In our last lesson we learned that the 144,000 from among the Jews will go forth preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Therefore, we have every reason to expect that as a result of their preaching, multitudes will be saved during the tribulation period. Conditions will be different then from what they are now. Today is the age of grace, and men are being saved through the preaching of the Gospel of Grace, but by this time we expect the church to be completed, and raptured away to be with Christ! So what we are studying here has to do with those things which will
come to pass after the church has been completed and raptured away. At that time men will be saved through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Christ Will Come

As we know, the tribulation period will close with the 2nd coming of Christ, in power and great glory at his revelation, when he shall come to destroy the Antichrist and the false prophet. Afterwards he will ascend to the throne of David in Jerusalem and reign as king over all the earth. This is confirmed in Zechariah 14:4 and 9, where it says, “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the East — And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one.” Then the government will be upon his shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, he Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”

The Psalmist David, also said in Psalms 67 and verse 4, “Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.”

Multitudes Will Hear and Be Saved

It is perfectly natural to believe, therefore, that in preparation for these things through the preaching of the 144,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel, multitudes of people will hear and believe and be saved through the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, from all kindreds and people and tongues.

Now let us notice that it says: “They stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

David’s Throne

The very fact that those of this redeemed multitude are to be clothed with white robes, and have palms in their hands, would also indicate that this is an earthly scene, and that the throne in question here, is not the throne in heaven but rather the throne of David here upon the earth.

The Feast of the Tabernacles

The scene is one of joy and of great rejoicing. This is confirmed by the fact that they have palm branches in their hands. In other words, the joy of the feast of tabernacles is theirs.

In Leviticus 23rd chapter, verses 33-44; the Lord ordained that after the harvest, Israel should observe the feast of tabernacles, at which time God said.

“Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord, your God, seven days.” Therefore, as it was then in Israel so shall it be again when this time comes. These multitudes of people, who shall be saved through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, shall rejoice with much gladness before the throne, and shall worship the Lamb upon that throne, and wave their palm branches before him, crying, with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.”

Now some may object to what we have said, because mention is made in our lesson text of the angels and the elders and the four beasts, or living creatures, but there is no inconsistency here, when we consider the fact that John saw these things in prophetic vision, he had been caught up in spirit to the throne in heaven, and from that exalted position, he was shown these things, which shall come to pass upon the earth. There is no doubt but what the angels who were then standing round about the throne in heaven, and the enthroned elders, and the four living creatures, sharing this wonderful vision with the Apostle John. It is no wonder, therefore, that they fell upon their faces before the throne that was in heaven, and worshipped God, saying, “Amen; Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honor, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

Two Thrones

It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to understand that there are two thrones in question in our lesson text today. The one was the throne in heaven, from which John and the elders and the four living creatures and the angels were given to see things in prophetic vision. The other throne in question here, we have already stated, is the throne of David, which as we know, is to be re-established here upon the earth at the second coming of Christ. There no way of understanding this passage intelligently unless we keep this distinction in mind.
Out of Great Tribulation

Now, in verses 13 and 14 of our lesson text it says, “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

These words furnish an important key to the understanding of the entire passage. When it says here, that this multitude came out of great tribulation, there is no question but what the tribulation referred to here, is the great tribulation spoken of by Daniel Prophet in Daniel 12:1, and by Jesus himself in Matthew 24:21. Of the tribulation Jesus said, “Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

We have already learned from our study what will happen under the opening of the other five seals. Peace will be taken from the earth, and there shall be famine and scarcity, followed by terrible plagues, and under the opening of the sixth seal, the earth and the heavens shall go into convulsions. But, this is only the beginning of those things which will occur during the tribulation, as we shall see. Is it any wonder, therefore, that one of the Elders answered, saying, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white, in the blood of the Lamb.”

These words reveal an important truth, namely; that salvation for all men in all ages is accomplished through faith in the blood of Christ. How true it is that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission, as stated in Hebrews 9:22. Man who is guilty before God, can only be saved through the blood of an atoning sacrifice.

Only One Way of Salvation

God has only one plan of redemption and he does not change or compromise this plan in any age to suit the conceptions or desires of any man or group of men! Those who were saved in the Old Testament times were saved through the shedding of blood, in which case the innocent atoning substitute died in behalf of the guilty sinner. Such sacrifices, we know, were typical of, and foreshadowed the one great sacrifice which Jesus made for all men upon the cross at which time he shed his blood to make an atonement for the sins of the world, for he was truly the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, as stated by John the Baptist. When he gave his life as a sacrifice for sin upon the cross he was the only pure and innocent man the world had ever known! Therefore He gave His life by shedding his blood in behalf of those who were lost. Therefore, only through faith in his shed blood can any man hope for redemption, and this applies to all men in every age alike without respect of persons. Those who lived on the other side of the cross were saved by faith in the blood of the son of God which had been prophesied would be shed for them upon the cross. And we who live on this side of the cross are saved through faith in the blood of the son of God, which WAS SHED for us upon the cross nearly 2,000 years ago.

And herein “God commandeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him.”

Many Ethical Religions Reject the Blood of Christ

I know there is a lot of religion in the world today which teaches a sort of ethical righteousness apart from the blood of Christ. So many these days are opposed to the blood of Christ and reject it as being the only way of salvation. But in this message, without an apology to any living man, and in the fear of God, and as a witness before men upon earth and angels in heaven, and demons in hell, I wish to declare my faith is the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as man’s only hope of redemption! And it is interesting to note from our lesson text that this great multitude who will be saved out of the tribulation will share this faith and conviction with all of us preachers of the gospel, who believe in the blood of Christ. For it says: “These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Their Reward

Therefore, it says, “are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.”

The last verse just read reveals the reward of those who will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the lamb, namely: that they will be accepted by the Lord and will serve him day and night in his temple. In other words, they will become the servants of God, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

The Bridehood Saints

Now, let us not forget that before this time comes, the church, which is the body of Christ, will have been caught away at the rapture to be with the Lord. Therefore, the opportunity for becoming a bridehood saint and a member of that elect body called “The Church”
will have been closed forever. From the scriptures we know that those who are now being called out from among both Jews and Gentiles, into the church, which is the body of Christ, are being called and prepared to receive the greatest crowns and the highest thrones and the glorious positions of authority of any elect body in the universe! The scriptures reveal that being the sons of God we have become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ in all things which are yet to come. But when the church, which is the body of Christ, has finally been completed those crowns and thrones and kingships which it offers, and which are now open to all who will believe and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, will be closed forever! Hence those who are saved after the resurrection and rapture of the church could, by the very nature of things, only be accounted as servants of the Lord. And for that very purpose this great multitude will be saved during the tribulation period, and will come out of Great Tribulation and will enter into the joys and privileges of the kingdom age.

**Will Serve Him Day and Night in His Temple**

In Revelation 7:15 it says that they shall *Serve him day and night in his temple.* The temple in question here is not the temple in heaven, but will be the millennial temple which every student of prophecy knows will be rebuilt. For a description of this future temple which will be in Jerusalem, we refer you to Ezekiel, chapters 40, 42, and 41. This will not be the temple which the Jews will build in the near future in their unbelief in which the Antichrist will exalt himself above all that called God. But the temple described by Ezekiel will be the one which Lord himself will cause to be built. This is confirmed in Zechariah 6:12 and 13 where it says: *And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord:*

> “Even he shall build the temple of the Lord: and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

**The Tabernacle of David to Be Rebuilt**

To substantiate the statement which we have just made, we refer you to Acts the 15th chapter and verses 16 to 18 where it says:

> “After this I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

> “That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

> “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world”

This passage reveals not only the fact that such a temple is to be rebuilt, but sets forth the purpose for which it will be done, i. e., that the residue of men might seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name if called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

**They Shall Hunger No More**

Now concerning this great multitude of blood washed saints, in Revelation 7:16 and 17 it says: They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

> “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

Concerning this redeemed, joyful multitude Seiss in his book on the Apocalypse says:

> “O the blessedness, the peace, the comfort, the everlasting satisfaction, which is the portion of these palm-bearers! Our souls thrill with the mere contemplation of it! A home so happy, a rest so glorious, a place so high, a bliss so exquisite and enduring, would not be too dearly purchased at a cost of all the pains of the Great Tribulation! It is verily the very mount of transfiguration to which we are carried by this theme. We feel ourselves overshadowed with the cloud of brightness. We cannot open even our drowsy eyes to the scene, but our lips mutter: Lord, it is good for us to be here. Fain would we set up our tabernacles where we might ever contemplate the blaze of living glory. Here we would sit forever viewing bliss so great, so true, so high. This glorious Lamb! The glorious throne! These glorious ones with their glorious crowns! This effulgence of gracious Godhead! These sinless splendors! These eternal consolations! These holy services! These smiles of favor beaming from the King! These never-withering palms! These ever-shining robes! These ever-shining songs! These overflowing springs of never-failing life! These joy-speaking eyes which never weep, and singing lips which never thirst, and uplifted hands which never tire, and comforts from God as a mother would comfort the child she loves, and sorrow and sighing forever fled away! O blessed, blessed, blessed contemplation!”
LECTURE 25 ON THE REVELATION

Who the Saved of the Tribulation Will Be — The Opening of the Seventh Seal — A Strange and Profound Silence in Heaven — Seven Trumpets to Be Sounded by Seven Angels — The Scriptural Importance of Trumpets — the Seven Trumpets Are Judgment Trumpets — The Other Angel — Who This Mighty Angel Represents — A Warning of Judgment

In our last lesson we considered the great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, who are to be saved during the Tribulation Period through the preaching of the one hundred and forty four thousand Jews, who will be called out and sealed from among the twelve Tribes of Israel for this very purpose.

Multitudes Will Be Saved

We have every reason to expect that multitudes of people will be saved during the Tribulation Period, because the Prophet Daniel said in Daniel 12:10, "Many shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

In Isaiah 26, and verse 9, the Prophet Isaiah said, "Yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

Who Will the Saved Be?

Now, it would be well for us just here to consider, before passing on to the 8th chapter, just who those who are to make up the great multitude of the redeemed, during the Tribulation Period, will be.

Who That Will Not Be

First of all we wish to state that, those who will be saved during the Tribulation Period will not be those who have sat beneath the preaching of the Gospel of the Grace of God, and who have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. It stands to reason that if a man will not believe and accept the Lord under grace, he is not very likely to repent and believe when the judgments of God come upon him.

The fact of the matter is that those who are hearing the Gospel now, and are rejecting it, if the rapture should occur and they were left behind, they would be caught in the great delusion that is to come upon those who are now rejecting the truth. This is confirmed in Second Thessalonians 2:10 to 12, where it says, "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Logical

This is perfectly logical, for it stands to reason that if a man will not believe the truth, he is ready and willing to believe a lie. - If a man will not receive the true Christ, it is only logical to believe that he would be willing and ready to receive the Antichrist. - If a man turns his face away from the light, it stands to reason that he is headed towards darkness. - If a man rejects the mercy of God, he must of necessity accept the judgments of God. And, my friends, during the Tribulation Period, it will be even so.

Those who are hearing the Gospel now, and are rejecting the true Christ and are walking in unbelief, have reason to expect that God will be merciful to them after the Church has been completed and raptured away, and the Tribulation begins. Rather, we may expect that upon them will come the strong delusion that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. In other words; there will be no revival of Apostate Christendom during the Tribulation Period. Louis T. Talbot in his book on the Revelation, says this point,

"Never let any cult or person lead you to reject the Gospel of the Grace of God with the hope that you will have another chance after the Church is translated. There is no word in the Bible which would lead anyone to believe that there will be any hope for those who reject Christ as their Saviour after the day of Grace is over."

Not a Contradiction

Now, do not misunderstand me, these statements are in no wise in contradiction to what we have said concerning the great multitude who will be saved during the great Tribulation Period. The great multitude of people will be saved during the Tribulation Period, exactly the scriptures have pointed out. Who then are they to be? There is no question but that they will be those who hear and accept the Gospel of the Kingdom, which will be preached by the hundred and forty-four thousand Jews during the Tribulation period. There are millions of people in the world today who are as yet unevangelized, and to them will be preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, and multitudes will believe and be saved. But let us not think for one moment that a man who has rejected the Gospel of the Grace of God will repent and be saved when he hears the Gospel of the Kingdom! Therefore, the only safe thing to do, if you
want to be saved, is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and accept Him as your personal Saviour now, in this day of grace, before the judgments of God, and the strong delusion come upon the earth.

Advance Lesson

Now for today let us advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 8:1 to 6, where it says,

“And when He had opened the Seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour "And I saw the Seven Angels which stood before God; and to them wert, given Seven Trumpets. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. “And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. “And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. “And the Seven Angels which had the Seven Trumpets prepared themselves to sound.”

The Opening of the Seventh Seal

We now come to the opening of the Seventh Seal of the Seven Sealed Book which the Apostle John saw in the right hand of Him which sat upon the Throne. In our studies thus far we have considered those events which shall come to pass under the opening of the first Six Seals!

The opening of the Seventh Seal is of much greater importance than any of the other Six Seals preceding it, because the breaking of the Seventh Seal includes also the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Vials of the wrath of God. Let us remember that Seven is the perfect number, and since our theme is that of judgment, we may expect that those things which will occur upon the breaking of the Sixth Seal, will lead to the end or completion of God’s work of judgment so far as the earth is concerned. Therefore, those things that are to occur as a result of the breaking of the Seventh Seal must be looked upon as being of great importance.

What Happened When the Other Seals Were Broken?

Under the opening of the first seal a strong command was given by one of the four living creatures, saying, ‘Come and See” (or go) and the same command was given at the opening of the three succeeding seals. Under the opening of the Fifth Seal there was a great cry which arose from beneath the altar that was in heaven from those that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. Under the opening of the Sixth Seal all nature went into convulsions, and there was a terrible shaking in the heavens and in the earth. But under the opening of the Seventh Seal quite the opposite was true; for John said, “When He had opened the Seventh Seal there was silence in Heaven about the space of half an hour.” Surely this was a great contrast to that which occurred under the opening of the other six seals.

Silence in Heaven

Now let us consider the nature and the importance of this silence which is to occur in heaven at the opening of the Seventh Seal.

We believe the language of our lesson text to mean exactly what it says. In other words; when the Seventh Seal is opened there will be silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. Indeed, my friends, there is something very impressive about absolute silence, and there is no question but what the silence spoken of here, will be the result of awe, rapture and expectancy, and rapt attention! It will be like the silence which precedes a storm, or an earthquake! Personally I can enter well into the feeling of what is suggested in our lesson text regarding this silence which is to precede the awful storm.

An Experience in Japan

When we were living in Japan several years ago ye could nearly always tell in advance when we were going to have an earthquake of serious proportion, because preceding such an earthquake everything in nature seemed to go to sleep, and became as silent as death. A strange hush seemed to pervade the very atmosphere and not a leaf would be moving on the trees. This silence would often continue for some time before the earthquake, actually occurred. And then suddenly there would come a subterranean rumbling, and the earth would begin to shake as it had the ague, and the trees would begin to dance without even a puff of wind to disturb them, and the houses would shake and the windows would rattle, as if in the midst of a storm. What a true and accurate object lesson we had in such experiences of that which is to happen under the opening of the Seventh Seal.

A Time of Suspense

Think of what it is going to mean when everything becomes absolutely silent in heaven for nearly half an hour. That will be a long
time for all of the creatures in heaven to be silent and motionless, and what a solemn stillness that will be. We all know that even a few minutes seems like hours sometimes when we are waiting for something to happen. Even two or three minutes would seem like a long time if a person were drowning, or were in danger in any way, and we were trying to accomplish their rescue.

Therefore, when we consider the circumstances in the case now before us and realize the different things which will be interrupted, and the countless number of heavenly beings that will be affected by this silence in heaven, thirty minutes, or half an hour, will seem like a very long time indeed. Imagine, if you can, all of the Angels and the Cherubim and the Seraphim, and the hosts of heaven, their eyes fixed in rapt attention upon the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, at the breaking of the Seventh Seal, waiting to see what will next occur in the program of justice and judgment being dealt out upon the wicked of whole earth.

The Seven Trumpets

We next turn our attention to what is stated in the second verse where John said, “And I saw the Seven Angels which stood before God; and to them was given Seven Trumpets.” This statement is both interesting and suggestive, the fact that these Seven Angels stood before God would indicate that they were the Arch Angels of highest rank. In Matthew 18:10, Jesus Himself spoke those Angels who always behold face of the Father which is in heaven.

Arch Angels

We are told that the Jews were familiar with Seven Angels of this particular class. The scriptures speak to us of Michael and Gabriel. We know that Gabriel was an Angel of this high rank, because in Luke 1:26 and 27 it says, “The Angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a City of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David; and the Virgin’s name was Mary.” We should have no difficult therefore, in believing that there are seven such archangels who stand in the presence of God to execute His will.

The Importance of Trumpets

Now, it is of striking interest and importance that to these Seven Angels were given Seven Trumpets.

Trumpets are mentioned frequently in the scriptures, and were used under many different circumstances, especially in Israel. First of all, you will remember that when God came down upon Mt. Sinai there was the sound of the Trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled.

Trumpets were also used to sound an alarm as in the case of war This is confirmed in Jeremiah 4:19, where the prophet said, “I cannot hold my peace because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.” Also in Numbers 10 and verse 9, it says, “If ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then you shall blow an alarm with the trumpets.”

The trumpets were also sounded by the Jews in connection with their worship This is confirmed in Numbers 10, and verse 10, where it says, “Also in the days of your gladness, and in your solemn days and in the beginning of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God.”

The trumpets were also blown in Israel in connection with some of their great religious festivals This is confirmed in Leviticus 23:24, where it says, “Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.”

Trumpets were also blown to announce the anointing of certain Kings in Israel

This was true of King Solomon; for in First Kings 1:34 it says, “And let Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, anoint him there King over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon.”

And what one of us would not remember how the children of Israel marched around Jericho, and how the walls of the city fell down at the blowing of the trumpets. All this is confirmed in Joshua 6:13 to 16.

We know also that trumpets were blown at the laying of the foundation of God’s Temple This is confirmed in Ezra 3:10, where it says, “And when the builders laid the foundation of the Temple of the Lord they set the Priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph with symbols to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David, King of Israel.”

An Interesting Quotation

Now concerning these things, Seiss in his book on the Apocalypse says,

“With these facts before us, we are already in a degree prepared to anticipate what these seven trumpets are to bring forth.
Their number is the complete number, and we may expect from them everything to which trumpets stand related in the scriptures. Are they related to war? Then war is coming; yea, “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Are they for the calling of convocations and signals for motion? Then we may look for great gatherings and mighty changes. Do they herald great solemnities and blessed feasts and sacrifices? Then we may anticipate the sublimest festivals, and victories, and jubilee, and burning up of the victims of sin, that the world has ever yet seen. Do they declare investiture with dominion and the commencement of a new reign? Then may we look for the setting up of a new administration, and the opening of the reign of the true David, the greater than Solomon. Do they declare the presence of God in His awful majesty? Then may we expect a revelation of Divine power and Godhead which shall fill heaven and earth with trembling. Do they bring the fall of the cities of the wicked and the destruction of their inhabitants? Then we may look for the end of great Babylon and the sweeping of the dominion of Antichrist and all his confederates from the earth. Do they tell of the founding and building of the permanent temple of the Lord? Then may we look for the incoming of that true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, and of that firmly founded city whose maker and builder is God. And all this accords entirely with what John subsequently describes as resultant from the sounding of these seven trumpets.”

Another Angel

Now in the third verse of our lesson text, it says, “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.”

Christ: The Angel of the Lord

There should be no difficulty in determining who the other angel referred to here, really is, because the work he is engaged in is the answer to any questions on this subject. The angel referred to here is described as offering incense with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. Now we know this was the work of a priest. These words, therefore, describe none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, exercising himself as our great High Priest.

In First Timothy 2:5, it says, “There is one God, and one Mediator before God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” The fact that the Lord is here called an angel, should not be any hindrance to our faith in this regard, because, in Old Testament times, Christ in his pre-incarnate form was often referred to as “the angel of the Lord.”

We know that the Angel referred here, is none other than the Lord Christ, because no other angel, however high in rank has the right to act in a mediatorial position. Only Jesus, Son of God, who died upon the Cross to make an atonement for our sins, and arose again from the dead for our justification, and who ascended into heaven, has the right to plead our cause with God.

He Offered Incense

Now, to this angel was given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints. The purpose of the incense was, of course, to make the prayers of the saints acceptable unto God. And in the fourth verse, it says, “The smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”

Our High Priest

How wonderful, is the thought presented to us here, namely, that to Christ as our High Priest will be given incense with which to offer up to God all the prayers of the saints. It is comforting to know that the prayers which Christian people have prayed will not one of them be forgotten, when this time comes. The sum total of all Christian prayer is “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven.” Throughout all centuries of time this has been the heart cry, and the prayer of every believing child of God. It is very appropriate, therefore, that just at this time in the ongoing of God’s judgment against the wicked of the earth, John in his vision saw this angel exercising himself in the Priest’s Office by offering up the prayers of all the saints. Because, when those prayers shall have been offered up by the High Priest, and have been made acceptable unto God, the answer will not be far away or long delayed.

How Many Prayers Will Be Answered

The only way in which God can answer the sum total of all the prayers of the Saints, will be to send judgments upon the world which will completely dethrone the Antichrist and the false prophet, and destroy the wicked from off the earth. These things, therefore, will come to pass after the prayers of the saints have been offered unto God by the High Priest, and have been made acceptable unto Him.

A Forewarning of Judgment

Now, let us notice that in the fifth verse of our lesson text, it says, that “The angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar,
and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thundering and lightnings, and an earthquake."

In our earlier studies, we have already pointed out that thunderings and lightnings and earth-quakes are symbolic of the wrath and of the judgments of God. Therefore, it is plain to see that the same fire upon the altar, which is to waft the prayers of the saints upward to God, and make them acceptable unto Him when taken by the High Priest and cast toward the earth, will result in terrible judgments upon the wicked of the whole world.

**Will Happen in Answer to Prayer**

Is it not wonderful, therefore, that all of these things are to occur as the result, or in answer to the prayers of the saints? I know, there are some who are rather inclined to make fun of those who pray, and they are wont to say with Job, "**What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto Him?**" And judging from our lesson study, the answer would be, "**Much every way.**" Why? Because, in the following poem it says:

> There is an eye that never sleeps
> Beneath the wing of night;
> There is an ear that never shuts
> When sink the beams of light.
> There is an arm that never tires
> When human strength gives way;
> There is a love that never fails
> When earthly loves decay.
> That eye is fixed on seraph throngs;
> That arm upholds the sky;
> That ear is filled with angel songs;
> That love is throned on high.
> But there’s a power which man can wield,
> When mortal aid is vain, That eye, that ear, that love to reach,
> That listening ear to gain. That power is PRAYER, which soars on high,
> Through Jesus, to the throne; And moves the hand which moves the world,
> To bring salvation down!"

**They Prepared Themselves**

And last of all in our lesson text, it says, **"The seven angels prepared themselves to sound."**

**Summary**

Now, as a sum total of what we have said in this message, we quote a brief statement from Reverend Seiss, in his book on the APOCALYPSE, as follows:

> "Here are transactions which fill heaven with awe, and turn the songs of eternity into silence! Here are administrations which call the seven archangels into action, and for looking after the results of which, the universe is spellbound and mute with solemn expectation! Here are things, the mere prayers for which the Son of God holds in the golden censer, and offers on the golden altar, and sends up with awful solemnity into the presence of eternal Majesty! Is not this, then, a subject to command and justify the and holiest profoundest interest, study, and attention of rational beings?"

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**LECTURE 26 ON THE REVELATION**

This Book a Revelation Indeed — How the Sounding of the Trumpets Will Affect Physical Universe — Our Principal of Interpretation — Prophecy Easy to Believe When We Have Historical Evidence of Same Thing — A Prophet Speaks — The Storm of Judgment Break Forth in Added Fury — The Second Trumpet Will Affect the Sea — The Testimony David in the Psalms — The Disastrous Results of This Judgment — The Third Trumpet Waters to Become Bitter and Extremely Poison — The Fourth Trumpet — How It Will Affect the Sun — A Dark Day Ahead
How glad and how thankful we are that this book is proving to be exactly what its name implies, i.e., a Revelation of divine truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. In this book we are finding truth which is not revealed in the Gospels or anywhere else in the word of God. Surely, the Bible would be incomplete without this marvelous book of prophecy. How thankful we ought to be therefore that this book is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and that he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bear record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

Slowly but surely, as we continue our study of this marvelous book of prophecy, we are receiving a Revelation of those events with which the plan of redemption will come to a close. In this book we are studying the consummation of all things recorded in the word of God. Therefore, with renewed faith and hope and courage, let us continue our study of these things which God caused to be written for our instruction and comfort.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 8th chapter, and the 7th verse where our will lesson begin for today.

In our last lesson which was based upon Revelation 8:1 to 6. We considered the impressive silence in heaven which is to follow the opening of the seventh seal.

We considered also the seven angels, which stood before God, to whom were given the seven trumpets. We spoke also of the significance of trumpets as used in the word of God.

We also decided that the angel mentioned in verses 3 to 6, whom John saw, was none other than the Lord Christ acting as High Priest in the heavens. We know that this is true cause he was engaged in offering up the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. Not only did he offer the prayers of the saints of God heavenward with sweet smelling incense and the merit of his own life, to make them acceptable unto God, but he also took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and (it says) there were voices, thunderings and an earthquake, indicating the impending wrath and the judgments of God.

And then it said that: “The seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound”

Lesson Text

Now we are ready to continue our study by reading what is written in Revelation 8:7 to 11 where it says:

“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. “And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood. “And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: “And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many died of the waters, because they were made bitter. “And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third Part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, O the inhabiters of the earth by reason the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

They Prepared Themselves to Sound

Now first of all, let us consider what is stated in the 6th verse where it says: “The seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound!”

This is a very brief statement but is very suggestive to say the least. It is perfectly natural to believe that before entering upon a series of events such as those which were to follow upon the sounding of the seven trumpets, certain preparation would be required. Certainly, such a work of judgment as that to be accomplished against the wicked under the sounding of these trumpets would require not only wisdom but also a well organized program of events based upon counsel and deliberation. Let us remember that there were seven of these angels whom we have designated as being archangels of the highest rank, sometimes spoken of as the seven presence angels because they stand in the presence of God as the executors of His will. Although there were seven of them, they did not all sound their trumpets at the same time, and the result in every instance was different. It is interesting to note that the
scope of judgments indicated to follow upon the sounding of the seven trumpets will affect the earth and the heavens and reach to the very gates of the bottomless pit! Surely such a theme as this is deserving of the attention of every thoughtful man and woman.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the seven angels prepared themselves to sound, because unto them were committed control and authority over those events that would lead to the consummation of all things foreseen and foretold in the word of God relating to the judgment of the wicked and the redemption of the righteous.

The Judgment under the First Trumpet

Now let us consider what is to occur under the sounding of the first trumpet. In the seventh verse of our lesson text it says: **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.**

Principal of Interpretation

We should remember that the purpose of this great book is to reveal the truth and not to hide it. Whenever symbols are used in the Book of Revelation, the fact that they are symbols is always clearly indicated in the text or context of the passage, so that we do not need to be in doubt about the matter. In the passage now before us, however, no symbolism is indicated. Therefore, the only safe thing for us to do in order to avoid a misunderstanding of the word and to escape from making a misapplication of the truth is to accept any passage as literal unless a symbolic meaning is clearly indicated in the lesson text itself.

Acting upon this principal or interpretation we are compelled to believe that when the first angel sounds his trumpet there will come a great storm of hail and fire mingled with blood upon the earth exactly as stated in our lesson text.

An Historic Example

It should not be difficult to believe this if we believe the word of God at all, because a similar event took place in Egypt under Moses and Aaron, who were sent of God to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. This is confirmed in Exodus 9:23 to 25, where it says **“And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.**

“So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

“**And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.”**

Now the only difference between what happened in Egypt and that which is to occur at the sounding of the first trumpet, is that to hail and fire, blood will be added. This, of course, will make it even more terrible!

What the Prophet Joel Said

But we do not need to wonder at this because the prophet Joel said in 2:30 and 31: **I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, fire, and pillars of smoke.**

**“The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come”**

And our lesson text reveals the manner in which these things will accomplished.

A Terrible Storm

You will remember also that under the opening of the sixth seal there was a cessation of events and the four angels holding the four winds of the earth were commanded not to blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. But at the sounding of the first trumpet the calm in the storm will be broken the storm of God’s wrath will break with increased fury upon the wicked of the earth, and he will send a terrible storm of hail and fire mingled with blood upon the earth, even as he did in the days of Egypt. And it says that as a result of this storm, a third of the trees will be burnt up and all of the green grass will be destroyed. Now imagine, If you can, what a devastation that will be upon the forests and the orchards and the timberlands of the earth! Surely such a storm as this would impress men that such a judgment was from the Lord. Not only so, but this will impoverish the inhabitants of the world. In recent years we have experienced terrible droughts, when nearly all green grass and vegetation was destroyed. But when such a condition as this becomes worldwide, as a result of this terrible storm, which is prophesied shall come, what will conditions be like then? There is no question but what it will be a sore trial for the people of the whole earth, increasing scarcity and want as well as death and destruction on every hand.

The Second Trumpet
We now come to the sounding of the second trumpet as indicated in the 8th verse of our lesson text which says: 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.

Not a Literal Mountain

Now, in this passage it is plainly indicated that the mountain referred to here as falling into the sea, was not a literal mountain because it says: "As it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea" We have no right therefore to believe that this was a literal mountain, but rather something which had the appearance of a great mountain burning with fire. It would seem from our lesson text that what John saw was something like a great meteoric mass which fell out of the heavens into the sea. Surely such a thing as this would be of sufficient interest to attract the attention and arouse the feelings of all the people living upon the earth at that time. Especially so, when we consider the results of this event, when this great burning mass falls into the sea, we are told that a third part of the creatures which are in the sea and have life, will die: and that a third part of the ships will be destroyed.

It might be well, just here, to consider briefly into what sea this great burning mass will fall. It seems to be the general opinion of most expositors that this event will occur in the Mediterranean Sea. There is no positive proof for this, however. Nevertheless it seems logical to conclude that some particular sea is meant. And we all know that the Mediterranean Sea is geographically located in the center of the earth and that it is around the Mediterranean Sea that many of the prophecies recorded in the word of God will reach their ultimate and final fulfillment. On the other hand there is no reason to keep us from believing that the sea referred to here means the oceans of the whole world.

The Result

It is very interesting to note that as a result of this great burning mass falling into the sea, one-third of the sea will be changed into blood, so that one-third of the creatures in the sea will die and one-third of the ships will be destroyed.

Another Historic Example

It should not be difficult for us to believe this for you will remember again what happened in Egypt. In Exodus 7:20 and 21 it says: "And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.

“And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.”

The Testimony of the Psalms

To these words we have the added testimony of David in Psalm 105 and verse 29 where he said concerning Egypt: He turned their waters into blood and slew their fish. And in Psalm 78:44 David said he: ‘Turned their rivers into blood and their floods, that they could not drink.”

What the Prophet Hosea Said

We also have the added testimony of the prophet Hosea and that of Zephaniah concerning the fact that God will destroy the fishes of the sea. Fish have always been an important item to man, because they have been one of his chief sources of food supply. Imagine, therefore, if you can, what it is going to be like when God destroys at least one-third of the fishes that are in the sea. In Zephaniah 1:3 the Lord prophesied saying: ‘I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked, and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the Lord.”

Many Ships Will Be Destroyed

Another interesting item indicated in our lesson text, is that one-third of the ships will be destroyed. This is a matter of no small consequence. Think, if you can, what it is going to mean when one-third of the ships are either sunk in the midst of the sea or washed ashore as total wrecks upon the sea coasts of the earth! We thought it was awful when one great ship, like the Titanic, struck an iceberg and went to the bottom of the sea. But imagine if you can what a loss of human life, and what a material loss in dollars and cents it will mean when, as a result of the sounding of the second trumpet this great fiery mass falls into the sea. Think also what it will mean in the interruption of traffic between the nations. Surely such things could not fail to impress men that these things have come upon them as a judgment from the Lord.

The Third Trumpet

Now let us consider what is stated in the 10th and 11th verses of our lesson text where it says: “And the third angel sounded, and
there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters:

“And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became worm-wood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

Here again we have another meteoric phenomenon and all we need to do is to merely consider the results of what is indicated here, and this is not difficult to do because the lesson text is brief and to the point upon this subject. As a result of this great star falling from heaven, we are told that a third part of the rivers and the fountains of waters will become effected and be as bitter wormwood. This is in keeping with what is stated in Jeremiah 9:13 to 15 where it says: “And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein:

“But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them

“Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood and give them water of gall to drink.”

Primarily to Israel, Prophetically to Us

This prophecy was spoken prima to Israel, but if God was able to do to them, he is able also to cause the same conditions to come upon those of the whole earth.

The Nature of Wormwood

We are told that wormwood is a bitter, intoxicating and poisonous herb, which, when it is used freely, produces convulsions, paralysis, and death! Just think of what it is going to mean when men thirst for water and find to their dismay and to their own hurt and to their complete undoing that the waters have become suddenly bitter and are unfit and unsafe to drink. There is no question but what many will die because they will drink of these waters unawares and others will die from thirst, because all sources of healthful water supply shall have been cut off. Yes indeed, my friends, if one meteor can turn the waters of the sea to blood, another one may just as readily turn the rivers and fountains of waters into bitterness! And according to our lesson text that is exactly what will happen under the sounding of the third trumpet.

The Fourth Trumpet

Now in Revelation 8 and verse 12 it says: “And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, 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.”

Under the sounding of the first three trumpets we have seen what will happen upon the earth to the trees and vegetation and what will happen also upon the sea and to the fishes in the sea and to the great ships of the sea and what will happen to the rivers and and fountains of water. But the sounding of the fourth trumpet calls our attention to what will happen in the heavens above.

Isaiah Speaks

There is no need to take a lot of time asking here what is meant by the sun and the moon and the stars. There is no question but what the sun means the sun, and the moon means the moon, and the stars mean the very stars of heaven! In Isaiah the 13th chapter, verses 9 to 11 there is a very interesting passage which speaks of these very things. We quote the passage as follows: “Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

And the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.”

Joel

The prophet Joel also adds his testimony by saying in Joel 2:10: “The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.”

Amos

Amos also said, in Amos 5:20: ‘Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness
Jesus

Jesus, Himself, also said in Matthew 24:29 and 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:*

“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.”

Why Not Believe What Is Written

Now, in the face of all these scriptures which confirm the truth stated here under the sounding of these four trumpets, why should we try to spiritualize what is spoken here and thereby rob this wonderful passage of its literal import and ultimate fulfillment? What we have here is therefore not a group of symbols representing a lot of unnamed things or events, but the word means exactly what it says, and by believing and accepting it as it is written, we find both instruction and comfort and are able to see and to understand in advance what is to happen when the trumpets are blown and these judgments come upon the world.

Men Refused to Believe Noah

How true is was that in the days of Noah, men continued on in sin and laughed at Noah because he feared God and believed His Word and made preparation for the saving of his house by building an ark upon dry land! Nevertheless in due time the flood came took them all away.

Even so, in these days, we see wicked prospering as a green bay-tree. Today men laugh at those of us who believe the word of God and proclaim the truth of the coming judgments of God upon a lost and dying world. But just as surely as these things have recorded in God’s word they will as surely come to pass!

Today

Today the world is having its round of pleasure; men are walking in sin and unbelief, and are acting in pride and arrogance, just as if the day of reckoning would never come! They are living as if there were no heaven to gain and no hell to shun. They are living just as if these things had never been recorded in the Word of God to warn them against the error of their ways! But God’s Word is true nevertheless, and we who believe should rejoice, “That we have a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto we do well to take heed unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts.” “For prophecy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

LECTURE 27 ON THE REVELATION

More Trumpet Judgments — The Plain Meaning of the Text — This Book Intended to Revealthe Truth, Not to Hide It — Unbelief Is Foolish — Unbelievers Classified — Six Interesting Things About the Bottomless Pit — Strange Locusts to Come from the Bottomless Pit to Plague Men Upon Earth — These Strange Creatures to Have a King — An Interesting Comment

A STUDY of the Book of Revelation is necessary and is made more urgent than ever before because of present world conditions. So many things are happening these days which are in exact fulfillment of the prophetic scriptures, that it would both unwise and foolish to neglect to refuse to study this last book of Bible. I am sure that those who have been studying these messages agree that this wonderful book contains, after all, a message of light, and truth and comfort for those of us who are living today. Therefore, with open minds and with sincere hearts, let us continue our study of the book of REVELATION, asking God, by His Holy Spirit, to help us understand these things that have been written here for our instruction.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 8th chapter and the 13th verse, where our present lesson will begin.

Our last lesson was based upon Revelation 8:7 to 12, and we considered those events which are to come upon the world at the sounding of the first four Trumpets. - When the first Trumpet is sounded a great storm of hail and fire, mingled with blood will come upon the earth, at which time one-third of the trees, and all of the green grass will be burned up. - When the second Trumpet is sounded, a great flaming mass will fall into the sea, and one-third of the sea will become blood, and one-third of the ships will be destroyed. - When the third Trumpet is sounded, a great Star called Wormwood will fall from heaven upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water, and as a result one-third of the waters will become bitter, and many will die when they drink of the poisoned waters. - When the fourth Trumpet is sounded, a third part of the sun, and a third part of the moon, and a third of the Stars will be smitten, and the earth will be darkened when they fail to give forth their light.
An Announcement of Woe

In Revelation 8:13, John said:— “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

It would seem as if this unusual statement was made to impress John and those of us who read and study these things, with the importance of those things which shall come to pass at the sounding of these three last trumpets. Those things which shall come to pass at the sounding of the first four Trumpets will be very bad indeed, but what is to happen at the sounding of the last three Trumpets will be even worse. Therefore, these last three Trumpets are sometimes designated as the “WOE TRUMPETS.” What we have therefore is a prophetic warning in advance of the actual fulfillment of these things, that God is going to send terrible judgments upon the world.

Advance Lesson

Now let us advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 9:1 to 12, where it says,—

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. “And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. “And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. “And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. “And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. “And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. “And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle, and on their heads were, as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. “And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. “And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. “And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months. “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. “One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more, hereafter.”

The Curtain Rises

We must all agree that as the curtain rises upon the drama of events, set forth in our lesson, a strange scene meets our eyes, and I presume the first thing necessary will be to decide whether we are to accept this passage as literal or symbolic. This is an important question because if we should make a mistake in this regard we would soon be involved in a mass of confusion. But we are still convinced that this Book was intended to reveal the truth and not to hide it. And the only safe principle of interpretation is to accept any passage as literal, unless the text or context indicates that it is symbolic. By following this principle of interpretation we will more quickly and more accurately arrive at the truth which the passage is intended to teach than any other. God alone knows the time which has been wasted, and the harm which has been done by scholarly men who are always trying to make the Bible mean something other than what it says. Why can we not take the Word of God for what says, and believe what is written as is written, unless the text or context indicates to the contrary?

Unbelief Always a Hindrance

I am afraid that our faith is oftentimes hindered by an element of unbelief which may have crept in unawares, into our hearts. I see no reason for disbelieving the Word of God for what says, and believe what is written as is written, unless the text or context indicates to the contrary?

Unbelief Defined

Generally speaking unbelievers may be classified as atheists, infidels, agnostics and free-thinkers.

Atheist

An atheist is a man who does not believe there is a God. All such are spoken of in the scriptures as being fools; for David said, The fool saith in his heart there is no God.”
Infidel
An infidel is defined in the dictionary as one who rejects religion or divine revelation. In a Christian country an infidel would be considered as a non-Christian.

Agnostic
An agnostic is defined in the dictionary as one who denies that man possesses any knowledge of the intimate nature of things, in other words, he is one who says, "I don't know," to everything pertaining to religion. Thus he seeks to escape all responsibility to God on a plea of ignorance.

Free-Thinkers
A free-thinker, we are told, is one who develops his opinions independently, especially in regard to religious matters, and is sometimes spoken of as a skeptic or rationalist. As a rule a free-thinker will not believe or accept anything which does not bear the mark of modern scholarship. In other words he is worshipping at the shrine of scholarship, and refuses to believe anything that has been given by divine revelation.

Orthodox
Now there is another group of religious thinkers who are spoken of as being Orthodox. The word orthodox literally leans, "thinking straight." Those who are orthodox, therefore, usually hold to the conservative opinion, especially in regard to religion. We often speak of the Orthodox Jews, as compared to other groups in Israel, because they still hold strictly to the teaching of Moses, and do their very best to live according to the law which Moses gave.

Fundamental Christians Believe the Word
Those in Christian circles today who believe the deity of Christ and the power of His resurrection, and the fact of His present High Priesthood in the heavenlies, and the promise that He will come again, are spoken of as being Fundamental, and because of their faith along these lines, they often find it necessary to separate themselves from their modernistic brethren, who do not believe these things, and who will not allow them to be taught in the churches.

Unsound Orthodoxy
It is a sad thing, however, that we often find a great deal of unbelief among those who claim to be orthodox. Even in Jesus' time there were Jews who claimed to be orthodox, yet who entirely rejected Jesus and refused to believe the words which He spoke. This was proof that they were orthodox in name only; for if they had been orthodox at heart they would have believed in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the mighty miracles which He performed, and in the words which He spoke. But the fact that they rejected Him was proof that their orthodoxy was in name only, and that they were not orthodox in their hearts.

False Fundamentalism
The same thing applies today regarding many people who claim to be Fundamental in their thinking concerning religious matters, who, while they hold tenaciously to the fundamentals of the Gospel, do not by any means believe the whole word of God. They claim to believe the truth but if you undertake to preach the whole Word of God, some of them will rise up against you and openly say they do not believe this, and do not believe that, although it is in the Word of God. Please do not misunderstand me. I am a Fundamentalist myself, and have great love and respect for those who are Fundamental in their acceptance of the Word of God; but when we say we are Fundamental, by all means, let us believe and accept THE WHOLE WORD OF GOD; otherwise we are likely to be Fundamental in name only, and we are likely to stand up so straight that we lean backwards. For a man to say he is fundamental and then reject whatever portion of the Word of God he does not like, or which does not seem to fit into his preconceived, or narrow conception of things, is positive proof that he is fundamental in name only, and that after all his heart is filled with a lot of unbelief, which needs to be purged out before he can be truly orthodox or fundamental.

Why Do I Say This?
Now why have I taken time to say all this? Merely because I wanted to find out how much faith you really have in the Word of God before we undertake to study the lesson text. If we have faith to believe what is written here; then good and well, and how happy our hearts will be in believing what is here written in the Word of God!

The Bottomless Pit
Now, when the fifth angel sounded John said, "I saw a Star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit."
It is perfectly clear from the wording here that the Star which John saw fall from heaven unto the earth was not a literal star, because he is referred to as a person, for it says, "to HIM was given the key of the bottomless pit." There seems to be no accurate way of determining just who the Star represents. After all, that is not the important thing. Although the identity of this divine messenger is not revealed, the work which he is to perform is clearly stated, for it says, "to HIM was given the key of the bottomless pit, and he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." It would seem that this same angel is referred to in Revelation 20, verses 1 to 3, where John said, "I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Why the Pit Will Be Opened

And so we see that there is an angel whose duty it is to open and to seal the door of the bottomless pit at God's command. In our lesson text, he is to open the bottomless pit in order to let the infernal locusts loose upon the earth, in order that they might torment the wicked, unrepentant, unregenerate masses of humanity. At a future time he will also open the same pit in order cast Satan therein, after which he will seal the pit in order to keep Satan from coming out for a thousand years.

What Is the Bottomless Pit?

Now just here it will be necessary explain what is meant by the bottomless pit. We should not get the idea that the bottomless pit is the same as hell or hades, or the place where fallen angels are now confined. Nor is the bottomless pit the same as the lake of fire. It is something entirely separate and different from all these. According to the scriptures, it is the place where Satan is to be bound during the thousand years of the millennial reign of Christ; after which he must be loosed for a little season.

That there is such a place as the bottomless pit, is confirmed in Luke 8:31, where the demons, which were in the wild men of the Gadarenes, besought Jesus that He would not command them to go into the deep (that is, into the abyss or bottomless pit).

What Will Happen?

We are now ready to give our attention to what will happen when the bottomless pit is opened. The first thing that is called to our attention is, that a great smoke will arise out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and that the sun and the air will become darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. For anyone who has lived near a live volcano, that is not difficult to believe. When we were in Japan it was our custom to spend some time each summer in the little town of Karuizwa, which was located only fourteen miles from the living volcano called "Asama-Yama." The crater of the volcano was more than one-half a mile across, and was thousands of feet deep. On one occasion we climbed the mountain with several others and looked at the lake of red hot lava, thousands of feet below. On other occasions we saw the mountain smoking as a great furnace, belching forth smoke which ascended like a pillar of cloud, until it was caught in the currents of the upper air, and then it spread out like a great cloud obscuring the sun for many miles around. I remember that, one day ashes fell out of such a cloud upon the village where we were, fourteen miles away, until the clothes of the people were covered, and the roofs of the houses were colored an ashen gray, by the very fine ashes which fell out of the sky.

Now this was only a miniature example of what is to happen when the Fifth Trumpet is sounded, and the bottomless pit is opened.

Locusts Will Come Forth

But that is not all; for we are told that when the bottomless pit is opened, and the smoke of the pit covers the earth, there will come out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, and that power will be given unto them as the scorpions of the earth have power, and the purpose of their coming forth will be to hurt those men which will not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

We have already read a description of these strange locusts, and from the description which we have here, many expositors are inclined to look upon their description as a group of symbols, representing other things, and I must confess it would be easier, and would require less faith to believe this, than to accept the description as literal. Nevertheless there is no intimation in the lesson text that these are symbols, therefore, we are compelled to accept what is stated here literally.

Unbelief Can Not Comprehend

I know there are a lot of people who will object to this; because what is written here is contrary to anything they have ever known or heard about before. Therefore, they naturally assume that such creatures as those described here, could not possibly exist; but that, my friends, is where they are mistaken. In refusing to believe this passage they discredit the creative power of God, and fail to take into consideration the fact that there are many things pertaining to the underworld which they themselves know nothing about. The
fact of the matter is, that if such creatures exist now, or ever did exist, God could create them for just such a purpose, if He wanted to do so! This is confirmed in Exodus 10:3 to 20, where we have an account of the locusts which God sent upon the land of Egypt as one of the major plagues upon Pharaoh for refusing to let Israel go. In the 14th verse of this passage it says, “And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.” Now, from this statement it is perfectly clear that God created those locusts especially to carry out His work of judgment against Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Would it not stand to reason, therefore, that God could create any sort of locust that he wanted to in order to carry out his plans and purposes in judgment? The description of these locusts, therefore, should not in any wise hinder our faith, for after all, God is able to perform all these things which have been recorded in His own word. It would seem as if the locusts described here are to be some sort of infernal cherubim. They will be, in appearance, a strange combination of the horse, the man, the woman, the lion, and the scorpion. They will be queer looking creatures, no doubt. But if God who made the horse, the man, the woman, and the lion, and the scorpion as individual and separate creatures, would he not be able to make another creature, combining all of these, and call it a locust? No one doubts but what he could, if he chose to do so.

The Important Thing

After all the description of these locusts is not the most important thing about them, it is the thing which they were commanded to do which attracts our attention. In the 3rd and 4th verses of our lesson text it says: “And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power, and it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.”

The reason, therefore, they are to be let loose upon the world will be in order that they may torment those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And in the 5th verse it says: “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.”

Impossible to Imagine

I am sure that none of us can even imagine what a terrible time that is going to be for the wicked of the earth. I suppose there is nothing more painful to anyone than the sting of a scorpion, and when men are stung by these strange, infernal creatures, they will cry out with pain. But according to our lesson text the pain will not be sufficient to kill them, but it will be so severe that they will wish they could die. And their torment will be made even worse by the fact that they will not be permitted to die, for it says: “In those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.”

Terrible things are happening throughout the world today and it common knowledge everywhere that men are committing suicide by hundred and thousands in order to escape from things which seem to them even worse than death! Truly men’s hearts are failing them for fear of those things which are coming upon the world. But think if you can, what it will mean when men shall be tormented for five months by these locusts, which will sting like scorpions. And when this comes to pass, men will be unable to commit suicide. Today men can choose between life and death, but when that time comes the right of choice will be taken away, and even though men shall desire to die it says, “that death shall flee from them.” There will be absolutely nothing therefore, for them to do but suffer during the five months until the end of this strange plague shall come.

To Have a King

There is just one other thing about these locusts that we might mention, and that is, that they are to have a king over them. In the 11th verse it says: “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.” The word Abaddon we are told means “destruction” and the Greek word Apollyon means “destroyer.” Therefore, a king whose name stands for destruction is to rule over these locusts and direct their work during the five months so that it will be carried out in an orderly fashion. These locusts therefore, will not be an unorganized mob of creatures, such as ordinarily locusts, who ravage and destroy without restraint, but they will carry on their work in an orderly fashion under the direction of their king.

What One Writer Says

In his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss, speaking on this very point, says:

“It appears, then, that hell and hellish torments are not the mere fictions which some have pronounced them. Neither are they as remote from this present world as men often dream. There is a fiery abyss, with myriads of evil beings in it, malignant and horrible, and there is but a door between this world and that. Heaven is just as near; but heaven is above, and hell is beneath. Mortal man and his world lie between two mighty, opposite, spiritual spheres, both touching directly upon him, each operative to conform him to itself, and he predestined, as he yields to one or the other, to be conjoined eventually to the society on high, or to companionship.
with devils and all evil beings beneath. To doubt this, is to mistake concerning the most momentous things of our existence, and to have all our senses closed to the most startling realities of our lives. As we are heavenly in our inclinations and efforts, and open and yield to things Divine, heaven opens to us, and spirits of heaven become our helpers, comforters, protectors, and guides; and, as we are devilish in our temper, unbelieving, defiant of God, and self-sufficient, the doors of separation between us and hell gradually yield, and the smoke of the pit gathers over us, and the spirits of perdition come forth to move among us and do us mischief. And at the last, as the saints of God are taken up out of the world on the one side, the angels of hell with their malignity and torments are to be let in on the other.

People are prone to persuade themselves that this world of sense and time is all that we need be concerned about, and hence have no fears of an unseen world of evil, and no decided or active desire for the blessings of an unseen world of good. They live only for earth, not dreaming that this brief life is only the vestibule to worlds of mightier and eternal moment. Their houses are built by the very margin of hell, and yet they rest and feast in them without a feeling of insecurity or of danger. The flame of perdition clamor after them beneath the pavements on which they walk, but they have no sense of fear or serious apprehension. God and angels are ever busy to win their attention to the ways of safety, but they turn a deaf ear and drift along as they list, crying, Peace! Peace!

And so will the wicked and the unbelieving go on, until ignored and offended Omnipotence gives over the power to Satan to let loose upon them these horrid beings from the abyss, under whose torment they will wish they never had lived at all, and vainly attempt to make their escape from what they once considered their chief and only good.

Hell is to be let in upon the living earth, and no human hand can stay its torments. And as the generations of the rebellious and the unsanctified, complete their five months of horror and writhing under the scorpion stings of these infernal tormentors, the first woe will be fulfilled, whilst yet two other and more horrible ones follow.

God Almighty, in His mercy, save us from the evils of those days!

One Woe Past

Now in verse 12 of our lesson text it says: “One woe is passed; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”

LECTURE 28 ON THE REVELATION

God's Judgment under the Sixth Trumpet — The Only Safe Principal of Interpretation Is A Voice from the Altar — The Altar a Place of Judgment and Sacrifice — Job Had a Altar — We Have an Altar — The Voice of the Altar — What It Meant — Judgment Has Become a Necessity — A Great Army of Two Hundred Million — Not the Battle of Armageddon As Some People Think — The Foolishness of Unbelief — Even under Judgment Men Will Refuse to Repent

In our last lesson based upon Revelation 9:1 to 12, we considered those things which will come upon the earth at the sound of the Fifth Trumpet. We discovered from the Word of God that, following the sounding of the Fifth Trumpet, a plague of infernal locusts will come forth from the bottomless pit to torment men for a period of five months, during which time they shall desire to die and death shall flee from them.

Advance Lesson

Now let us continue our study by reading what is written in Revelation 9:13 to 21, where it says,—
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.”

This passage, my friends, is somewhat similar to the one which we studied in our last lesson, in that it deals with things that are supernatural. The general theme of the passage is, that of well deserved judgments upon the wicked of the whole earth.

Principal of Interpretation

We have already stated our principle of interpretation of this remarkable book of prophecy. We believe the only safe principle of interpretation is to accept any passage as literal, unless otherwise implied in the text or context, and shall adhere to this same principle interpretation in our study of this passage. In doing so we shall save a lot of time, and I am sure will avoid a lot of unnecessary confusion.

Theme

The theme of the entire passage is suggested in the 13th verse, where it says, “And the Sixth Angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God.”

This statement, I am sure, is rather difficult for the average reader to understand, because many people have not made a careful study of the Old Testament scriptures concerning the use of the altar. We know that the Tabernacle which Moses built, with its altar, and other articles of furniture, was made after the pattern of the true Tabernacle in the heavens.

On the ancient altar there were horns into which the blood of the sacrifice was poured, which flowed down into a pit beneath the altar. They were not mere ornaments, therefore, but were placed there for this specific purpose, namely, to receive the blood of sacrifice offered for the sins of the people on the great Day of Atonement, or whenever the people sought to purge themselves from their transgressions, by bringing the required sacrifice.

The Blood of Abel

When Cain slew Abel, Abel’s blood cried unto God from the ground, which had received Abel’s blood; and so when a man in Israel had brought the required sacrifice, and the blood of the sacrifice had been poured into those horns on the altar, the blood of the atoning substitute cried, as it were, unto God, to bestow mercy upon the guilty sinner. Ordinarily, therefore, the altar, and the horns thereof, represented the place of sacrifice, where guilty men received grace and mercy from the Lord.

The fact, therefore, that when the sixth Angel sounded there was a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God at the true sanctuary in the heavens, is very significant.

A Place of Mercy

The fact that the horns of the altar were looked upon as a place of mercy is suggested and confirmed in First Kings 1:50, where it says, “And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.” By this act he sought to express his repentance; and he knew that if he was to receive mercy at all, he could only receive it at the place of mercy, thus he sought the forgiveness of Solomon and the favor of God, and received them both by taking hold of the horns of the altar.

A Place of Judgment

But exactly the opposite is true in our lesson. At the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet, John said, “I heard a voice from the four horns of the Golden Altar which is before God.” Was this a voice crying for mercy upon the wicked of the whole earth? No, indeed! This was no voice calling for mercy upon sinful men, because, according to our lesson text, no sacrifice had been brought which would cause the voice of the altar to cry for mercy.

On the other hand, quite the contrary was true. It would seem here, as if the altar itself was crying unto God to send forth the spirit of vengeance as if it has been sinned against. The altar has always been a means of approach unto God ever since man first sinned in the Garden. Cain and Abel were first required to bring an offering unto the Lord. We know also that Noah built an altar unto the Lord immediately after he came forth from the Ark, and offered sacrifices of clean beasts thereon, which were as a sweet smelling savor unto God.

Job Had an Altar

The Patriarch Job also offered up sacrifices on the altar in behalf of his own sons and daughters, and when Moses pitched the
Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Altar became an established part of the worship of Israel.

There was also a great altar before the Temple that stood in Jerusalem.

We Have an Altar

Today, in the day of grace, the author of the Book of Hebrew says, in Hebrews 13:10, *We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the Tabernacle.* In other words, since Jesus as our atoning substitute, shed His blood for us on the cross and ascended into heaven, we can pray any time and any where, and if we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as God’s Son, and as our Saviour, we can be saved.

A Cry from the Altar

Why then do we have this cry from the horns of the altar, which is suggested in our lesson text? When the Sixth Trumpet is sounded, why will a voice be heard coming from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God? There is only one answer! And that is, because men have rejected God’s only way of salvation! In olden times those who sinned against the altar, by refusing to bring the required sacrifice, were cut off from Israel. In this day of grace those who sin by refusing to accept the sacrifice which Jesus made for them upon the cross, are judged unworthy of eternal life, and shall be denied the glories and the privileges of heaven.

The cry that shall come from the horns of the altar, therefore, will not be a cry for mercy, but a cry for vengeance and for judgment upon those who have rejected God’s plan of salvation.

Need for Judgment

The need for judgment upon the wicked of the whole earth is suggested by the nature of the plague which is to follow upon the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet. According to our lesson text the voice from the golden altar will speak to the Sixth Angel, which has the Trumpet, saying, *Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates*.

This is a striking command and one which is well worthy of our consideration; for it says in the fifteenth verse, *The four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and for a year, for to slay the third part of men.*

It is reasonable to believe that since these four angels are bound in the area of the great river Euphrates, that they are fallen angels of some sort who kept not their first estate, and in consequence are bound and are no longer at liberty. The Apostle Peter speaks in Second Peter 2:4, saying, *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast the down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,* etc.” These four angels, therefore, no doubt belong to that class of Angels, and they are bound, and no matter what their will or wish may, they will be restrained from doing it until the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet, at which time they will be released for an hour, and a day and a month and year, which will be a period of thirteen months and one day and one hour. This statement gives the exact duration the plague described in our lesson text.

A Bible Expositor Says:

The fact that these angels are bound in the area of the Euphrates River is of considerable interest and importance, his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says on this point,—

“It was in this locality that the power of evil made their first attempts again the human race. It was in this locality that the first murder was committed, it was in this region that the great apostasies, both before and after the flood had their centers. It was in this region that Israel’s most oppressive enemies resided, and that the Jews were compelled to drag out the long and weary years of their great captivity.

“It was in this region that the great oppressive world powers took their commencement. It is the region where all this world’s beginnings were made—where man first saw the light, first sinned, fell from his estate, and vanished from paradise, and introduced all earth’s miseries — where Satan first alighted upon our planet, won his first triumphs and first set his foul agencies against man in operation.

“The Euphrates itself is one of the primeval rivers, and the only one we know of that remains, and there, where guilt came in the place of innocence, and Babylon supplanted Eden, and hell sent up its Upas, instead of the tree of life, and death came in upon the children of men,—these four fallen sons of light, with their evil hosts, rave in the bonds imposed in mercy, but, at the appointed hour, in wrath to be relaxed, that earth’s blaspheming millions may feel what shall then have been so richly merited.”

A Great Army

We are now ready to consider the great army of infernal horsemen which are to be released upon the world at the sounding of the
Sixth Trumpet, and the loosing of the four angels.

We are told plainly that the number of them is to be two hundred thousand thousand, in other words, two hundred million.

Now some expositors would have us believe that the army of horsemen spoken of here are the same as those spoken of in Ezekiel the 38th chapter, who are to come down from the north against the Holy city and the Holy people and the Holy land in the latter days of the Present dispensation. They also would have us believe that what is stated here represents the march of the armies of the earth to the Battle of Armageddon. But, my friends, there is absolutely no way of confirming this from the scriptures.

Not the Army from the North

What is stated here in this passage does not represent the armies from the north, spoken of in Ezekiel the 38th chapter. Every effort to make these words fit into the situation described in Ezekiel the 38th chapter breaks down at every point, and the same is true in regard to the Battle of Armageddon, which will not take place until the very close of the Tribulation period.

Not the Battle of Armageddon

And let me state right here that the Battle of Armageddon will not be a battle between the nations of the earth, but will be a battle between the armies of the earth, led by the Antichrist, against the armies of Heaven, led by the Lord Jesus Christ. This is confirmed in Revelation 19:11-21. We shall have more to say about this later when we come to that portion of our study. But for today let it suffice to say that the army spoken of here DOES NOT represent the armies of Ezekiel the 38th chapter, nor the Battle of Armageddon. If such were intended, it certainly would be implied in the lesson text. But since there is nothing stated, or implied, which would cause us to believe this, we must of necessity accept the Word as it is written, and believe that when the Sixth Trumpet is sounded, and the four angels are loosed, a great army of infernal cavalry numbering two hundred million, will be loosed upon the earth for to slay the third part of men.

The Creatures Described

As to the description of these infernal creatures, the Apostle John said, “I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.”

It is significant to notice, in this description, that the riders upon the horses are only mentioned, and are in no wise described. It is to be the creatures themselves who do the damage, and who will kill the third part of men.

Unbelief Refuses to Believe

I know there are a lot of people who will say there were never any such creatures seen upon the earth, and therefore they assume that there never could be, but in this they are mistaken. You can depend upon this, my friends, that when God has written a certain thing in His Word for our instruction, He is well able, out of His storehouse of wisdom, and by His creative power, to perform and fulfill every word which He has written, however impossible it might seem to us at the present time.

A few years back the ordinary man would have said that such a thing as present day radio was utterly impossible. He would have said the same thing regarding airplanes, and television, and many other things of our modern world; but today, these things are present realities, and even though they seemed impossible, they have come to pass.

Therefore, when God says in His Word that He is going to send an army of two hundred million infernal horsemen upon the earth, at the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet, to slay the third part of men, and gives to us a description of the creatures which are to be sent forth, and describes the manner in which they to perform their work of destruction, I am compelled to believe exactly what God has written for our instruction. I wonder when we will cease to limit God by our own narrow conception of things, and by our wicked unbelief?

They Repented Not

Now in the 20th and 21st verses of our lesson text it says, “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!”

These words are a summary of those conditions which will exist upon the earth at that time, and they show clearly the necessity of the terrible plague and the awful judgment, just described which will come upon men at the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet. It reveals
that such extreme judgment will then well deserved.

Idolatry to Be Revived

The first thing mentioned is, that when these things occur, men will be worshiping devils, and that there will be revival of idol worship. It seems hard to believe that men would worship devils but they do, nevertheless! This is confirmed in First Corinthians 10:20 and 21, where the Apostle Paul said, “But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s Table and of the table of devils.”

Personal Experience

Personally, I know the truth of what is stated here. During six years I lived in Japan, Korea and China, and have seen with my own eyes heathen people offering sacrifices and praying to demons. If it is a terrible thing to think about, it is far worse to witness these things, and be made to realize the state and condition and the spiritual danger of that soul which engages in these things.

Those who engage in demon worship are subject to demon possession. Thus, in olden times, there were those who had familiar spirits and unclean spirits and lying spirits of every kind. Even King Saul, when he knew that God had forsaken him, went to the Witch of Endor for advice. Ahab listened to the lying Prophets who were inspired by wicked spirits, and followed them to his doom. The Apostle Paul cast an evil spirit out of a girl at Philippi who troubled him, and brought upon himself the anger of those who owned the girl, because she brought them much gain.

Even Our Own Country

And it is needless to say, my friends that not only in heathen lands, but also in so-called Christian lands, our own country included, devil worship is being carried on under the name of so-called spiritualism. We do not need to be surprised at this; for in First Timothy 4:1 to 3, it says, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies and hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

Indeed, my friends, what one of us dare say that these things are not coming to pass in these very days in which we live. The great falling away and the apostasy are upon us, and men are being turned from the truth unto fables, and “God will send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

Men Will Kill Each Other

Another outstanding characteristic of the age, as it will be then, will be the spirit of murder, which will be abroad in the land. We all know this terrible sin is increasing every day, and there is not a single day but what our attention is called to this awful crime committed somewhere near at hand, or in distant places in our own country. We think it is terrible now, but it will be much worse by the time these things come to pass, which are mentioned in our lesson text.

Still Refuse to Repent

It says also that they repented not of their sorceries. This would indicate that many will be deceived by modern witchcraft, and the enchantments which men will use to lead men to their own destruction. Some things you are hearing over the radio these days are only a prelude of those things that are to come.

It says also, “They repented not of their fornication nor of their thefts” You know as well as I do that these two sins are becoming more and more prevalent, and that our own country, in many places, is well nigh turned already into a modern Sodom and Gomorrah. - The social sin has been the forerunner, and the downfall, of every great nation of antiquity, and our fair land will be no exception if we persist in going the road we are now traveling. - The social sin will surely lead to moral degeneracy, and to spiritual bankruptcy. - The social sin also leads to sins of violence, such as murder and robbery, etc. It is a sad comment on present day conditions that in nearly every bank robbery that is reported in our newspapers, when the facts are known there is usually a woman in the case. When the womanhood of any nation loses its virtue, that nation is just as surely headed for the judgments of God, as God’s Word is true!

Now the startling thing in our lesson text is that after one third of the earth’s population shall have been killed, it says, that the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues—repented not.”

Considering the state of society, one would think that God could scarce restrain from destroying them all from the face of the earth, yet in His wrath, He will remember mercy upon some when this terrible plague comes upon the earth, and only one-third of the
population of the earth will be killed. How wonderful that in the midst of judgment He will remember mercy upon so many of the earth's population, and how terrible on the other hand that those who witness these things will in no wise be touched by them. By that time they will have hardened the hearts to such an extent that in the face of such terrible plagues, and testimony of God against them, they will continue right on in sin.

Like the Rich Man's Brethren

In the account given by our Lord, in Luke the 16th chapter, concerning the rich man and Lazarus, you will remember that the rich man, who was in hell said, "I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldst send him to my Father's house, for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment", then, "Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them, and he said, Nay, Father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead they would repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

LECTURE 29 ON THE REVELATION

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: And he had in his hand a little book open, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth 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; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when it shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the Prophets.

A Foreview of Victory

In the lesson text now before us, the scene changes from that of judgment and gives to us a glimpse and foreview of the final victory which shall be accomplished when all these things shall have been brought to pass. There is a different note, therefore, in our lesson, from that which we have been studying, but it does not mean that we have in any wise reached the end of God's judgments, or the final consummation of all things in the redemptive plan as set forth in this book. What we have here is only a lull in the storm, which enables us to see our way ahead, and thereby have courage to press on.

A Mighty Angel

Our attention is drawn first of all, in our present lesson, to the mighty angel which John saw come down from heaven. The angel is described in the first verse where John said, "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:"

From the description given here, it is plainly evident that this was no ordinary angel; for he is described as another mighty angel."
From the description and the symbolism used here we are constrained to believe that the angel referred to was not an ordinary created angel, but was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and I am sure that the scriptures will sustain us in this view.

The Lord Jesus Christ

The fact that He is spoken of here as a Mighty Angel is no hindrance to our belief in this regard, because in the Old Testament Jesus was often referred to as the “Angel of God”—the “Angel of the Lord” and the “Angel of His presence.” You will remember that the Angel of the Lord spoke to Abraham on the day that he offered Isaac upon the altar. You will also recall that the Angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob and wrestled with him all through the night. In Isaiah 37:36, it says—“Then the Angel, of the Lord went forth, and smote in L the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and four score and five thousand;” Also in Psalms 34:7, David said, “The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.”

And thus we see that there is no hindrance whatever in believing that the angel referred to here in our lesson text was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, having discovered who this mighty angel was, let us give attention to the description of this angel as given in our lesson text.

Clothed with a Cloud

John saw this Mighty Angel coming down from heaven clothed with a cloud. This is a very suggestive statement, to say the least, especially when we understand the history of Israel, and their relationship to the Angel of the Lord, and the cloud of God’s Shekinah Glory. You will remember that in Exodus 13: 21 and 22, it says, “The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people.” Also in Exodus 16:10, it says, “And it came to pass as Aaron spoke unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.” And again in Exodus 34 and verse 5, it says, “The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with Him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord.”

You will also remember that when Jesus ascended into heaven a cloud received Him out of their sight, and there is no doubt in my mind but what it was the cloud of God’s Shekinah glory which received Him, and in which He was taken into heaven.

And so, my friends, we see that when it says that this Mighty Angel was clothed with a cloud, we are caused to think at once of how the angel of the Lord appeared in time past in the same manner to Israel in the wilderness, and we may rightfully declare that the garment worn by this mighty angel indicates the presence of deity. Surely no other angel was ever clothed in such manner as this. We may rightfully conclude, therefore, that because he was clothed with a cloud, the Angel referred to here was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rainbow Also a Sign

Another mark of identification is that He had a rainbow upon His head. We have already studied about the rainbow in chapter 4; and have seen that there was a rainbow round about the Throne that was in heaven. The presence of the rainbow upon the head of this Mighty Angel would indicate therefore that He was associated with the Throne in heaven.

We have also considered the fact that the rainbow is a sign or symbol of God’s grace and mercy. The rainbow shines brightest against the darkest clouds, and, however severe the storm may have been, the rainbow reminds all flesh of the fact that God will remember mercy in the midst of judgment, and will never again visit the earth with a flood of utter destruction. How wonderful, therefore, that this mighty angel was clothed with a cloud, and that upon His head there was a rainbow, indicating the deity of Christ and the fact that it was His purpose to bestow grace and mercy in the midst of judgment upon those who would receive His mercy.

The Face of the Angel

It also says “And His face was as it were the Sun” Here again we have another mark of identification, which causes us to feel and to believe that the One referred to here was Christ. In Revelation chapter 1, where we have a word picture of the risen and glorified Christ, in verse 16, it says, “And His countenance was as the Sun shineth in his strength” This is perfectly in keeping with the vision of Christ which was given to Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, at which time even His raiment became shining exceeding white as snow. “And His face did shine as the Sun.” This also agrees with the vision which Saul of Tarsus had of the Christ when he met Him on the road to Damascus, for he also saw a light from heaven, and heard the voice of the risen Christ saying unto him, “Saul, Saul why persecuteth thou me?” as recorded in Acts 9:1 to 4.

The Feet of the Angel

It also says in Revelation 10, and verse 1, “And His feet were as pillars of fire.” Here again we are reminded of the description of Christ as given in Revelation 1:15, where it says, “and His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace.” We conclude
therefore that the description in either case refers to the same person, namely to the risen Christ. In the one case the feet represented great purity, and in our lesson text they represent the consuming majesty of the one to whom they belong, and nowhere in the scriptures do we find such a description applied to any ordinary angel.

Thus, by this wonderful description of this mighty angel, the Lord has left us without doubt as to the identity of this great personage.

The Little Book

Now in Revelation 10 and verse 2, it says, “And He had in His hand a little book open: and He set His right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when He had cried seven thunders uttered their voices.”

I presume the first thing for us to do here is to identify the little book which this Mighty Angel held open in His hand. It should not be difficult to do this, however, since we have already studied about the seven sealed book in chapter 5. In our study of that portion of the Revelation we discovered that the Seven Sealed Book was a book of inheritance. In other words, it represented the title deed of the inheritance which was forfeited by man when he sinned in the Garden of Eden, and which was to be recovered by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the root of David, who also was found worthy to loose the seven seals thereof.

The Book Is Open

We have every reason to believe, therefore, that the open book in the hand of this Mighty Angel was the same book which the Lamb of God took out of the hands of Him that sat upon the Throne for the purpose of loosening the seven seals thereof. In the first case the book was sealed, and in our present lesson the book is open, in the hand of this Mighty Angel. This would indicate that definite progress had been made in His work of judgment against the wicked of the earth, and that by the time these events occur, the one who holds the open book in His hand will have won the right to act with authority, which is exactly what He will do, according to our lesson text; for it says, “He set His right foot upon the sea and His left foot upon the earth”

This was an act of taking possession of that which was rightfully His. Everyone knows that the heavens and the earth are the Lord’s and the fullness thereof. They are His by right of creation. We know also that they belong to Christ, because in John 1, and verse 3, it says, “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made”

Satan a Usurper

We know also that because of man’s sin the earth was cursed and Satan came into temporary possession of the earth by the permissive will of God. Satan is looked upon, therefore, as a usurper, and before the dominion of the earth can be given over again to man, the usurper must be destroyed out of the earth, and the title deed returned to those who disposed it away by sin and transgression.

Understanding these things, the act of this Mighty Angel when He came down with the open book in His hand, and set His right foot on the sea and His left foot upon the earth, is very significant.

A Legal Warrant

In the first place, in this act of taking possession of the earth and the sea, the open book served as His legal warrant and as His legal right to do so. No man would think of taking possession of any land unless he could produce evidence of his legal right to do so. Through His death upon the cross and by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus won for Himself the right to act as man’s kinsman-redeemer, and it is His purpose in due time to restore unto man all that he lost in the fall when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.

We have already seen how He opened the seven seals of the Seven Sealed Book, and having accomplished this, He had the perfect right to claim possession of the sea and the earth, as described in our lesson text.

Seven Thunders: A Mighty Voice

Now let us note that when this Mighty Angel had come down and had set His right foot upon the sea, and His left foot upon the earth, He “cried with loud voice as when a lion roareth: as when He had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.” Here we have of cry of this Mighty Angel upon earth, and the response to His cry, which came from heaven.

The roar which He gave was that of victory and of complete mastery. Jeremiah chapter 25, and verses 30 and 31 says, Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say unto them, the Lord shall roar from on high and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He shall mightily roar upon His habitation; He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes against all the inhabitants of the earth a noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.”
Thus will this Mighty Angel roar against the inhabitants of the earth, who would oppose His right to possess the earth in righteousness. Thus will He roar and manifest His prophetic, Priestly and royal right to possess the earth and the sea. His act will be therefore a warning to all of His enemies who would oppose His purpose to submit to His rule and authority, or perish.

What the Seven Thunders Utter

It is interesting to note that when the Mighty Angel had cried with a loud voice, seven thunders uttered their voices, and in Revelation 10 and verse 4, it says, "And when the thunders 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." Men have always been impressed with the thought that terrible thunders are symbolic of the wrath of God, as if God were speaking to man in His displeasure. We have all heard terrible thunderings during a storm, but not once have the thunders spoken audibly to us. Truly, we have been impressed by them, and somehow they never fail to strike fear to our hearts, but imagine, if you can, how much greater our fear would be if the noise of thunder were to speak to us in audible tones that we could understand, as they did that day when John was given to see and to hear those things recorded in our lesson text. The Word plainly says, "When He had cried seven thunders uttered their voices." They did not make an inarticulate noise, such as we are accustomed to hearing when it thunders during a storm, but the voices which John heard were intelligent and full of meaning, profound meaning, no doubt; for John said, "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."

This was an unexpected command, nevertheless John obeyed, and so there are certain things pertaining to the Revelation which were not written, and which will remain a secret until such a time as God is pleased to reveal them unto us. Indeed, how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out.

The Mystery of God Will Be Finished

We now come to a very interesting part of our lesson in verses 5 to 7, where it says, And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up His hand to heaven, and swear 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 things which are therein, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when He shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to His servants the Prophets."

Two Great Mysteries

This is a very striking statement, and is of great interest because it occurs at this place in the Revelation.

In the Bible we find mention made of two great mysteries, i. e., the mystery of iniquity, which Paul said "doth already work" and the mystery of Godliness. The mystery of Godliness is mentioned in First Timothy 3:16, where it says, ‘And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

By the mystery of Godliness, therefore, is meant the fulfillment and the consummation of the whole plan of redemption as it is in Christ. God has a certain plan, and He is working towards the accomplishment and the fulfillment of every purpose which He ordained for our redemption. And to us poor creatures who are born into the world and live out our years in the allotted three score years and ten, it seems as if there is long delay in the accomplishment and carrying out of the great purposes of God. But in our lesson text there is a word of encouragement, for in the sixth verse the mighty angel is described as swearing with his hand lifted to heaven, that there should be time no longer. In other words there should be no longer delay in bringing the great work of redemption to a final consummation. This is confirmed in verse seven where it says: “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, the mystery of God shall be finished, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets.”

I want you to notice that it says, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. The word “days” is plural, and would therefore indicate a period of time, however long or short it may be. In any wise, there would be time enough for the Lord to bring about the consummation of all things pertaining to the mystery of God, which has been declared to his servants by the prophets.

The Lord Will Surely Come

The fact that the Lord has seemed to delay his coming and has tarried longer than men would have it so, has in many instances caused considerable confusion in the minds of many people. The Lord has already tarried so long and has delayed to bring His plans and purposes to a final consummation, that many people have become suspicious of the fact that Jesus will ever come again. And in their doubting, they try to convince themselves that everything will continue on forever just as it is. Such people are called scoffers by the Apostle Peter in II Peter 3:3 and 4 where he said: “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days
scoffers, walking after their own lust and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”

The Evil Servant

In Matthew 24:48 Jesus Himself spoke of the evil servant who shall say in His heart, “My Lord delayeth His coming and shall begin to smite his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunken, and he said: The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut Him asunder and appoint Him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The Foolish Virgins

Also in the parable of the ten virgins, it was while the bridegroom tarried that they all slumbered and slept, only five of them were ready when the bridegroom came.

In Every Age

It is of striking interest to note that in every age men have waited and expected the redeemer to come and the fulfillment of those things which been spoken by the prophets! Adam and Eve after they had sinned received the promise of a coming redeemer, as stated in Genesis 3:15. Eve believed the promise which God had given, i.e., that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent’s head. So when Cain born she said: “I have gotten a man from the Lord” As we know she was mistaken about this, for Cain did not prove to be the redeemer, but it goes to show that Eve believed the promise and that she thought, or at least hoped, that God had wrought a miracle by divine intervention and that her son would be the redeemer. Thus was the Messianic hope born and manifested in the heart of the mother of the race.

John the Baptist

There is no question but what John the Baptist, when he looked upon Christ believed in Him as the promised Messiah and that he thought the time for the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness, which God had promised by the mouth of His prophets had come. Therefore, he preached saying, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”

The Apostles

The twelve apostles also shared this belief until after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Even then, they were taught to look for His return, for no one knew how long the age or dispensation of grace was to last.

And it has continued now for nearly two thousand years. And in every period of the church age the faithful, believing remnant of God’s people have been longing and waiting for the return of Christ and the consummation of all things.

But in spite of our anxious desire for Christ to return, there has been long delay. How many times, just when it seemed as if Christ would surely come, conditions have changed and there has been continued delay, and the Lord still tarries, and we are made to wonder some-times how long He will yet tarry within the veil before He comes to receive His bride and to smite the wicked of the earth.

One Thing Sure!

But listen, friends, there is one thing we can be sure of, and that is that even though the Lord has tarried longer than we would desire for Him to, the time will surely come when He will no longer delay. “For in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.”

LECTURE 30 ON THE REVELATION

A Word About Scoffers — What John the Baptist and the Apostles Believed — The Lord Has Tarried a Long While — The Time Will Surely Come — John Becomes an Actor in the Chain of Events — He Was Representative of Others — A Present Day Application of This Truth — Our Experiences Both Sweet and Bitter — John’s Work Not Yet Finished Because He Must Prophecy Again — Christians Still Have a Great Work to Do — What It Was That John Measured — A New Temple to Be Built in Jerusalem by the Jews — It Will Need to Be Cleansed and Taken over by the True Christ

In our last lesson, based upon Revelation 10:1 to 7, we considered the account of the mighty angel with the little book, whom John saw come down from heaven, and who set His right foot upon the sea, and His left foot upon the earth. This we pointed out was an act of taking possession of the earth and the sea, which were rightfully His.
The open book which He held in His hand was the same book described in chapter 5, which the Lamb took out of the hand of Him that sat upon the Throne. Since this Mighty Angel was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who had prevailed to open the Seven Seals of the Seven Sealed Book, it served in this instance as His warrant or legal right to take possession of the earth and the sea.

We concluded our last lesson with the thought suggested in the 7th verse, where the Mighty Angel, with His hand lifted to heaven, swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer, for it says, “In the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the Prophets.”

The Time Will Surely Come

But listen, friends, there is one thing we can be sure of, and that is, that even though the Lord has tarried longer than we would desire for Him to, the time will surely come when He will no longer delay. For, in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God we are told (shall) be finished, “as He hath declared to His servants the Prophets.”

Our Lesson Text

Now let us advance in our study by reading first of all what is written in Revelation 10:8 to 11, where it says,

“\text{And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the Angel, which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.} \text{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.} \text{And I took the little book out of the Angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.} \text{And He said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings.”

John Took Part

This is a very interesting passage, because at this point in the Revelation the Apostle John changed from being a mere Seer and became an actor in those things that were taking place. John heard a voice from Heaven directing him to go and take the little book out of the hand of the Angel. We have already stated that the little book, in the beginning, represented the title deed to the earth, which had been conveyed away because of man’s sin. Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and as the root of David, had prevailed to open the Seven Seals of the Book, and according to our lesson text, he was ready to return the open book, representing the title deed to the earth, to John. This was an act of no little importance, as we shall see.

There is no question but what John here was acting in a representative capacity. It would be unreasonable believe that the title deed to the earth would be given to John as an individual. There is no scripture to sustain such a view, whatever, but we do know that it is God’s purpose and promise to return the title deed to the earth to redeemed ones; for Jesus Himself said in the beatitudes, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth”

A Glorious Promise

This is a glorious promise, and one which should cause the heart of every true Christian to rejoice; but let us notice the strange experience which the Apostle John had when he ate this little book, which represented the title deed to the earth. In his mouth it was as sweet as honey, but when he had eaten it, it made his belly bitter!

Now, what are we to understand from this strange incident recorded here? Certainly the act was itself prophetic of what was to be accomplished in the future. As an object lesson, it indicates that when men hear for the first time the great promises of God, recorded in the prophetic scriptures, they are pleasant to hear, and as it were, sweet to the taste. For example, when God promised to the Children of Israel in Egypt that He would deliver them by the hand of Moses, and bring them into the Land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, it was pleasant to their ears, and was as it were a sweet morsel for the taste and to meditate upon, but when they came to Kadesh-Barnea and discovered that there were giants in the land, who lived in walled cities, the promise was turned into bitterness, and fear filled their hearts, and they even murmured against the Lord and against Moses, and as a result were turned back into the wilderness for they could not enter in because of their unbelief.

Today

To make a present day application, a lot of people rejoice when they hear an explanation of the great prophecies of the Bible, which reveal the future blessings and rewards, and the final triumphs and victories of the saints of God. They rejoice to hear of judgments...
upon the wicked, and of deliverance for the righteous, but they little realize the awful pain and suffering which will be caused by the fulfillment of these things which have been prophesied in the Word of God.

Today those of us who believe the prophetic scriptures, and who rejoice in the fact that God is fulfilling His Word before our very eyes, have already begun to suffer because of our faith in the Word of God. Personally, I have suffered much already because I believe and teach these things. I never shall forget how my soul was stirred when I first heard the doctrine of the Lord's Second Coming preached, which lead me more and more into a study of prophecy. How I did revel in the study of these things, but; - Little did I realize that if I should begin to preach the Second Coming of Christ, which is definitely taught in the Word of God, that I would be persecuted by many professing Christian people. - Little did I realize that the more I came to understand the Word of God, the more I would have to stand alone in order to preach it to the people. - Little did I realize, when I began to study and preach these things that I would be driven into poverty, even to the extent of reproach, because of preaching to others the very things which had brought light and joy to my own heart! - Little did I realize that I would have to carry the weight of financial indebtedness, as I have been compelled to do for many years, and which I am still doing for the sake of the truth, which by the grace of God, is going out to the people.

So, out of personal experience, I know something of what the Apostle John meant when he took the book, and ate it, which was sweet to his taste in the beginning, but in his belly it became bitter. Indeed, my friends, if we expect to go through with God, and to receive and enter into our inheritance with Christ, we may expect that these promises, pertaining to the future, which are sweet to us now, will become bitter as time goes on, but no matter how bitter our lot may become, because we have believed the promises of God, we should in no wise be discouraged, but we should press on to the very end, and be faithful in our appointed task of witnessing to the truth, and by the grace of God we shall enter into our inheritance, and our bitterness will be turned into joy once again when we hear the Lord of the harvest say, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord"

John Must Prophesy Again

Before we leave this passage we must call your attention to the fact that the Mighty Angel said to John, in the 11th verse, after he had eaten the little book, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

This certainly was a divine appointment for the future, and is very interesting to say the least.

Here again we must take into account the fact that John was a representative of the entire Church, and that the Lord in this statement did not mean that John only would prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings, but if John was a representative character, representing the entire Church, then this statement means that all who are true Christians will have future opportunities to witness and testify for Christ even after we have been resurrected and raptured away to be with our Lord.

We all know that after we have been caught up to be with Christ, we shall be forever with the Lord, and when Jesus Christ returns to the earth at His revelation, at the close of the Tribulation period, the saints of God will come with Him. This is confirmed in Jude the 14th and 15th verses, where it says, "And Enoch also the seventh from Adam also 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."

This passage would indicate that the saints of God who will be caught up at the rapture will return with Christ at His revelation, and will share with Him the work of judgment against the wicked.

What Paul Said

We need not be surprised at this, as if it were something contrary to the scriptures; for this is not true. In First Corinthians 6:2, and 3, it says, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life." Also in the 149th Psalm, verses 5 to 9, it says, Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people: To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written. This honour have all His saints."

There is an illusion to this fact in Revelation the 19th chapter, 11 to 16, where we have a word picture of the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the Battle of Armageddon, and there we are told that "The armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, and out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod iron."

The position we have taken in regard to this matter is fully sustained in the 11th chapter of Revelation which we are now ready to
In Revelation 11, verses 1 and 2, John said:

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

This is a great dispensational passage and we invite your careful attention as we endeavor to find out just what it means.

By this time the little book, representing the title deed to the earth, had been taken from the hands of the father, who sat upon the throne by Christ the Lion of the Tribe of Juda and the root of David, and in successive order, had opened the seven seals thereof, after the book had been opened he gave it to the Apostle John, who represents the redeemed of the earth, to whom the lost inheritance was to be restored. And from our lesson text, we have every reason to believe that after the saints have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air and have put on Immortality and the work of judgment has progressed thus far, the saints will be changed from being mere spectators of these events and will become actors in the administrations which are to follow.

This is indicated by the fact that the work of measuring the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein, was committed unto John. The work of measuring indicates the act of actually taking possession of something. It is a judicial act, the laying down of lines and borders which are intended to mark the exact area to be possessed. In other words it is a sign of appropriation, whereby a person actually takes possession of his inheritance. Whatever has been measured becomes his from that time forward.

What John Measured

Now when John, acting in a representative sense, took the reed and began to measure; the first things that he measured were the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

We all know that there has been no temple of God in Jerusalem since the Jewish temple was destroyed about 70 A. D. by the Roman Army under Titus. The only temple of God upon earth from then until now has been the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ. That the Church is a Spiritual Temple is confirmed in Ephesians 2:19 to 22 where it says: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints and of the household of God:

“In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

In whom ye also are builded together or an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Yet to Be a Literal Temple

But our lesson text implies the fact that there is yet to be a literal temple of God with an altar and with worshippers therein in Jerusalem here upon earth, which is to be measured and thereby, through this act of appropriation, become the acknowledged inheritance of the Lord and His saints.

We should not think for one moment that the temple spoken of here is the temple in Heaven, because there would be no reason for measuring the temple there as an act of appropriation because the temple in Heaven has never been defiled and has always belonged to God the father and to the son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But we know this has not been true and will not be true of the earthly temple which is to be rebuilt in Jerusalem.

The Jews Are Preparing to Build a Temple

We know that the Jews are now returning to their own land in great numbers in fulfillment of the scriptures. We know also that one of their chief ambitions is to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem as quickly as possible, and all they are waiting for is a chance to repossess the temple area so that they can rebuild the temple on the very site where the temple once stood. And there is no question but what eventually the temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt by the Jews who are now returning to the land. When the temple is rebuilt, they will seek to reestablish the ancient Levitical order of sacrifice, thus manifesting their faith in Moses and their unbelief toward Christ! We know that God will not be pleased with their effort in this regard because he gave the Lord Jesus Christ His son, as the last and final and complete sacrifice, who shed His blood upon the cross to make an atonement for the sins of the people.

Therefore in his displeasure at their unbelief God in his permissive will, will allow them to make a covenant with the coming Antichrist who shall deceive them, and who shall defile their temple by the wicked exaltation of himself. This is confirmed in II
Thessalonians 2:3 to 5 where it says: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the Son of perdition.

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God.

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

It Will Need to Be Cleansed

Thus, my friends, we see that the future temple of the Lord in Jerusalem will be in need of cleansing as much or more so than the temple which was Jerusalem when Jesus was upon earth. You will remember how Jesus made a whip of small cords and cleansed the temple of those who had made His father’s house a place of merchandise and a den of thieves. And so when the new temple is built, it will need to be cleansed because it will be defiled by the very personal presence and abominable acts of the Antichrist.

It stands to reason, therefore, that Christ must come and destroy the Antichrist, and that the temple must cleansed, and measured as an act of appropriation and of taking possession of it before it could be occupied by the Lord and His people.

LECTURE 31 ON THE REVELATION

The Temple in Jerusalem to Be Rebuilt and Repossessed by the Lord — The Gentiles to Be Rejected — Why God Turned from the Jews to the Gentiles — How Jerusalem Is to Be Redeemed — The Two Witnesses Who Will Come from Heaven to Witness and Prophecy During the Tribulation Period — They Will Possess Great Power — The Necessity for Such Witnessing — They Are Now in Heaven — Who Will They Be? — Enoch and Elijah the Only Two Men Who Were Translated to Heaven without Dying

IN our last lesson, based upon Revelation 10:7 to 11 we considered the fact that in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel; when He shall begin to sound the mystery of God will be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the Prophets.

We also considered the account of how John took the little book from the hand of the mighty Angel, which was standing upon the sea and upon the earth, and ate it. In his mouth it was sweet as honey, but when he had eaten it, in his belly, it was very bitter. Thus signifying that, as we accept and lay claim to our inheritance, which is promised in the Word of God; at first there is a sense of joy, but before we come into actual possession of our promised inheritance, there will be times of bitterness for all of us who are to receive the inheritance and enjoy the full blessings and rewards, and the glory which are to follow.

After John had eaten the little book, the Mighty Angel gave to him a future appointment, saying, "Thou must prophesy again before many people, nations, and Kings." We pointed that John here was representative of all the redeemed, thus signifying that when we have been finally and fully redeemed, our work for the Lord will only have just begun.

Lesson Text

In our last lesson we also read and began a study of what is stated in Revelation 11:1 and 2, but we did not in any wise conclude our study of this passage, so it will be necessary for us to reread, and comment upon it again. In Revelation 11:1 and 2, John said, “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the Angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

But the court which is without the Temple, leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the Holy City shall they tread under foot, forty and two months.”

We remind you again that in this passage John changed from being a seer to an actor in the events suggested here. Having received, and having eaten the little book, which, as we have stated, represented the Title Deed to the earth, which had been conveyed away as a result of man’s sin, the work of repossession, or re-appropriation must begin, and that is exactly what you have suggested in our lesson text. To John Was given a reed like unto a rod, and he was commanded to measure the Temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein. We have already pointed out that the work of measuring was an act of appropriation. In other words, it was an act of taking possession of the inheritance, which had been reclaimed by the Mighty Christ.

On Jewish Ground

We remind you again of the fact that the Temple, and the Altar, and the worshipers, and the Court, referred to in this passage, do not refer to the Temple in Heaven, but signify the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem here upon the earth. This being true, we are on Jewish ground, and what is stated here has nothing to do with the Church as such. We have already discovered how the
Church will have been completed, and raptured away to be with Christ before the events spoken of in this portion of the Revelation come to pass. Studying this passage, therefore, from a dispensational standpoint, we must agree that God is not through with the Jews as a distinct and chosen race of people. Surely He has not preserved them through all of these long centuries of their dispersion among the Gentiles without having a good reason for doing so. It is true that blindness in part has happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, as stated in Romans 11:25. But when the time comes for the Lord to reclaim and repossess the earth, which He will do through the power of His spirit, and by the work of His saints. The first place that He will take possession of will be the Temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein in the city of Jerusalem. This is indicated by the fact that these things are the first ones to be measured as an act of appropriation, as signified in our lesson.

The Jewish Temple Will Be Rebuilt

Our lesson text would infer that in order for these things to be fulfilled, the Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and the city will largely be inhabited by this ancient race of people. Already there are many indications that things will be accomplished in the near future, in preparation for the fulfillment of what is stated here. The Jews are even now returning to Jerusalem and to their own land in great numbers. Even now, they are hoping to rebuild their Temple on the ancient Temple site in Jerusalem.

Now, when all this is accomplished, and the work of measuring begins, it is very significant that the Mighty Angel said to John, 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.”

The Outer Court

The outer court of the Temple was the Court of the Gentiles, and this fact is given as the reason why it is to be rejected. This is confirmed in our lesson text, where it says, “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.”

The Gentiles to Be Rejected

The fact that the Gentiles are to be rejected at the close of the present dispensation is well sustained in the scriptures. In Jeremiah 4:6 and 7, it says, “Set up the Standard toward Zion: Retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. The Lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way.”

Also in Romans the 11th chapter, the Apostle Paul warned the Gentiles, saying,

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office; If by any means I may provoke to emulation them ones which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? “For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: And if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree watt grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches, but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. “Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. “Behold, therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: For God is able to graft them in again.”

This, my friends, is a very important passage, which reveals the dispensational purposes of God, both toward the Jews and the Gentiles. When Christ came nearly two thousand years ago, and was rejected by the Jews, they were cut off because of their unbelief, so that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. But according to God’s Word, if the Gentiles fail to accept the mercy of God offered to them in Christ, they also will be cut off, and that, my friend is exactly what is going to happen.

God Turned from the Jews to the Gentiles

In the early Apostolic period the Apostle Paul turned away from the Jews to the Gentiles, because he knew they would receive the Gospel. This is confirmed in Acts 28, and verse 28, where it says “Be it known, therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” And for nearly two thousand years the Gentiles have been willing to hear the Gospel, and many have believed and turned to Christ from among the Gentiles. But what is the condition which exists today? Today, after nearly two thousand years of grace and mercy offered to them through the Gospel, the Gentile nations of the earth are rising
up in unbelief, and rebellion against the Lord, and many of the Gentile nations have begun already to reject and to suppress the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We refer you to Russia and to Germany as an example of what I have said, and even right here in our own fair land, multitudes of people, who have opportunity to do so, refuse to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and not only so, they oppose and persecute those who desire to hear the Word of God preached. And worse yet, many Churches have become apostate from the truth, and will no longer allow the preaching of the entire Bible in their pulpits. With such conditions as this already in existence, we are told by the Apostle Paul in Second Timothy 3:1 to 5, “That in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parent, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of Pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof;” and from such he said turn away.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that God will reject the Gentiles, and that if the Jews continue not still in unbelief, He will graft them in again to their own Olive Tree.

Zion to Be Redeemed with Judgment

But before these great dispensational changes are accomplished, let us not forget that the Gentiles shall tread the Holy City under foot forty and two tenths, or 1,260 days, which is exactly three and one-half years. In Isaiah 1:7 and 28, it says, “Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness, and the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.”

We wish to remind you just here that the reed, which was given unto John, was described as being like a rod, and the rod, as we all know, is a symbol of chastisement. This would indicate that when the city is to be measured, and repossessed by the Lord and His Saints, it will be accomplished with a rod of authority, wherewith the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be punished for their iniquity, and that is exactly what is indicated in our lesson text; For God declares that the Holy City shall be trodden down of the Gentiles forty and two months.

That this is exactly what will happen! That God will allow the Gentiles to trespass against the city, is confirmed in Zechariah 14:1 and 2, where it says, “Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee; for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished: and half of the city shall go forth into captivity and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”

All this, as we know, will come to pass during the Tribulation Period, which is mentioned by our Lord in Matthew 24:21 and 22, and which is to last forty and two months, which will be during the last half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, of seven years; indicated in Daniel 9:20 to 27.

Thus we see that there are geographical boundaries, and racial distinctions, and a time limit in God’s plans for the future.

The Two Witnesses

We are now ready to take up our study of the Two Witnesses, an account of which is given in Revelation 11:3 to 12, where the mighty Angel said to John,

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth. “These are the two Olive Trees, and the two Candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: And if any man will hurt them, he must I in this manner be killed. “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. “And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves, and 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 dwell on the earth. “And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet and great fear fell upon them which saw them. “And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.”

The Two Witnesses Will Receive Power
Now out of this unusual reading we will only have time to call your attention to what is stated in the third and fourth verses in our lesson text, where the Angel said: “I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy one thousand, two hundred three score days, clothed in sack cloth. These are the two Olive Trees and two Candlesticks standing before God of the earth.”

We must all confess that we have here an account of two very unusual witnesses. The importance of these two witnesses is signified by the fact that so much space of holy writ has been devoted to a description of them and to their work. The importance and the authenticity of this account is also impressed upon our minds by the fact that it was dictated to the Apostle John by the Mighty Angel himself, who, as we have pointed out, was none other than Christ, so what we have here is an account in Christ’s own words. We should therefore give very careful attention to what He said, and weigh every statement carefully and prayerfully.

It would be well for us to take note of the fact that Jesus said to John, “I will give power unto MY TWO WITNESSES.” In every age of human history there has always been a believing remnant of people who served as God’s witnesses, but in this particular case Jesus speaks of TWO WITNESSES which He has reserved unto Himself a particular work of prophesying in the future.

They Will Testify During the Tribulation Period

The length of time they are to prophesy is a thousand two hundred and three score days, which is three and one-half years. This corresponds exactly to forty and two months, which is the length of time that Jerusalem is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles after the measuring of the Temple, and the altar, and the worshippers, therein begins. This is exactly the duration of the Tribulation period as given elsewhere in the Word of God. We may rightfully assume, therefore, that after the Church has been raptured away, and the time for the Tribulation comes, these two witnesses will come from heaven and prophesy during the three and one-half years of the Tribulation period, during which time the Antichrist and the False Prophet will reign upon the earth.

Two Witnesses Necessary

The fact that there are two of these witnesses is quite significant, because in both the law and the gospels two witnesses were required in order to establish the truth concerning any matter. This is confirmed in Deuteronomy 17: 6, where it says, “At the mouth of two witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.” Also in Matthew 18:16, Jesus said, “But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.”

The Antichrist Will Be in Authority

Let us remember that when these witnesses come to prophesy it will be a time of judgment. Antichrist and the False Prophet will be in the seat of authority. What they say and do will be false, of course, even though they will perform miracles to confirm their word and their works and thereby deceive many people. Before God pours out his judgments, however, upon the people, He will send these two witnesses to prophesy and speak the truth, and thereby he will give them a chance to escape from the deception of the Antichrist, and the false Prophet, and from the awful judgment which will fall upon those who follow them. If God sends two witnesses to speak the truth during that awful period, that will be enough to confirm it, and if men will not hear and heed what they have to say, God will be justified in sending upon them the judgments which He has foretold in this Book of the Revelation.

Will Be Real Persons

We must understand from the very beginning that these two witnesses are real persons, who are alive and have individuality and personality. Some would have us believe that these two witnesses refer to the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, but this could not be true, because every effort to apply what is stated here to the written Word of the Old and New Testaments breaks down at every point.

Who Are These Two Witnesses?

We now come to the important question as to who these two witnesses are. This should not be difficult to answer if we stick to our lesson text, and do not go off on some wild theory offered by men. In the fourth verse of our lesson text the Lord Himself said, “These are the two Olive Trees and the Two Candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” These words should serve at least as an index to who and where these witnesses are. Notice: the Angel said to John, “These are the two Olive Trees and the two Candle Sticks STANDING before the God of the earth.” That is, they were standing THEN, at that time, before the God of the earth, which would indicate that they were then in heaven awaiting the time when they would come back to the earth to act as witnesses, and to prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days.

They Are Now in Heaven

In our effort, therefore, to identify these two witnesses, we must look for them in heaven, and not expect to find them upon the earth
at this present time.

Since these two witnesses are to come to the earth, and are to witness and prophesy, and then be killed by the Antichrist, and since it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment, as stated in Hebrews 9:27, there must be at least two men in heaven at the present time who reached there without dying. We need not be surprised at this because the Word of God plainly teaches that two men and two only, have been taken to heaven without dying. One of them was Enoch, who lived on the other side of the flood, “And was not for God took him,” as stated in Genesis 4:24. The other one was a Jewish Prophet, who lived in the wicked and degenerate times of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. This was none other than Elijah (the Tishbite) and we are told that he “went up by a whirlwind into heaven” as stated in Second Kings 2, and verse 11.

So far as the divine record is concerned these are the only two men who were ever taken to heaven without dying. Therefore they would be the two persons in heaven who could come back to this earth and witness and prophesy and be killed as required in the account of the two witnesses given in Revelation in the 11th chapter.

IN our last lesson, which was based upon Revelation 11:1 to 3, we discussed the fact that in the end of the present dispensation, when Christ begins to repossess the earth, the first place that He will measure and appropriate unto Himself, through the assistance of His Saints, will be the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and the Altar, and them that worship therein.

We also considered the fact that the Gentiles are to be rejected because of their unbelief and their failure to turn to God in this age of grace, during which time they have been privileged to hear the gospel.

We learned also from Romans the 11th chapter that the Jews “If they abide not still in unbelief shall be graffed in, for God is able to graff them in again. Concerning this dispensational change the Apostle Paul said in Romans 11:25, “I would not, brethren, that ye should ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

In our last lesson we also read the account of the Two Witnesses recorded in Revelation 11:3 to 12. Therefore we shall not repeat the passage, but shall take it for granted that most of our readers are familiar with the details of this account.

Two important facts, concerning these witnesses, are revealed in the 3rd and 4th verses of our lesson text, where the angel said to John, “I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth. These are the two Olive Trees, and the two Candle Sticks, standing before the God of the earth.”

Now, let us remind you again that these two witnesses were individuals with personalities and were not the Old and New Testaments, or certain systems, or agencies, as some would have us think.

Enoch and Elijah

In our last lesson we identified these two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah, whom Christ will send back to the earth after the Church has been completed and raptured away to be with Christ, to witness and testify against the deeds of the Antichrist and the false Prophet during the coming time of Tribulation, which will be forty and two months, or a thousand two hundred and three score days.

Difference of Opinion

The exact identity of these two witnesses is not given in the Word itself. There is room, there-fore, for a difference of opinion as to who they may be, so all we can do is to say who we think they are, and give our reasons.

So far as the divine record is concerned, Enoch and Elijah are the only two men who were taken to heaven without dying. Therefore, they would be the only two persons now in heaven who could come back to this earth and witness and prophesy and be killed as required in the account of the two witnesses given in Revelation the 11th chapter.

Concerning Elijah

Before we pass on to the work of these two witnesses, we want to speak either concerning their identification.
First let us speak of Elijah. In Malachi 4:5 and 6, it says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

These words are all the more impressive when we realize that they are the last words of the Old Testament. We need not be in doubt, therefore, concerning the fact that Elijah, who was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind without dying, will be one of these two witnesses, and that God will send him back to the earth as a forerunner of the great and terrible day of the Lord, to witness and prophesy before the second coming of Christ in His revelation, at which time the wicked of the earth are to be overthrown.

Some object to identifying Elijah as one of these witnesses because they think that John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy concerning the return of Elijah. Therefore let us look into the gospels and see what we can do to clarify this mistaken idea.

Because of what was stated in Malachi 4:5 and 6, concerning the return of Elijah, the Jews who lived just preceding the first advent of Christ, had the right to expect the return of Elijah to the Earth to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest God should come and smite the earth with a curse.

It was perfectly natural, therefore, that when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, that the Priests and Levites from Jerusalem came and asked him who he was. In John 1:20 to 23, it says, "And He confessed, and denied not; but confessed I am not the Christ. And they asked Him, what then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No! Then said they unto him, Who are thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What saith thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Esaiah."

These words are clear and to the point, and should not leave us in doubt. John openly confessed that he was not the Christ, and that he was not Elijah!

**The Disciples Question**

It is perfectly natural therefore that as the disciples were coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration, and Jesus had commanded them not to tell the vision which they had seen to any man, "Until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead" His disciples asked Him saying, "Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?"

**Jesus’ Answer to the Question**

Now to this very unusual question, Jesus gave a very unusual answer! In Matthew 17:11 to 13, it says, And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things, but I say unto you, That Elias is come already and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

Now it would seem sure enough as if we are up against it! Those chronic unbelievers who always want to say that the Bible is full of contradictions, think they have us in a corner here. What better stock in trade could they have than something like this? In the first place John the Baptist said He was not Elijah, and Jesus said to His disciples, “That Elias is come already’ and His reference was to John the Baptist.

Certainly, we could not think for one moment that John did not know what he was talking about. Neither can we believe that Jesus was mistaken in His opinion of John. What then is the answer to this seeming contradiction?

**The Solution to the Problem**

The answer and true explanation to this very difficult problem lies in the fact that Israel’s Messiah was to come, not only once, but twice. In the Old Testament there were two groups or strains of prophecy concerning Israel’s Messiah. One group of prophecies, of which the 53rd chapter is an outstanding example, revealed that Messiah would come and be despised and rejected, suffer humiliation and be crucified in order to make atonement for the sins of the world. The other group of prophecies revealed that Messiah would come as a great King, to sit upon David’s Throne and rule over the earth in justice and in judgment for everyone. An example of this is found in the book of Daniel 7:13 and 14, where Daniel said; “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

**Isaiah the 53rd Chapter**

The sad thing is that the Jews either did not understand such prophecies as Isaiah the 53rd chapter, which revealed a suffering
Messiah, or else they deliberately passed over such passages, because they wanted the kind of Messiah described by the Prophet Daniel, and by other Prophets of the Old Testament. In consequence when Jesus came at His first advent, in humility, and in suffering, and reproach, they did not accept Him. Because of their theology they were only looking for one appearing of the Messiah, and only one!

The Disciples Did Not Understand

A study of the New Testament will reveal that even the disciples of Jesus, who had followed Him during the days of His earthly ministry, were of the same opinion. Although He had plainly told them that He must be rejected by the Chief Priests and the Elders, and be crucified and rise again on the third day, they still did not understand these things.

Even after His crucifixion and resurrection the two disciples on the road to Emmaus were still bewildered and confused as to why Jesus had been rejected and crucified, and they said, of Christ, “But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.” And Jesus found it necessary to rebuke them, saying, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe, all that the Prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”

It is plainly evident, therefore, that neither the Jews of Jesus time, nor His very own disciples, understood the tremendous fact of the two comings of the Messiah. Before Jesus went away He made this clear to His own disciples, but the Jews, because of their unbelief, still do not understand that Jesus whom they rejected was their Messiah in deed and in truth, who came in fulfillment of such Prophecies as Isaiah the 53rd chapter, to suffer and die and rise again, in order to make an atonement for the sins of the people, and that this very same Messiah will come again with power and great glory to rule and to reign, as promised by Daniel, and other Prophets of the Old Testament.

A Forerunner Was Necessary

Now, if Christ was to come twice, once to suffer and to die, and rise again, and then, many centuries later, come again to rule and reign, it is natural to believe that He would have a forerunner to prepare the way for His appearing, both at the time of His first advent, and at the time when He would come again at His second advent, and that is exactly the question we now have before us in seeking to identify these two witnesses.

Now let us return to Matthew the 17th chapter where the disciples, on the way down from the Mount of Transfiguration, said to Jesus, “Why say then the Scribes that Elias must first come?”

In the answer which Jesus gave, when we understand that Messiah was to come twice, it is plain to see that He referred to both events. His first answer to their question was, “Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.” There is no question but what His reference here was to the time of His second advent, which was then, and is yet future. In that statement He confirmed to His disciples the statement of the Prophet Malachi, in Malachi 4:5 and 6, where he said, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Elias is Come Already

But in Matthew 17:12, Jesus continued His answer by saying, “But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them.” And in verse 13, it says, “Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist”

Concerning John the Baptist

Now before we can understand the reference which Jesus made here to John the Baptist, we must turn to Luke the first chapter, where we have an account of the birth and the divine commission of John the Baptist, given to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, by the Angel, who announced to Zacharias at the time of his vision that John the Baptist was to be born. In Luke 1:15 to 17, the Angel said of John the Baptist, “He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine or strong drink; and shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb. And many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Thus, my friends, we see that John the Baptist was not Elijah in person, but that he ministered as the forerunner of Christ, at the time of His first advent, in the spirit and power of Elijah!

What Jesus Said

In Matthew the 11th chapter, in verses 12 to 15, Jesus said, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets in the law prophesied until John, and if ye
will receive IT (namely the KINGDOM) this is Elias, which was for to come.*

In other words, both John and Jesus had preached to the Jews that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and even so it was, in the person of Jesus, who was Himself the King from heaven. Therefore, Jesus said, "If you will receive IT (not John, but the Kingdom which John preached) this is Elias which was for to come." In other words, if the Jews of Jesus' time had believed the preaching of John Baptist, concerning the Kingdom, and concerning Jesus, as the Messiah of Israel, John would have fulfilled at that time, the prophecy of Malachi 4:5, which referred to the coming of Elijah, to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. But since the Jews did not believe the preaching of John concerning the Kingdom, and did not believe his witness and testimony concerning Christ as the Messiah of Israel, John did not succeed in turning Israel nationally to the Lord, and the prophecy of Malachi 4:5 and 6 remains unfulfilled to this very day.

**Jesus Foreknew What Would Happen**

Jesus understood all of these things. He knew beforehand that the Jews would reject Him, and that He would be crucified and buried, and that He would rise again from the dead on the third day and after forty days would ascend into heaven. He knew all about the Church Age, or the present day of Grace, which would intervene between His first advent and the time when He would come again. He knew that during this period the Church, which His Body, would be called out through the preaching of the gospel from among both Jews and Gentiles, who would believe on Him as the Son of God, and as the Messiah of Israel, and as Saviour of the world, and after all should be accomplished, that God would send Elijah the Prophet, as the forerunner of His second advent, as stated in Malachi 4:5 and 6.

It was perfectly right, therefore, for Him to say, in Matthew 17:11 and 12, "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things." Referring, of course to His Second advent. In view of the fact that the people were refusing to believe the preaching of John the Baptist, who had come as the forerunner of His advent in the spirit and power of Elijah, it was perfectly right, and within the bounds of scriptural teaching for Him to say, "That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed."

**John and Jesus Both Told the Truth**

Thus, when John the Baptist denied that he was Elijah, he told the truth, for he was not Elijah in person, but was ministering in the spirit and power of Elijah, and when Jesus said that Elias is already come, he could say this of John the Baptist without stretching the truth in the least, because the spirit and power of Elijah were upon him. Therefore, our conclusion is that both John and Jesus spoke the truth, and there was no contradiction whatever in what they said when we understand that Christ was to come two different times, once to suffer and to die, and to rise again, which is already past, and once to rule and reign with power and great glory, which is still future! Since it was foreordained that He should come twice, it was necessary that He should have a forerunner preceding each advent to prepare the way of the Lord. John the Baptist was the forerunner who ministered preceding Christ's first advent, in the spirit and power of Elijah, and before Christ comes again at His second advent, God will send Elijah, the prophet, as the fore-runner of Christ to prepare the way for His coming.

Thus we see that the answer to this seeming contradiction in the scriptures lies in the fact that Christ was to come twice, and when we understand the Word of God, there is absolutely no difficulty in believing the words of Malachi 4:5 and 6, where God said, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

**Who Will the Other Witness Be?**

Now, let us see if we can identify the other one of these two witnesses who is to come and prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth.

**Enoch or Moses?**

Some think the other witness will be Enoch and some are rather inclined to believe that it will be Moses. Personally, it is my conviction that it will be Enoch, and I think most Bible expositors agree on this interpretation. Enoch and Elijah were both judgment prophets. Let us remember that Enoch lived in the wicked days before the flood, and walked with God, and prophesied to the people concerning things to come. This is confirmed in Jude verses 14 and 15, where the Prophet referred to Enoch, saying, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of thee saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand 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."

It is not difficult, therefore, to see that Enoch was a great Prophet of judgment, and we know that he stood alone in those wicked
days before the flood, “and was not, for God took him.”

It is not difficult, therefore, to believe that Enoch and Elijah will be the two witnesses who are mentioned in Revelation the 11th chapter, who will come back from heaven and witness against the Antichrist and false prophet during the Tribulation period of forty and two months, during which the Holy City will be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, and during one thousand two hundred and three score days, which is exactly the same length of time. This is to be the exact duration of the Tribulation Period.

Now, I see that in our lesson, we have not advanced very much in our study, so far as our lesson text is concerned, but, if in our lesson we have in any degree been able to bring light upon this difficult subject, and have in any measure been able to clarify your minds concerning what seemed to be a contradiction in the scriptures, we are very glad indeed, and shall count our time well spent.

If those who are prone to disbelieve the Word of God because of its seeming contradictions have been made to realize that the Bible does not contradict itself when once it is properly understood, we shall rejoice and be very glad indeed.

LECTURE 33 ON THE REVELATION

The Two Olive Trees and the Two Candle Sticks Who Will Stand Before the God of the Earth — What the Prophet Zechariah Saw in His Vision — The Seven Branch Candle in the Tabernacle Symbolic of the Light and Truth and Power of God — The Two Trees Are Two Persons Who Will Witness to the Truth of God During the Tribulation Period — Enoch and Elijah Fit into the Prophetic Picture — Conditions upon the Earth Will Demand Such a Witness and Testimony — Antichrist Will be in Authority and He Will Subdue Others Who Witness to the Truth — These Two Witnesses Will Be Endowed with Authority to Witness in the Face of the Antichrist

IN our previous studies we have learned from the first two verses of the 11th chapter that the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein, are to be measured as an act of reappropriation by Christ. When this work of reappropriation begins, the Court that is without will not be measured, and the Gentiles shall trod the Holy City under foot for a period of forty and two months. This indicates that after the work of reappropriation of the earth actually begins, it will be forty and two months, or three and one-half years, to the end of the Gentile period.

Beginning with the 3rd verse of this chapter to the 12th verse inclusive, we have an account of the two witnesses who are to come from heaven and prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth. This is exactly forty and two month, or three and one-half years, and will be the same period during which the Gentiles will tread the Holy City under foot. We know from other passages of scripture that during this time Antichrist and the false Prophet will arise and govern the earth during the Tribulation period for exactly the same period of three and one-half years.

The great purpose, therefore, for the return of these two witnesses from heaven, will be in order that they may witness and testify and prophesy against the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and to warn the people of the awful consequences which will come to those who believe and follow them.

In our last two lessons we have searched the scriptures diligently in an effort to discover and to determine who these two witnesses are to be. Without listening to manmade opinion on the subject, and by comparing scripture with scripture, we concluded, quite to our own satisfaction that the two witnesses referred to here, will be none other than Enoch and Elijah.

Our Lesson Text—The Two Witnesses

Now, since we did not advance in our last lesson very far, in order to refresh ar minds concerning the lesson text, we are going to read again the account of these two witnesses, recorded in Revelation 11:3 to 12, where it says,—

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. “These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. “And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. “And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two
prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. “And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.”

The Two Olive Trees and the Two Candlesticks

Now let us give our attention first of all to the fourth verse, where it says, These are the two Olive Trees, and the Two Candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth.

In this brief verse these two witnesses are described under the symbolism of the Two Olive Trees and the Two Candle Sticks standing before the God of the earth. It will be utterly impossible for us to understand the language and symbolism used here, unless we look elsewhere in the Word of God and find where similar language and symbols were used.

What Zechariah Said

Most Bible expositors agree that the language used here refers to the vision given to Zechariah, which is recorded in Zechariah the 4th chapter, where it says,—

“And the Angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked and beheld a candlestick of gold with a bowl upon the top of it, and His seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: “And two Olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the Angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my Lord. “Then the Angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. Then He answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the Word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, sayest the Lord of Hosts. “Who art thou, O great Mountain?— before Zerubbabel? Thou shalt become a plain: and He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting, crying, Grace, grace unto it. “Moreover the Word came unto me, saying the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of the house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the Plummeth in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. “Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two Olive Trees upon the right side of the Candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, “What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

Time will not allow a separate and detailed exposition of this 4th chapter of Zechariah which we have just read, but suffice it to say that what is stated here refers to the work of the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem, which was to be accomplished by Zerubbabel. In this passage mention is made both of the Candle Stick and the two Olive Trees.

The Candle Stick in the Tabernacle

Almost everyone knows that among the furniture in the Tabernacle, which Moses pitched in the wilderness, there was the Golden Candle Stick with its seven branches and seven lamps, which were kept burning continually. Naturally the Candlestick was symbolic of the light and truth and power of God, and when the Angel spoke to Zerubbabel about the work which he was to accomplish in the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem, he wanted him to know that he could not accomplish this in his own strength; therefore he used the Candle Stick as a symbol of God's light and truth and power, and in Zechariah 4:6 the Angel said, “this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit” he was made to understand that the great work of building the Temple, and the restoration which was to be accomplished at that time, would not be brought about by any strength or merit of his own, but by the Spirit and power of God, as symbolized by the Candlestick in the vision.

The Two Anointed Ones

When Zechariah asked for the meaning of the Two Olive Trees, which were seen in the vision the Angel answered and said, “Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

When we study this statement in the light of its context we understand that the first application of this truth was to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the Priest, who were the anointed of the Lord, and who undertook the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of
restoration when the Jews returned from their Babylonian captivity.

Therefore in Revelation 11, and verse 4, when the Mighty Angel said to John (of the two witnesses) these are the Two Olive Trees, and the Two Candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth, he meant that they were to be the Zerubbabel and the Jeshua of the final restoration, who will be filled with the light and truth and power of God, as symbolized by the Candlesticks, and the two Olive Trees, of Zechariah's vision.

An Interesting Quotation

Concerning these two witnesses, in I, book on the Apocalypse, J. A. Seiss, says, quoting,

“The two Olive Trees in the vision are two individual persons; so then these two Witnesses are likewise two individual persons, for they are 'The Two Olive Trees'—for their day, as Zerubbabel and Jeshua were in a former day.

“But whilst they are, 'The Two Olive Trees' of their time, as viewed through the medium of Zechariah's vision, the whole order of things has changed from what it was in Zechariah's day, or what it is in the present Church period. “The Golden Candlestick, with its many conduits and multitudinous burners is missing. All of that arrangement has disappeared. The Church period has ended.

“Gospel ministers are stars; but these witnesses are not stars. There are neither “Stars” nor Candlestick left in the time of these Witnesses. As the more direct and special messengers of God, like Zerubbabel and Jeshua, who gave out the golden oil into the golden bowl and candlestick, the two olive trees remain; but they are alone, with no Golden organism of light bearers to feed and supply. They are themselves the only light bearers now; for they are at once, ‘The Two Olive Trees and the two Candlesticks’ standing before the God of the earth.

“This clearly demonstrates that the economy is a new one, whilst it at the same time singularly agrees with the two characters whom we take it to describe. Such a lone and self supplying lamp was Enoch—the soul light nearer to the old world; then on the eve of the submersion in the great waters of judgment; And such a lone and self supplying lamp Elijah to the nation of Israel; then in great darkness and drawing near its great captivity. Many distinguished light bearers have graced the several ages of time, but none of them so marked and conspicuous in self standing loneness as these two. Never but once did the human race depend for a knowledge of God's purposes upon one mere man as it depended upon Enoch; and never but once did the Hebrew faith hang upon one mere man as it hung upon Elijah and his ministrations . . . Looking through the world for two men preeminently entitled to the name of 'The Two Lamps' (or candlesticks) we must inevitably settle upon Enoch and Elijah, who as the two Lamps are mysteriously preserved to come again for the illumination of still darker times after the same style as of old."

Before the God of the Whole Earth

We are now ready to consider the fact that they were 'standing before the God of the earth.' This expression would indicate that they were at that time, when this vision was given to John on the Isle of Patmos, standing before the God of the earth. In the scriptures God often refers to Himself in different terminology suitable to the occasion and in keeping with the lesson which He desires to teach. For instance in Joshua 3:11, He is referred to as 'The Lord of all the earth' while in Daniel 2:18, He is called 'The God of Heaven.' When He is spoken of as 'The Lord of the Earth' the word used is ‘Adon’ which means Master! Therefore these witnesses were standing before the God or Master of the earth, which fact impresses us with the theocratic power of God in His Government of the earth.

They Will Come with Authority

It is significant also that when these Two Witnesses come to prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth, it will be during the Tribulation Period, when the Antichrist and the False Prophet will have challenged the authority of the God of Heaven and of His right to govern the earth in righteousness. Therefore they will come with the authority of heaven to witness against those who would usurp the authority of God and claim for themselves the right to govern the earth.

The Conditions Upon Earth at That Time

We are now ready to consider more in detail the conditions as they will be during the time when these two witnesses shall come to prophesy upon the earth. Let us remember that they are coming as the personal representatives of Christ, for He speaks of them in the third verse as ‘My Two Witnesses.' Therefore they will not be men who will be chosen and ordained and sent forth by some Church Organization, but they will come from heaven as the personal representatives of Christ, anointed with God’s Holy Spirit, to perform a great and necessary work in the dark days of the Tribulation Period.

The Church Will Be Gone
Let us remember that by the time these things come to pass the Church will have been completed, and caught away to be with Christ at the rapture of the Church, indicated in First Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

The Abomination of Desolation

We must also remember that when the Antichrist comes into power he will commit the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, in Daniel 9:27, and referred to by our Lord in Matthew 24:15, by exalting Himself in the rebuilt Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem, “above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, showing Himself that he is God”—as stated in Second Thessalonians 2, and verse 4. This means, of course a temporary interruption so far as the exercise of the Jewish religion is concerned. Therefore with the Church gone, and the Jew's religion interrupted by the deeds of Antichrist, it will be necessary for God to send the two witnesses from heaven in order to witness and testify concerning the truth and the power and the purposes of God! If God did not send these two witnesses there would be no light whatever upon the earth during that awful time of coming darkness. How thankful we should be therefore, that God has told us before hand, even before the Church is taken away, and before the rebuilt Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem is desecrated by the Antichrist, that will send these two witnesses endued with power from on high to bear witness to the truth in that dark hour, so that all who will believe the truth may turn to God and be saved, even from the hands of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

Prophets of Judgment

Another evidence that these two witnesses are not Gospel preachers of this present age of grace, is that they are Prophets of judgment and actually bestow vengeance upon those who would oppose them in their ministry.

During this age of grace ministers of the Gospel are forbidden, even though they are persecuted without cause, to strike in self defense. The reason of this is that this is the day of grace, and those of us who have received grace from the Lord are required to manifest the same Spirit of grace unto others. We who have received the forgiveness of our trespasses are required to forgive other men their trespasses. The Christian spirit of the present age is manifest in the lives and example of such men as Stephen, who was stoned to death. The Apostle James was beheaded. Paul and Silas were beaten and cast into prison, and Paul Himself was later beheaded. Many Christians were martyred, like Polycarp, who was burned at the stake, and we are told that Peter was crucified with his head downwards, and none of these men feared or resisted death at the hands of their enemies.

During this present age of grace ‘If men revile and persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely,” we are told by our Lord “To rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven!’

Now and Then

Now we are commanded not to resist evil but to turn the other cheek, and if necessary to go the second mile, but when the time comes for these Two Witnesses to prophesy, it will be entirely different then; for we are told in Revelation 11:5 and 6 that “If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have Power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

This is positive proof that they will be judgment Prophets, and that they will accomplish their work in evil times, and it is evident from what is stated here that the world will be so wicked that they could not live and carry on their work unless they were anointed by God’s Holy Spirit and protected by the power to work miracles, and to destroy their enemies.

The Case of Elijah

We need not be surprised at those things which are stated here concerning the work of these two mighty prophets of God. You will remember, I am sure, the account given in Second Kings the 1st chapter, how Elijah called down fire from heaven upon the messengers of the King who were sent to him. This he did not only once but several times, thus showing the power which he had with God. Therefore if one of these two witnesses is to be Elijah the Prophet, whom God has promised to send before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, should we not have reason to believe that he would be able to repeat such miracles against his enemies as often as he would need to do so? Surely if he performed such miracles then, he would be able to do so again. We need not be surprised therefore if these two witnesses employ this same method in protecting themselves from their enemies in the days of their prophecy.

No Rain

Not only will they be able to hurt with fire but it says, “These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy.”

Elijah an Example Again
Here again we need not be surprised as if this were something which had never occurred before. Almost everyone is familiar with the story recorded in First Kings the 17th chapter, of how Elijah told King Ahab, saying, “As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.”

Commenting upon the work of Elijah, the Apostle James said, in James 5:17 and 18:— “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

Indeed, my friends, if such things were accomplished by Elijah in times past, why would we think it incredible, or impossible, for these two witnesses to accomplish the very same things again? The reason Elijah prayed in olden times for the heavens to be shut that it might not rain, was because of the wickedness and idolatry which existed at that time among the children of Israel.

In Leviticus 26, verses 3 and 4, God said, “If you walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.” But in the times of these two Prophets, God will shut up the heavens again because of the wickedness and idolatry which will exist upon the earth at that time.

**Waters Will Be Turned to Blood**

Not only will these two witnesses have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, but it says they will have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will. Again we do not need to be surprised at their power to do this, because these things also have been done before. All who are familiar with the Old Testament know of the miracles and plagues wrought upon Egypt through the ministry of Moses and Aaron, whom God sent to redeem His people from the hands of Pharaoh. The second miracle which Moses performed was that of turning the waters of the river into blood. We know also about the plague of the frogs, and that of the flies, and of the boils and blains, which broke forth upon man and beast in the land of Egypt, and other terrible plagues also, which Moses and Aaron wrought against Pharaoh, and upon the land of Egypt, because Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Again it stands to reason that if such miracles and plagues have been accomplished in the past, they could be accomplished in the future by these two witnesses, whom God will send to prophesy in the midst of judgment times.

**Elijah Will Come**

Let us not forget that in announcing the return of Elijah, the Lord said in Malachi 4:5 and 6, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”

From what is stated here, it is perfectly clear that Elijah the Prophet, will not only be a judgment prophet, but that he will prepare the way for the restoration of God’s people Israel, back to their own land from their age long dispersion among the Gentiles in preparation for coming events, lest God should come and smite the earth with a curse.

**Enoch Was a Prophet Also**

But let us not forget that Enoch was not a Jewish Prophet, for he lived and prophesied long before the giving the law, and it was through his ministry, just preceding the flood, that a very small remnant, even the household of Noah, was saved from the awful judgment of the flood, and was preserved to re-people the earth.

As Elijah represents the Jews, therefore, Enoch would represent the Gentiles in the needed work of restoration. You will recall that the Gentiles rebelled against God at the Tower of Babel, after the flood, and went off into heathen idolatry, and except for a small believing remnant, who have accepted the Gospel during the present age of grace, the Gentiles are still away from God and are walking in spiritual darkness. Therefore the Gentiles also need someone to represent them in the time of judgment during which these two witnesses will testify in order to prepare them for their part in the great restoration, which is to be accomplished when Christ comes again!

**What the Apostle James Said**

This twofold aspect of the coming restoration, which is to be prepared for by the work of these two Prophets, is forcibly brought to our attention in Acts 15:13 to 17, where the Apostle James said— “Men and brethren hearken unto me: Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name and to this agree the words of the Prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.
It is my firm conviction that these two Prophets, whom we have designated as Enoch and Elijah, will come at the time appointed, and at a time of dispensational change, to prepare the minds and hearts of Jews and Gentiles alike for the things that are to follow in the program of God, when Jesus comes to subdue and to restore all things.

We still have not finished our study of these Two Witnesses, but at this point we must conclude our study.

LECTURE 34 ON THE REVELATION

The Book of Revelation Not a Closed Book — The Two Witnesses to Be Killed by the Antichrist — What Jesus Said About Jerusalem — The Two Witnesses Will Not Be Buried — A Great Jubilee Will Be Held over Their Death — After Three Days They Will Arise from the Dead and Ascend into Heaven — What the Jews Thought About Jesus — A Great Earthquake Will Occur About That Time — Many Will Confess Christ Through Fear, Rather Than Because They Really Love Him — Those Who Reject the Light and Truth As Contained in the Book of Revelation Are Certainly Foolish for Doing So — Enoch and Elijah Are to Be Restoration Prophets

I CANNOT understand how or why it is that some ministers of the Gospel still insist that the Book of Revelation is a closed book, and that it has no message of light or truth for those of us who are living today. The very name of the book is contrary to such a position. The word “REVELATION” means to reveal, or make known. The very first verse of chapter 1, says, "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His Angel unto His servant." There is not the slightest intimation from these words that the Revelation was given, and was intended to be, a closed book of hidden truth. On the contrary exactly the opposite is true. The Revelation of Jesus Christ was given in order that He might show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass, and it was for this purpose that He sent and signified these things by His Angel unto His servant John.

Why is it that preachers will warn the people and seek to discourage them in the reading and the study of this wonderful book, when it plainly says in Revelation 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."

From these statements in the Word itself we are firmly convinced that God intended for each and every one of us to study the Book of Revelation and learn what we can of the wonderful things which He has caused to be written in these chapters both for our instruction and for our comfort.

We invite you therefore to continue with us our study of this wonderful book of prophecy.

Review

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 11th chapter, and the 7th verse, where our present lesson will begin. In our recent lessons we have been studying about the Two Witnesses who are to come from heaven back to earth, and witness for God during the awful time of Tribulation, which is to come upon the earth.

We have already identified these Two Witnesses as Enoch and Elijah, and in our last lesson we discovered from the scriptures that they will be not only judgment prophets, who will witness against the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and warn the people of impending judgments, but that they may also be termed restoration Prophets.

In Malachi 4:5 and 6, when God promised to send Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, He said that his work would be to “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest God should come and smite the earth with a curse.”

Elijah, therefore, will be the forerunner, and a restoration Prophet, before the second coming of Christ at His Revelation, much the same as John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ at the time of His first advent, nearly two thousand years ago.

What Elijah will be to the Jews, Enoch will be to the Gentiles, for they too are away from God. Their hearts also must be turned and prepared by some great Prophet for the coming of the Lord at His Revelation.

In order to accomplish these great things, we learned in our last lesson that these Two Witnesses will be endowed with great power from God to destroy their enemies, and to visit the earth with many different plagues as often as they will.
Our Lesson Text

Now let us notice once again what is stated concerning these Two Witnesses in Revelation 11:7 to 12, where it says,

“When they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them, and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. “And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. “And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these Two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. “And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. “And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud and their enemies beheld them.”

The Church Will Not Be Here

We wish to remind you again that by the time these Two Witnesses come, the Church which is now being called out from among Jews and Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel of God’s grace, will have been completed, and raptured away to be with Christ. During this same period, following the rapture of the Church, the practice of the Jewish religion will also be interrupted when the Antichrist deceives them by breaking his covenant with them, and by committing the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, by exalting himself in the rebuilt Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem.

There Would Be No Light

Therefore if it were not for the coming of these Two Witnesses to preach the truth of God in the midst of the awful spiritual darkness which will come upon the world during the Tribulation period, there would be no light or witness or testimony concerning the truth whatever, and it is reasonable to believe that unless these Two Witnesses should come and maintain a light in the world, all of the people would be deceived by the Antichrist and the False prophet, and would perish with them when God’s judgments fall.

What Will Happen to the Two Witnesses

We are now ready to notice what will become of them when their work is finished. We are told in the seventh verse that, When they shall have finished their testimony the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them.” There is no question but what the Beast referred to here is the Antichrist. It is natural that he should hate these Two Witnesses because their prophesies and their testimony will be given directly against him throughout the entire period of their ministry. We have already seen how nothing can harm these witnesses until their work is finished. In other words, they will be immortal until their work is done. There will be no power that can touch them on earth or from hell, not even the hand of the Antichrist can touch them, until their work is finished. There was a time when Elijah fled from the face of Queen Jezebel and King Ahab into the wilderness because they sought his life. Old King Herod caused John the Baptist to be cast into prison, and later caused him to be beheaded, and down through the centuries men have burned Christian martyrs at the stake and have put them to death in every way imaginable, but they will not be able to lay hands upon these Two Witnesses until in the wisdom and providence of God their witness is complete and their work is finished.

Antichrist Will Make War Against Them

When their work is finished we are told that the Antichrist will make war against them and overcome them and kill them. There is no way of telling whether their death will be due to a weakening of their powers of self defense, or whether it will be due to an increase of the powers of the pit, which will become stronger and stronger until they succeed in overcoming the Two Witnesses. In either case the witnesses are to be killed, and it says, “their bodies shall lie in the street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” We should have little difficulty in discerning here that these Two Witnesses are to perish in the city of Jerusalem; for that was where our Lord was crucified.

What Jesus Said

It is interesting to note in Luke 13:33 that Jesus said, Nevertheless I walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem.” And then He cried saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings and you would not.”
When we understand the attitude which Jerusalem has taken towards the Prophets of God in times past, and that they even went so far as to crucify Jesus, who was the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world, we do not wonder that it is here described as the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt.

Everyone knows that Sodom was noted for its wickedness, and that Egypt is used in the scriptures as a type of the world. Therefore when these two words are used symbolically to describe the City of Jerusalem, where these Two Witnesses will be killed, it signifies the low spiritual condition into which the city will have fallen by that time.

Will Be Denied a Place of Burial

The next thing we note about these Two Witnesses is that they will be denied a place of burial. This is confirmed in the 9th verse, where it says, "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."

Indeed, my friends, there could be no greater outrage of decency than this, for we know that even though a man is a criminal, or dies in a wicked condition, he is at least given as decent a burial as possible! This was in fact required by the Jewish law, which is confirmed in Deuteronomy 21:22 and 23, where says, "And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Thus, my friends, we see that by allowing the bodies of these Two witnesses to lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem, they will be acting, not only contrary to human custom, but contrary to God's law also. This they will do, however, in an effort to show how much they despised and hated these two men of God.

It simply goes to show to what extremes men will go in an effort to express their hatred of God and of those who maintain an uncompromising witness and testimony against them.

A World Wide Jubilee

Not only will they deny these two witnesses a place of burial, but they actually hold a worldwide jubilee over the fact that they are dead. This is confirmed in verse 10, where it says, "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."

There is only one way to measure the joy which the wicked people of the earth will have when these two witnesses are killed, and that is to remember that during all their ministry, these two prophets will have tormented them that dwell on the earth with all sorts of plagues. Their measure of joy, therefore, will be in proportion to the evil they will have suffered at the hands of these two witnesses. We can imagine therefore it will be very great. In order to express their joy they will send gifts one to another, and I can imagine that the death of these two witnesses will be the most talked of event in the news of that day.

A Strange Miracle

But according to our lesson text their joy will not last long, because in verse 11 it says, "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."

We might say just here that these are three literal days. There is nothing in the language given here which would cause us, or give us the right to believe otherwise. These Two Witnesses will prophesy three years and a half, and will then lie dead in Jerusalem three days and a half, which will be long enough to prove to all men everywhere that they actually died and were not in any wise in a trance. But the strange thing is they will not remain dead. Imagine, if you can, the absolute consternation of the people when the Spirit of life from God enters into them and they stand upon their feet. Certainly such an event as this will change their confidence into a feeling of fear and turn their joy into sorrow. Certainly it will put an end to their jubilee which will have sprung up over the death of these Two Witnesses.

Naturally when they shall see them resurrected, they will not know the purpose of this miracle, and they will immediately presume that they have been resurrected to resume their witness and prophesying, and to call down plagues upon the people. Who, my friends, wouldn't fear under such circumstances? Nevertheless that will not be the reason for their resurrection. Verse 7 of our lesson text reveals the fact that their work will be finished before they are killed! They will not be resurrected, therefore, to resume their former tasks, but in order that they may ascend into heaven from whence they came. This is confirmed in Revelation 11:12, where it says, "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither, and they ascended up into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

What the Jews Thought About Christ
Upon reading this we cannot help but remember the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the world had crucified Jesus upon the cross, they thought they were rid of Him forever! Little did they realize that on the morning of the third day He would rise again from the dead in a glorified body, which they could not destroy, and that after forty days He would ascend into heaven, “Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”

When it came time for Jesus to ascend into heaven, it says in Acts 1:9, **When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

Thus were the enemies of Christ made to realize that they had in no wise done away with Christ, and that the one whom they had crucified had escaped from them by resurrection and ascension, and had become both Lord and Christ, as stated by the Apostle Peter in Acts 2:36. Thus their victory was turned into defeat, and their guilt and condemnation were only increased by what they had done!

### What Will Happen

And so it will be in the case of these two witnesses, and of those who will put them to death, and who will rejoice over their death. Naturally when they see them lying in the streets of Jerusalem, they will think that the victory is theirs, and that they have an occasion for great rejoicing, but when God restores life to these Two Witnesses, and calls them back to heaven, and they ascend up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies behold them, they will discover momentarily that God has turned their apparent victory into defeat. They will be left then, without anything to rejoice over, and with nothing but fear and remorse in their hearts for the evil things which they have done.

### A Great Earthquake

Now in Revelation 11:13 and 14, it says, **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 second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.**

In these words we are able to see the effect of this miracle upon those who will witness it when it comes to pass. To the fear which will already be in their hearts, will be added the terror of the earthquake! We are told that by reason of the earthquake, one-tenth of the city will fall, and that seven thousand will be slain. That in itself would be enough to frighten any one. I have experienced many earthquakes while in Japan for six years, and I know whereof I speak. We are not surprised therefore to read in our lesson text that those who escape with their lives from the earthquake that will happen in Jerusalem, will give glory to the God of Heaven!

### Will Confess Through Fear

The sad thing, however, is that this glory which they will give to the God of heaven will be based upon fear and terror, rather than because of any love in their hearts toward God. It will be just one of those circumstances in which men will be compelled to confess that such things are being brought about by the presence and power of God. Indeed my friends, eventually every unbeliever is going to find himself in circumstances where he will have absolutely no excuse for his wicked unbelief. God is able to produce sufficient evidence of His authority and power so that no man however great or powerful he may be can deny His power and Godhead. I think that the remorse of those who will fall under the judgments of God will be, that they rejected the light an refused to believe the truth in the face of every evidence that God provided. We should not wait to give glory to God until we are compelled to do so out of fear, but we should give glory to God all the time because of what He has done for us in providing for us a way of salvation through the gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us not get the idea, therefore, that, because these men will give glory the the God of Heaven, that they will be converted, and really turn to God; for I don’t think there is anything in the lesson text that would justify us in this position. In the New Testament Gospels we have various accounts of how demons moved by fear at the presence of Christ, confessed His deity, and acknowledged His power, but this did not mean that the demons themselves became changed in any way. Their confession was the result of fear and not of love. Only those who give glory to God because they love Him will share in the blessings and rewards which He has to offer for those who love and obey Him.

### Conclusion

And so, my friends, we have come to a conclusion of our study of the Two Witnesses, who shall come and prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack cloth.

Under the symbolism of the Two olive Trees and the Two Candlesticks by which they are described in this chapter, we have identified them quite to our own satisfaction as being Enoch and Elijah. We have discovered that they will be judgment prophets...
who will witness and testify against the Antichrist and the False Prophet during the coming time of Tribulation; after the Chinch has been completed and raptured away to be with Christ. We have discovered also that after their supernatural ministry has been completed they will be killed, and after three days and a half, will be resurrected and will ascend into heaven.

Restoration Prophets

We may look upon them, therefore, as great restoration prophets who will come from heaven to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ at His revelation, by turning at least some of the Jews and the Gentiles back to God by their faithful and powerful testimony to the truth.

We should rejoice therefore in the truth revealed to us here and be glad that God will send these Two Witnesses to oppose the Antichrist and to warn the people in those terrible times, lest He should come and smite the earth with a curse.

And now in conclusion, in Revelation 11:14, it says, “The Second Woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.”

LECTURE 35 ON THE REVELATION

The Kingdoms of This World to Become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ — A Synopsis of Things to Follow — The Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet and the Voices Which Follow — A Prophetic Announcement — All Heaven Will Be Moved with Excitement — The Elders in Heaven Will Worship — What the Elders Will Say As They Worship — A New Order of Government Will Come in Due Time to the Whole Earth — The Nations Will be Angry and God Will Judge Them in Wrath — The Time of the Dead Will Come — Resurrection a Necessity — God Will Destroy Those Who Destroy the Earth

IN our last message we concluded our study of the Two Witness, whom God will send from heaven back to earth, as judgment and restoration Prophets during the Tribulation period, which is to follow the completion and rapture of the Church.

Our last lesson concluded with these words; “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly”

Our Lesson Text

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 11:15 to 19, where it says,—

“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. “And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, “We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. “And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.” 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.”

Certainly, my friends, we have here a passage of scripture full of meaning, and one which well deserves our prayerful consideration. Let us remember that we are here studying concerning those things which will follow upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which, as we know, is the last of the Trumpets.

A Synopsis

What we have here is not a detailed discussion of those events which are to occur upon the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, but is rather a synopsis of things which are to follow.

The importance of the things which are to occur following the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, is impressed upon our minds by what is stated in Revelation 10, and verse 7, where it says, “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.”

We remind you that it says here, ‘In the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.’ In this passage the word “days” is plural which would indicate that not a single day, but rather a period of time will be necessary for the fulfillment of those events which will come to pass at the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. There is no
way of telling how long or short that period of time may be, but since the word “days” is used in the plural, we know that a continued period of time will be required.

To the End of the Revelation

From what was stated in Revelation 10, and verse 7, we have every reason to believe that the events which are to follow upon the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet include everything on through to the very conclusion of the mystery of God! The mystery of God will be finished according to the Revelation until the seven vials of the wrath of God have been poured out upon the world of wicked men, as indicated chapter 16 of the Revelation. We also know that the Revelation will not be finished until great Babylon has fallen, as indicated in the 17th chapter! And it is unreasonable to believe that the mystery of God will be finished until the harvest and the vintage of the earth have been gathered in, as suggested in Revelation 14:14 to 20. What we have therefore, in our lesson text, is an announcement or preview, or synopsis of all these things which will come to pass under the Seventh Trumpet, wherein and whereby the mystery of God will finished.

When the 7th Trumpet Is Sound

Now let us notice from our lesson text what happened when the Seventh Angel sounded the Seventh Trumpet. In verse 15: it says, “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 shall reign for ever and ever.”

- Upon the sounding of the First Trumpet you will remember, hail and fire, mingled with blood were cast upon the earth, and the third part of the trees was burned up and all green grass was burned up. - At the sounding of second Trumpet a great mountain, as it were, burning with fire was cast into the sea. - At the sounding of third Trumpet, “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.”

- At the sounding of the fourth Trumpet a third part of the Sun was smitten, and a third part of the moon, and a third part of the Stars.

- Upon the sounding of the fifth Trumpet, John said, “I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.” - At the sound of the sixth Trumpet John said, “I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the Sixth Angel, which had the Trumpet, Loose the four Angels which are prepared for an hour and a day, and a month and a year for to slay the third part of men.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the judgments which are to follow upon the sounding of these Trumpets, will be of great consequence, and are of interest to Angels in heaven, and men upon earth and to those who occupy the bottomless pit.

All Heaven Will Be Moved

We do not wonder, therefore, that when the Seventh Trumpet sounds there will be great voices in heaven! This would indicate that when this Trumpet sounds, all heaven will be moved with activity and with excitement because of those things which they know are about to happen.

Voices

Although it is not stated in our lesson text just who will speak and what these voices are all about, we can judge somewhat by the rest of the narrative what some of them will be. Somehow the inhabitants of heaven will realize that the final crisis of the ages has come, so far as God’s administration of affairs upon the earth is concerned, and it will be impossible for them to keep still. In Revelation 14:2, John said, “I heard voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and I heard the voice of harpers with their harps.” And in Revelation 14:6 and 7, he said again, “I saw another Angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud Voice, Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

Again in Revelation 18:1 and 2, the Apostle said, “And after these things I saw another Angel come down from heaven having great power; and the earth was lightened with its glory. And He cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hole of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

A Great Voice

In Revelation 16:1, John spoke saying, “I heard a great voice out of the Temple saying to the Seven Angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.”
Another Voice

Also in Revelation 18:4, John said, ‘I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

A Voice of Much People

And again in Revelation 19:1 and 2, John said, “After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and Glory, and Honor, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments.”

These references which we have given will serve to indicate the nature of the voices which will be heard in heaven upon the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet; for all of these things will come to pass in fulfilling the mystery of God under the judgments of the Seventh Trumpet. All of these voices, therefore, will unite together, 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.”

What Will Follow?

Now when the combined voices in heaven utter this cry in anticipation of what is to follow, it says in verse 16: The four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned.

We need not question as to who these elders are, because they were mentioned in our study in Revelation 4:4 and 5, where they were represented as being robed and crowned, and enthroned upon twenty four seats or lesser thrones round about the Throne which was in heaven. In our study at that time we discovered them to be representatives of the first born of the resurrection. Dr. Seiss, in his book on the Apocalypse, says,

“They are the Seniors of the Celestial Congregation of the Redeemed. They are the ones accounted worthy to ‘escape’ the sad scenes and tribulations of the judgment times, taken away and hid in the pavilion of God, while the anger of the Almighty sweeps the guilty world, and enthroned in heaven for their valiancy and faithfulness when yet on earth. They are already glorified, but that does not diminish their interest in the unfulfilled plan of redemption provided of God for those who are still upon the earth, we do not wonder that when the combined voices of heaven say it unison, “The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever,” that they will fall upon their faces, and worship God.

In our study of the fifth chapter we learned that when the Lion of the Tribe of Judah had stepped forward and had taken the Book out of the hand of Hin that sat upon the Throne, the twenty four elders fell down at that time before the Lamb and worshipped, having everyone of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the Saints.

But in our present lesson, when the Seventh Trumpet is sounded we are told that they will fall upon their faces and worship God. Formerly they worshipped by singing and playing their harps, but in this instance they will literally prostrate themselves upon their faces and worship God, because in this way only will they be able to express themselves, saying, “We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty which art, and wast and art to come; because thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned.”

What the Elders Will Say

Now let us note further what the elders will say in their act of worship!

In verse 18, it says, “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 to them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.”

Surely, my friends, all that is stated here will be enough to cause them to worship and fall upon their faces before God.

A Change in Government Will Come

Now, let us note a little more carefully what is included in these wonderful events which will come to pass at the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet.
The first thing we notice in the 15th verse is that the Kingdoms of this world are to become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and that He shall reign for ever and ever. In other words, “He shall reign to the ages of the ages.” This statement implies a great change in the Government of the earth. We have all been taught to pray, saying, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” This will not come to pass until after the sounding of the 7th Trumpet, but under, and by, and through the judgments of God, which will follow the sounding of the 7th Trumpet, this very condition will be brought about. Before this can be done, however, present day republics and democracies and dictatorships, all of which are builded upon systems of man philosophy, must be destroyed, and the whole world must come under the theocratic government of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not need to wonder at this, because Isaiah in prophesying of Christ, said, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

“Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”

Isaiah

Also in Isaiah 42, verses 1 and 4, the Lord said of Christ, Behold, my Servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles—He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His Law."

What Jesus Himself Said

We do not need to wonder at the fact announced here that the Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, because in Matthew 28:18, after His resurrection, and just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus said to His disciples: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” We should not be surprised therefore that someday Christ will come again and assume the authority over the earth, which is rightfully His, and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

What, therefore, does the present deterioration of world governments mean? What does all this sweeping change from dying republics and weakened democracies to dictatorships mean? It could only mean one thing, and that is that the world is now being prepared for the time when the Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. The political changes that are now taking place are but stepping stones in the mind and purposes of God for the accomplishment of this great objective.

The Nations Will Be Angry

Now, in the 18th verse we are told that when the 7th Trumpet is sounded, the nations of the earth will be angry, and that the time of God’s wrath will have come. That the nations will be angry is confirmed in Psalm 2:1 to 3, where it says, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing. The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.”

Thus we see that because the nations will be angry with God, God will find it necessary to visit them with His wrath, and punish them for their wickedness.

The Time of the Dead

Now, we are told in this same passage that when the Seventh Trumpet is sounded, it will be ‘The time of the dead that they should be judged.’

This is a very great subject, implying the intermediate state between death and resurrection. We shall not endeavor to discuss this phase of the subject, however, because what the lesson text seems to impress upon us most forcibly is that there is to be a resurrection of the dead; for the express purpose of judgment and reward. We are told in First Corinthians 15:22 and 23 that all will be made alive. It says, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” We know also that there is to be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust. This is confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Acts 24:15.

The Resurrection a Necessity

Every reasonable minded person can see the necessity of a resurrection. The reason the dead will be raised to life again is because, “It is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die” We must all agree that full justice is never done or meted out in this life, either for the righteous, or for the wicked. No man who does his best to live right, and to do what is right here upon earth, received his full reward when he comes to die. And the same thing applies the wicked. You know as well as I do that thousands upon thousands of
people live wickedly, and are guilty of many different kinds of sin. Many people live selfishly. Many live and grow rich by the fruits of deceit and craftiness, while they live, they pass as duly respected citizens! Fortunes are made by fraud and oppression, and by the exercise of injustice, and yet those who live and enjoy themselves at the expense of others, live out their days and are buried in pomp and style without the law of justice even once being brought again them. It stands to reason, therefore that in the economy of God, there must be a resurrection of the dead, else it would seem as if the justice and the judgments of God had been perverted. But this fact remains that the souls and bodies of men, having wrought together, either in matters of righteousness or wickedness, must share both judgments and the rewards of God together, as the case may be. Even those who commit suicide, to escape from things in this life, will be raised from the dead and be compelled to face the issue from which they sought to escape. This will be at the time of the sound of of the Seventh Trumpet.

**Reward for Others**

Another thing that will occur at this time is, that God will give reward unto His servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear His name small and great.

What a glorious time that is going to be. At that time Moses will receive the blessings and the reward he had in view when he forsook Egypt, “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure in Egypt.” Then shall Daniel stand in his lot, and the rest of the Prophets and the saints of the Old Testament. Then the Apostle Paul will receive the crown of righteousness, which he said was laid up for him against that day. Jesus promised the Twelve Apostles, that because they had forsaken all to follow Him, they would one day sit upon Twelve Thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel. They too, therefore, will enter into their reward.

We also, who may be counted among the lesser saints of the Lord, will receive our reward. Certainly we who are Christians, who labor for Christ, and suffer persecution here below, do not feel that we are receiving all of our rewards here and now. No, indeed! But we have the promise that if we are faithful over a few things, in the day of final rewards, He will make us ruler over many things. And a part of our reward will be when Jesus confesses us before the Father and before the Angels in Heaven, as His very own, as sinners saved by grace through faith in His shed blood.

All these things cannot and will not come until after the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, at which time God will give rewards unto His servants, the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear His name, small and great.

**God Will Destroy Them Who Destroy the Earth**

Another thing we are told is that when the Seventh Trumpet is sounded, God will destroy them which destroy the earth, as stated in Revelation 11:18. Just how God will do this is described in the following chapters of the Revelation. Therefore we shall not enlarge upon this thought.

**What John Saw**

Now in Revelation 11:19, it says, “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.”

We haven’t time to enlarge upon this verse in this lesson, except to say that there is a Temple of God in Heaven, which served as a pattern of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and of the Temple which was later built in Jerusalem.

We know also that the Ark containing the two Tables of Stone, on which were written the Ten Commandments, pertains to the Children of Israel who are everywhere in the scriptures recognized as God’s chosen people here upon earth. The presence of the Ark, therefore, in the Temple of God, which John was given to see, was a symbol of the fact that God will again remember His covenant with Israel, and will deliver His people.

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**LECTURE 36 ON THE REVELATION**

The Ark Comes into View Which Indicates That We Are Entering Upon Jewish Ground In Our Present Study — God Will Remember His Covenant with Israel — The Great Wonder or Sign Which John Saw in Heaven — The Woman Clothed with the Sun a Sign of Things to Follow — The Events Indicated by This Sign to Occur Upon the Earth — Who the Woman is Not — She Is Not the Church — She Is Not the Virgin Mary — The Woman Symbolic of National Israel — Christ, Who Was Born of the Race of Israel, to Rule the Nations — The Prophecy of Israel and the Statement of the Apostle Paul — Israel’s Future Travail — The Great Red Dragon Was Another Wonder in Heaven — The Red Dragon Symbolic of Satan — Satan the Enemy of Christ As Prophetically Announced in Gen. 3:15 — The Seven Heads and Ten Horns Symbolic of Seven Successive Empires and Ten Kings Who Will Arise — The Man
Child Symbolic of Christ — The Church Is the Mystical Body of Christ — Application of This Truth — A Wilderness Refuge Provided for Israel

Against every denial of unbelief, and the criticism of those who insist that the Book of Revelation is a closed Book, and that it has no message for those of us who live today, we are nevertheless finding our study of this book to be both interesting and helpful, and also instructive. As we continue our study, we claim once more the benediction and the blessing pronounced in Revelation 1, and verse 3, where it says: “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.”

Review

In our last lesson, based upon Revelation 11:15 to 19, we considered those things which will come to pass under the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. We pointed out that the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet will cover a considerable period of time, and that our last lesson was only a prophetic foreview, or synopsis of those things which will come to pass upon the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet.

Upon the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, we learned that the combined voices in heaven will say, 'The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and that He shall reign for and ever.' They will say this, because they know from what is about to take place that this will become an accomplished fact when the judgments of God, indicated under the sounding of Seventh Trumpet, shall have been accomplished.

Why the Elders Will Worship in Heaven

When this divine announcement goes forth we are told that the four and twenty elders, which sat before on God their seats, or Thrones, will fall upon their faces and worship God! They will have much reason to do this because in Revelation 11:18, it says, “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 them that fear Thy name, small and great; And shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.”

These things, therefore, are the stated objectives of God to be accomplished under the sounding of the 7th Trumpet.

The Ark Comes into View

Now, in keeping with these objectives in Revelation 11:19, it says, “And 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.”

In the closing remarks of our last lesson, we reminded you of the fact that the reference here to the Temple of God in heaven, and to the Ark of His Testament, signify the fact that we are entering upon Jewish ground in the ongoing drama of events and the prophetic unfolding of the marvelous Revelation, which we are now studying.

God Will Remember His Covenant

The fact that the Ark of His Testament was seen in the Temple, assures the fact that at this stage in the ongoing of events, God will remember His covenant with Israel. The fact that there were lightnings and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail indicate the fact that the impending judgments of God will be poured out against the wicked, who are the enemies and the oppressors of the Children of Israel, who are God’s chosen and covenant people.

The last verse of the 11th chapter, therefore, is perfectly in keeping with what we are about to study in Revelation the 12th chapter.

Our Lesson Text

In Revelation 12:1 to 6, it says,

“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 there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the Dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. “And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His Throne. 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 three score days."

Now, I do not know how much of our lesson text we will be able to cover in our present lesson, but we shall begin our study by considering the woman clothed with the Sun.

A Great Wonder in Heaven

In verses 1 and 2, it says, "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."

A Sign

First of all we must remind you that the language used here is symbolical. The word "wonder" is given in the marginal reading as meaning a sign. In other words, there appeared a great sign in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Therefore, if this which John saw was a sign, it was intended to teach something beyond the literal statement of the text. Our rule for the interpretation of this, as well as every other book in the Bible, is that we are to accept the language of the Bible literally, unless we have reason to do otherwise. And in every case where a symbolic meaning is intended, the lesson text itself will indicate this, just as it does in this very instance.

The importance of this passage is indicated by the fact that John said, "There appeared A GREAT WONDER (or sign) in heaven!"

This would indicate that it was more than an ordinary sign. If so it well deserves our prayer and careful consideration.

The Sign in Heaven: The Events Upon Earth

It is well for us to notice just here that the sign appeared in heaven. Nevertheless, the events referred to under this sign relate to both heaven and the earth, as we shall see.

We are now ready to ask the question as to who this woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars upon her head, and who is represented as being in travail, really was, as John beheld her in the vision.

She Is Not the Church

Perhaps it would be well, first of all, to deal with this subject negatively, by stating who this woman was NOT. Some have assumed the position that she represents the Church of Jesus Christ; but just a little reasoning will prove that this could not be true because this woman, according to our lesson text, gave birth to a child, and that child, as we shall see, was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. We all know that the Church did not give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ, but that Jesus Christ Himself was the one who founded the New Testament Church.

Not the Virgin Mary

Others believe that the woman clothed with the Sun, represents the Virgin Mary; but this interpretation also breaks down at every point, because we have no reason to believe, or scriptures to substantiate the fact that the Virgin Mary has ascended into heaven, and is now clothed in the manner described in our lesson text.

Then Who Is She?

If this woman does not represent the Church, or the Virgin Mary, who then does she represent? For an answer to this question all we need to do is turn to Genesis 37:9 to 11, and there we find a passage where the Sun the Moon and the Eleven Stars are mentioned in a prophetic sense, concerning Joseph and the future of Israel. This passage says, "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the Sun and the Moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou dreamed? Shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to see to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."

Upon Jewish Ground

This statement is all we need to show that we are here upon Jewish ground. The fact that eleven stars were mentioned in the passage in Genesis and verse 9, is no hindrance in applying this verse to the truth set forth in Revelation the 12th chapter, because Joseph was himself the twelfth Star. This being true, in Genesis 37:9 have mention made of the Sun, and Moon and eleven Stars, but including Joseph you have 12 stars. And in Revelation 12, and verse 1, mention is made also of the Sun and the Moon and crown of Twelve Stars.
In the Old Testament, Israel is time and again referred to as a married woman. An example of this is found Isaiah 54, and verse 1, where it says, “Sing O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.”

Temporarily Set Aside

We all know that at the present time Israel has been temporarily or judicially set aside by the Lord during this age of grace, while the Church is being called out. The reason for this is that Israel proved to be spiritually unfaithful to God. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 3, and verse 1, where God, speaking to Israel, said, “They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man’s, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord.” This passage reveals among other things that Israel must be looked upon as the wife of the Lord God.

To Be Restored

Also in Hosea 2:19 and 20, the Lord said to Israel, “I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.” Thus, my friends, we see that Israel, who has been an unfaithful wife will be betrothed again to her Lord in faithfulness and in righteousness.

These things could not be said of the Church, however, because the Church, which is now being called out, is represented everywhere in the New Testament, as a Virgin. This is confirmed in Second Corinthians 11:2, where the Apostle Paul said, “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.”

Also in Ephesians 5:25 to 27, it says, “Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

Travail

Now, we remind you again of the fact that the woman described to us in Revelation 12, verse 1 and 2, was not only clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, but it says, “She being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”

Not the Church

Now, having discovered that the Church is represented as a Virgin, even as a chaste Virgin, espoused to Christ, we cannot possibly apply this passage to the Church. But having learned that Israel, nationally, is spoken of as the wife of God, under the symbolism of a married woman, it is perfectly permissible and legitimate for us to apply what is stated in Revelation 12:1 and 2 to Israel! In other words, the woman referred to here in this passage is none other than National Israel.

The Church is no where spoken of in the scriptures as a Mother, but we do know that Israel, as the wife of God, was expected to bring forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.

The Prophecy of Isaiah

Isaiah prophesied, in Isaiah 7:14, saying, “Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel (which means, God With us).” The Prophet Isaiah also looked forward to the time when Israel could say, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the Government shall be upon His shoulders: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

That this Child would arise and rule over the nations is confirmed in the very next verse, where it says, “Of the increase of His Government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”

What Paul Said

Also in Romans 9:4 and 5, the Apostle Paul speaking of the seven fold privilege of Israel, said, “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises; whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all.”

Thus we see that Paul acknowledges that Christ was born in fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6 and 7, and that He came through the race of
Israel. We are not surprised therefore to read in Isaiah 66, and verse 7, where it says of Israel: “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.”

Israel’s Travail Is Yet Future

Every student of prophecy knows that the time of Israel’s suffering as a nation is still future, and will be during the time of the great tribulation, spoken of by Daniel in Daniel 12:1, and referred to by our Lord in Matthew 24:21. The miracle, therefore, is that nearly two thousand years ago, before Zion travailed nationally, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child, and that man child was Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and was born of a Virgin Mother, who was herself of the race of Israel and of the House of David!

What the Sun Clad Woman Represents

Now, to summarize what we have said thus far, we are ready to say that the woman of Revelation 12:1 and 2, was clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve Stars, who travailed in birth and pained to be delivered, was none other than Israel, through whom Christ, who is the Son of God, and the Messiah of Israel, came nearly two thousand years ago! We may say also that the Moon under her feet represents the glory of the Old Covenant, while the Sun with which she was clothed, reflects the glory of the New Covenant, which God has promised He will make with Israel, and we may assume, without fear of contradiction that the Twelve Stars upon her head, with which she was crowned represent the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Another Wonder in Heaven

Now, let us give attention to what is stated in Revelation 12:3 and 4, where it says, “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. 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 women which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

Satan

I think that no one will question here but what the Red Dragon refers primarily to Satan, who as we know opposed and sought to hinder the birth of the Christ Child. We know also that when Christ was born, Satan sought to have Him destroyed. The fact that he is here described as the Red Dragon indicates his ferocity.

A Reason for Satan’s Hatred

You will recall that in Genesis 3:15, God said to the serpent, that is to Satan, as represented by the serpent, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”

It is no wonder, therefore, that Satan hated the seed of the woman, and that he made every effort to hinder the birth of the Christ Child, and thereby tried to thwart the purposes of God in redemption, for the virgin born man, according to the prophecy, was to be the world’s redeemer, and the ONE who would bruise the serpent’s head.

Satan Tried to Hinder the Birth of Christ

Satan first sought to make the birth of the Redeemer impossible by bringing about a state of moral corruption, which necessitated the destruction of almost the entire human race, under the judgment of the flood! As we know, he also hindered the birth of Isaac, who was the promised seed, until both Abraham and Sarah were old, and if it had not have been for the divine intervention of God, Isaac would never have been born. Other instances could be referred to such as the murder of the royal family by Athaliah, when only Joash of the royal family was saved by being hid in the house of the Lord for six years. Later, Satan brought about a curse upon Jehoiachim of the royal line! And last of all, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, he so moved upon the art of Herod, that he sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coats thereof, from two years old and under.

Thus we see the age long enmity of the Dragon against the promised seed of the woman, and how he sought to destroy the seed of the woman, i. e., the Christ Child, as soon as He was born.

Of Political Significance

Now the fact that the Dragon is described here as having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head, places a political significance also upon this passage. One writer speaking on this subject says, “His seven heads here crowned signify the seven Empires that he energized to destroy the people of Israel and so prevent the birth of the Messiah. These Empires are Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. These powers in turn—notably the Egyptian and the Persian—almost succeeded in annihilating the Hebrew people. The Ten Horns represent the ten kings of chapter 17, verses 3, 7, 12, 16, and chapter 13:1.”
It is evident from what is stated in verse 4 that in his effort to destroy the promised seed, Satan has not only employed human government, as an instrument to accomplish his purpose, but that he seduced Angels also, to help him for it says, “His tail drew the third part of the Stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth.” This statement merely reveals what will happen, because in verse 9 we learn that Satan will be cast out of heaven into the earth, and that his angels will be cast out with him.

Now, let us read what is written in verses 5 and 6, where it says, “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, 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 three score days.”

The Man Child Was Christ

Nov. in our discussion thus far, we have labored exceedingly to show that the woman clothed with the Sun, with the moon under her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars upon her head, was National Israel and that the man child which she brought forth was none other than Christ, the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel, whose destiny is to rule the nations. But these facts which we have stated concerning the birth of Christ are a matter of history, while the Book we are studying is declared to be a Book of prophecy. How then are we to apply what is stated here in any way to the future. The prophetic significance is this, i.e. that Christ is the head of the Church, and the Church which is now being called out from among Jews and Gentiles, is declared to be the Body of Christ, and “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”

The Mystical Body of Christ

Taking into account therefore, the Church, which is the mystical Body of Christ, and the fact that Christ is the head of the Church, the Body of Christ will not be complete until the Church is resurrected or changed while living, and is caught up to be with Christ, as stated in First Thessalonians 4:13 to 18. The resurrection and rapture of the Church, when she will be caught up to be with Christ, is still future. Historically speaking, Christ was caught up unto God and to His Throne nearly two thousand years ago, when He ascended from Mt. Olivet into heaven, as stated in Acts the 1st chapter! But the time is not far distant when the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, will also be caught up unto God, and to His Throne, to be joined to Christ, who is the head of the Church.

Therefore, it is the resurrection and rapture and the ascension of the Church that are in the foreview in our lesson text. This is still a future event, and just as Satan, the Old Dragon, stood ready to devour the Christ Child when He was born nearly two thousand years ago, just so will he stand ready, with all of the powers at His command, including the angels of heaven who follow him, and men upon earth who will obey his commands, to hinder the resurrection and the rapture of the Saints of God to heaven, who constitute the mystical body of Christ.

Satan Knows

His reason for doing this will be because he knows that the Church, which is the Body of Christ, is destined with Christ to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is indicated in the promise which Christ gave in His message to the Church at Thyatira, where He said, “that which ye have already hold fast till I come, and He that overcometh, and keepeth my works until the end, to will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.”

For this reason Satan will hate the Church and will do everything within his power to hinder the resurrection and the ascension of the saints who belong to the Body of Christ.

The Wilderness a Place of Refuge

The sixth verse of our lesson text says, “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 three score days.” This merely states what Israel will do immediately after resurrection and rapture of the Church! Just as soon as the Church is gone, Children of Israel will flee into wilderness where they will be protected by the Lord for a thousand two hundred and three score days, or three and half years, which will be the exact period of the Great Tribulation. We shall have more to say about this in our next lesson.
to the Bottomless Pit — After Being Loosed for a Little Season He Will Be Consigned to the Lake of Fire — Michael a Powerful Arch
Angel and a Great Commander — The Heaven in Which the Battle Between Michael and His Angels and the Dragon and His Angels
Will Take Place. The Church to Be Resurrected and Caught Up to Meet the Lord in the Air — The Way Must Be Prepared for This
Event — Result of This War in Heaven

Introduction

Revelation means to reveal, to unveil, or to make known. The very title of this book, therefore, contradicts the impression which
many people have that the book of Revelation is a sealed book and has no message for those of us who are living today. Therefore,
since the word Revelation means to reveal, in the sense of unveiling something and to make known the truth, we insist that a study
of this book is both interesting and instructive and helpful to all of God’s children every-where who desire to know the Truth. We
have progressed in our present study to Revelation the twelfth chapter and the seventh verse, where our present lesson will begin.

Review

In our last lesson based upon Revelation 12:1-6, we studied concerning the woman clothed with the Sun, with the Moon under her
feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

Our last lesson also revealed Satan under the symbolism of a great Red Dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven
crowns upon his heads.

Mention was also made of the Man-child who was the son of the Woman described in this chapter, who was to rule all nations with a
rod of iron. The Passage also revealed that this child was caught up unto God and unto His throne, and that following this event the
woman fled into the Wilderness where (it says), “She hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand
two hundred and three score days.”

By much study and by comparing scripture with scripture in our last lesson, we discovered that the Woman clothed with the Sun was
none other than National Israel and that the Man-child which she brought forth who was to rule all nations was none other than
Christ! The interpretation of the Man-child must be enlarged, however, to include the Church which is the body of Christ, which is
now being called out from among both Jews and Gentiles in this age of Grace through the preaching of the Gospel. When the
Church is completed and is joined to Christ, who is declared to be the head of the Church, then the Man-child will be completed in
the mystical sense also. And so we see that there is both an historical and a prophetic interpretation to be made of this passage, if
we would understand it fully.

We learned also, that Satan under the symbolism of the great Red Dragon, stood before the Woman which was ready to be
delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. This we discovered, applied historically to Christ, who was born of Mary
and who was therefore of the race of Israel and of the house of David. We must never forget that Jesus was conceived by the Holy
Ghost and was born of a Virgin Mother and that He was as pertaining to the flesh, of the seed of Abraham, who was made the
depository of the Messianic Hope and through whose seed the Messiah was to come. This accounts for the age long enmity which
Satan has had against the seed of Abraham and it gives the reason why he sought to destroy the Christ Child when He was born.

Since the Church is the mystical body of Christ and is made up of the spiritual seed of Abraham, it is perfectly natural that Satan
would hate the individual and collective members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.
As we know, the Church is not yet complete but when it is completed, we know that it will be resurrected and raptured away to be
with Christ.

Advance Lesson

Now this brings us to our present lesson. Recorded in Revelation 12:7-12 where it says:

“And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon; and the Dragon fought and His Angels,
and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven. “And the great Dragon was cast out that old serpent
called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: He was cast out into the earth, and His Angels were cast out
with him. “And I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength and the Kingdom of our God,
and the Power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them, before our God day and
night. And they overcame Him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives
unto the Death. “Therefore, Rejoice, Ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and the sea!
For the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because He knoweth that He hath but a short time.”
Not History But Prophecy

Now, I presume that the first thing we should mention concerning this passage is, that what is stated here is not history but is a matter of prophecy. In other words, the war referred to in this passage is not a matter of history but is a future event which is yet to occur.

We all know that in the beginning Satan was "the anointed cherub that covereth." This was his angelic title before he fell. Our present passage, however, does not refer to that ancient and historic event because we are here studying about the work of Satan as the Great Dragon! We are here studying what Satan will do and what will happen to him in the future at the time when the seventh Angel will sound his trumpet and the mystery of God shall be brought to a consummation.

A Mistaken Idea

It is very important for us to realize just here the fact that Satan is not now in Hell as some would have us think. The idea that Satan is now in Hell and that he rules as King over the demons of that region is a mistaken idea based upon the language of poets rather than upon the word of God. The word of God does not sustain this idea in the least. If Satan were now confined Hell; we who live upon the earth would have no reason to fear him, but quite the contrary is true. Satan is not confined in Hell at the present time but on the contrary he is described in the Scriptures as being the Prince of the Power of the Air. This is confirmed in Ephesians two, verses one and two, where it says: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein, in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." From this statement it is perfectly evident that Satan is not confined in Hell at this present time but that He now occupies the atmospheric heavens above the earth, where he reigns as the Prince of the Power of the Air. This explains why Paul said in Ephesians six, eleven and twelve, "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The Downward Course of Satan

Now having located Satan as to his present abode and his present activities, I feel it will be helpful for us to enlarge upon this thought just a little and show you, if we can from the Scriptures, the downward course of Satan both as it has been and as it will be in the future.

In the beginning, because Satan was a beautiful and powerful creature, we have every reason to believe that he stood in the very presence of God but when he was lifted up in pride and fell from his Holy and lofty estate, from what we have just read, it is evident that he was cast out from the highest heaven to the atmospheric Heaven above the earth which he now occupies as the Prince of the Power of the Air.

Incidentally, we wish to point out that, from his present habitation in the atmospheric heaven as Prince of the Power of the Air, Satan now has access into the presence of God. His purpose of entering into the presence of God is in order that he may accuse the brethren! This is well illustrated in the case of Job, whom he accused before God and whom God defended.

Also in Zechariah three, one and two, it says, "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuked thee, O Satan: Even the Lord that has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee; Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Thus we see that Satan does have access to God, even now, as the accuser of the brethren.

Satan Will Be Cast Out of the Heavens

The next step in Satan’s downward career, however, will be when he is cast out of the atmospheric heaven into the earth as suggested in our lesson text, for in Revelation 12:9 it says: "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.” This will not occur until during that period included under the sounding of the seventh trumpet which is yet future.

When this occurs and Satan is thrust down to the earth, his time will be very short, for as we know, that will be during the tribulation period. The worst of which will only last for three years and a half, or forty and two months or 1260/ days.

The Bottomless Pit

The next downward step in the career of Satan is revealed in Revelation 20:1-3, where it says: And I saw an angel come down from Heaven having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him
up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; And after that he must be loosed for a little season."

Also in Revelation twenty, verses seven to nine it says of Satan: **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: The number of which is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them.**

**Satan’s Final Doom**

What then, is to be the final doom and destiny of Satan? This is answered in Revelation twenty, and verse ten, where it says: **And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.** Thus, my friends, in brief outline we have given you the downward course and the career of Satan, the old Dragon, as revealed in the Scriptures and our present lesson has to do with the time, yet future, when he will be cast out from the atmospheric heaven above, down to the earth, which will be the next step in his downward career.

**Michael**

Now having learned something about the Dragon as to his origin and nature and the downward course which he is to follow, we must return to our lesson text and learn something about Michael, for in Revelation 12:7 it says: **And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: And the Dragon fought and his angels.**

**Daniel**

We do not need to be in doubt as to who Michael is, for in Daniel 12:1 says: **And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even unto that same time: And at that time Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in book.**

**Jude**

Michael is also mentioned in verse nine, where it says: **Yet Michael the Archangel, when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, Durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.**

**An Archangel**

From these two passages we discover that Michael is an Archangel and that he is associated in a special way with the children of Israel and that he is also associated with the resurrection of the dead, for he disputed with the Devil about the body of Moses before it was resurrected and taken to Heaven. We know that Moses is alive because appeared upon the Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples.

**A Great Commander**

Now according to our lesson text, Michael will be the great commander-in-chief of a great army of angels on one side, and Satan, who is called the Dragon, will be the great commander-in-chief of another group of angels who follow him. And when the battle is in array and God’s moment has arrived for the conflict, there will be war Heaven.

**Which Heaven Is Meant?**

We must pause just here to inform you, however, that the Heaven in which this battle will occur is not the highest heaven where God is and where Heaven is, but it will be in the atmospheric heaven above the earth where Satan now dwells as the Prince of the Power of the Air. Ordinarily we think of three Heavens. - First there is the atmospheric heavens above the earth including the air and the clouds and the aerial spaces.

- Then there is the celestial heaven which contain the sun, and the moon and the stars, - Above these there is the highest Heaven where God’s throne is, and where Christ is. That the throne of God is far above all heavens is confirmed in Ephesians 1:20-11, where it says: **Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality, and Power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.**

We reaffirm, therefore, that the war in heaven, referred to in our lesson text, which will occur between Michael and his angels and the Dragon and his angels will not be in the highest Heaven where God’s throne is and where Jesus is now at the right hand of the
majesty on high, but it will occur in the atmospheric heaven above the earth for the purpose of expelling Satan and his angels from their present habitation down to the earth.

Other Reasons for the Conflict

But let us ask just here what other reasons there may be for this impending conflict and why it is that Satan will fight against Michael and his angels.

We all know that this is the age of Grace and that the great purpose of the Present age so far as God as concerned, is the calling out and completion of the Church which is the body of Christ! Therefore, this is now being accomplished through the preaching of the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles alike and all who believe whether Jews or Gentiles, are brought in as individual members of the Church which is His body.

The Rapture of the Church

When the Church is finished, that is, when all who are to constitute the body of Christ have been called out, the Church will then be called away to be with Christ. This is confirmed in I Thessalonians 4:16-17, where it says: “For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God: And the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: So shall we ever be with the Lord.”

This event is spoken of as the rapture of the Church and will not occur until Jesus descends from Heaven to receive the Church which is His bride but it is this event now impending which will be the cause of the war in heaven, that is, in the atmospheric Heaven above the earth between Michael and his angels and the Dragon and his angels.

We have already seen how the Church may be considered as the mystical body of Christ and the passage just quoted reveals that when the Church is completed we are to be caught away to be with Christ. We know from other Scriptures that when we have been joined to Christ we are to rule and reign with him in his future administrations over the earth. For this reason Satan, the old Dragon, hates us even now and when the time comes for the resurrection and the rapture of the Saints which belong to the body of Christ, he will be on hand with all of his angels to hinder and to thwart this event if it were possible for him to do so! Please remember that Satan is now the Prince of the Power of the Air and that he occupies the aerial spaces above the earth and that in order for us to be caught up into Heaven to be with Christ, we must ascend up through the spaces which he now occupies. It is natural therefore, that since he hates us and since he has set himself against the purposes of God toward us, that Satan would rally his forces at the time appointed to hinder the resurrection and the ascension of the Saints of God at the rapture. Just as he sought to destroy the physical body of Christ when He had been born of the Virgin Mary by causing the slaying of the innocent children in Bethlehem, just so will Satan stand ready to destroy the Church which is the mystical body of Christ when He had been born by the Power of the resurrection in the morning when it will be raptured away to be with Christ.

The Way Must Be Prepared

Now in order to keep him from doing this Michael, the Archangel will come with his angels and fight against the Dragon and his angels in order to make it possible for the resurrected saints and those who will be changed while living to be caught up from the earth and ascend up through Satan’s territory into the upper Heavens to be with Christ.

This, my friends, reveals what an interest God and the angels of Heaven have in those of us who belong to Christ. It reveals that God’s purpose is to resurrect us from the dead or to change us while we are living by His resurrection power and catch us away to be with Christ. He loves us enough and is so determined to bring this to pass that He will send Michael and his angels to fight against the Dragon and his angels in order to make it possible for us to ascend into the presence of God. Even now angels are interested in the things we do. We know this is true because in Hebrews 1:14, speaking of angels it says: “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” How wonderful therefore, that when the time comes for our very resurrection and ascension into Heaven will be made possible by the guardianship and the ministration of the angels You will recall that the resurrection of Jesus was attended by the presence and the ministration of the angels and so it will be at the resurrection and the rapture of the Church. The angels of Heaven are interested in this coming event as much as we are and look forward to it with great anticipation and we may be assured that Michael and his angels may be on hand to fight against the Dragon and his angels so that we may have a safe exit from this world and have an abundant entrance into the presence of God.

Result of the War in the Atmospheric Heavens

Now let us consider briefly what is going to be the result of this war in Heaven so far as Satan and his angels are concerned and so far as the people who will be left upon this earth are concerned. This is plainly stated in the lesson text in verses nine to twelve where it says:
“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. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

These verses reveal the outcome of the conflict between Michael and his angels and the Dragon and his angels and they explain those conditions which will come to pass upon the earth after these things have happened.

LECTURE 38 ON THE REVELATION

Satan Symbolized by the Dragon Will Persecute National Israel During the Tribulation Period As Never Before — A Remnant of the Jews Now Returning to Palestine in Preparation for the Fulfillment of Those Things Prophesied in This Chapter — The Human Objective — The Divine Purpose in the Regathering of Israel — Jerusalem and Palestine the Center of the Earth Geographically and Spiritually, Therefore They Are Central in God's Plans and Purposes in Redemption for the Present and the Future — The Jews in the Land Between Two Mighty Forces — The Abomination of Desolation Will Occur in the Rebuilt Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem — When This Occurs the Jews Will Be Driven Out of Their Land and Will Find Refuge in the Wilderness

The Bible a Light

SINCE the Bible is a complete revelation of divine truth concerning God’s plan of redemption, it is perfectly natural that it should reveal truth past, present and future. Unless he Bible did this, it would in no wise be a lamp unto our feet, or a light unto our pathway. We should be glad and thankful, therefore, that the Bible is filled throughout with words of prophecy, which reveal unto us things that are yet to come to pass.

A Book of Prophecy

The Book of Revelation is primarily a Book of Prophecy; the vision and scope of which reaches to the very end or consummation of God’s redemptive plan. Therefore, we claim for ourselves, and for all those who hear this message, the blessing which is promised in Revelation 1:3, where it says, “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.”

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 12th chapter, and the 13th verse, where our present lesson will begin.

Review

In our study of the 12th chapter thus far, we have considered the woman clothed with the Sun with the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, who being with child cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered, and found her to be symbolic of National Israel.

We have also considered the Red Dragon, which had seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head, whose tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth, and found the Dragon to be none other than Satan, which stood before the woman, ready to devour her child as soon as it was born.

We discovered also that the man child which the woman brought forth, who was to rule all nations, was none other than Christ, and that the man child also includes the Church, which is the Body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, which is now being called out from among the Jews and the Gentiles as a people for His name, through the preaching of the Gospel.

According to the lesson text, the man child was caught up unto God and to His Throne. This was historically true of Christ, for He ascended into heaven after He had arisen from the dead, nearly two thousand years ago; and it is prophetically true of the Church, which is the mystical Body of Christ, which will be caught up to be with Christ at the rapture; suggested in First Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

A Prophetic Announcement

In Revelation 12:6, it says, “And the woman fled into the wilderness, (that is, after the catching away of her child) where she
hath a place prepared of God that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days." This was a prophetic announcement of things that would come to pass in the ongoing, and the unfolding of God’s plan in the drama of events during the Tribulation Period.

**War in the Heavens**

In our last lesson based upon Revelation 12:7 to 12, we learned that at the time, yet future, when the Church is resurrected and raptured away to be with Christ; there will be war in heaven between Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels. We discovered that this war will take place in the atmospheric heavens above the earth, which Satan now occupies as the Prince of the Power of the air. Satan’s purpose for waging this war will be to prevent, if possible the resurrection and the ascension of the saints of God, who belong to Christ, into the presence of God in the upper or highest heavens. Satan knows that the moment the Church, which is the Body of Christ, is completed, and caught away to be with her Lord, she will be invested with power and great glory to rule and reign with Christ. Therefore, he hates the Church and will do all within his to prevent the resurrection and ascension of the Church into heaven.

The reason Michael and his angels will fight against the Dragon and his angels will be in order to drive them out of the atmospheric heavens down the earth, thus ridding the heavens of Satan and his angels, and at the same time make way for the safe ascension of the Church up through Satanic territory into the presence of God.

When this had been accomplished in the vision, John said,

> “I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now is the salvation and strength and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

**Lesson Text**

We are now ready to advance in, study by reading what is written Revelation 12:13 to 17, where it says,

> “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. “And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. “And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. “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.”

**A Prophetic Summary**

Now, what we have here in these words is really a summary of what is going to happen to Israel during the coming Tribulation Period.

We have already seen how Satan has hated the race of Israel ever since God called Abram and made with him the great Abrahamic Covenant, in which He made him and his seed the depository of the Messianic hope. In due course of time, when Christ was born, in fulfillment of the Word of God, Satan made every effort to destroy the Christ Child, but failed in doing so. Then at a future time when he shall have failed in his efforts to prevent the resurrection and rapture of the Church, and will himself be cast down to the earth, he will be more angry than ever against the woman which brought forth the man child. Since the woman represents National Israel, we do not need to be surprised that Satan at that time will persecute the Children of Israel left upon the earth as never before, and will seek in every way possible to destroy them. When we understand conditions as they will be at that time, we do not wonder that John said, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil has come down unto you having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

**Persecution of the Jews**

Everyone knows of the present persecution of the Jews in Germany and other countries throughout the world! All of these things are
of striking significance in view of that which is stated in our present lesson text; for we know that which is now taking place is only a beginning of sorrows to the Jews. That worse trouble is in store for the Jews is confirmed in Jeremiah 30:6 and 7, where it says, “Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.”

The Jews Returning to Palestine

In their present distress the Jews are naturally looking toward Palestine as a place of refuge, and they are returning to their own land just as fast as possible with the determination of building up a National Jewish State in the land of their Fathers. But according to our lesson text, their present return to the land, and their present efforts to build a revived Jewish State in Palestine, will not bring to them the rest and security which they need, and which their hearts long for.

A Two-Fold Purpose

In the present return of the Jews to their own land, we see both a human and a divine purpose. The Jews are seeking to return to their own land as a place of refuge, and they are seeking by every means, both politically and financially to throw off the yoke of Gentile overlordship by rebuilding a National Jewish State of their own in Palestine. That Israel would seek to do this very thing is confirmed in Zephaniah 2, verse 1 and 2, where it says, “Gather yourselves together, yea gather together O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord’s anger come upon you.”

And that, my friends, is exactly what the Jews are doing today. Finding out by persecution that they are no longer desired by the Gentile nations, they are gathering back to their own land. And their purpose for doing so is that they might have a place of refuge.

The Divine Purpose

The divine purpose of the present restoration of Israel to their own land is quite different, however. God’s purpose in allowing them to return to their own land is twofold. First, in order that He might purge them by affliction, and then later bestow upon them the full and complete blessing promised to them in the Abrahamic covenant.

That God’s primary purpose in their present restoration is to punish them, and to purge them by affliction, is confirmed in Ezekiel 22:17 to 22, where it says, “And the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of Man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and idon, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.”

Jerusalem and Palestine the Center of the Earth

We all know that Jerusalem and Palestine are geographically the center of God’s future plans and purposes for the earth in relation to His great plan of redemption.

Two Camps

We know also that the world is fast dividing itself into two great camps, i.e., Fascism, which seems to be springing up in the Western world, and Communism, which seems to be coming in power among the nations of the North and in between these two mighty forces stands the Jew. The Jews are now turning to their own land with the hope of rebuilding a national Jewish State and it is perfectly evident that they a not at agreement with either the political or religious ideas of the Fascists or the Communists. Now, here is what will happen. When the Jews have return in sufficient numbers, and shall have reestablished a temporary Jewish State in Palestine they will find themselves, as it were, between the upper and nether millstones, i.e., between Communism on the one hand and Fascism on the other.

We know from the scriptures that both Fascism and Communism will seek to possess and to control Palestine. In Daniel 11, and verse 41, where it speaks of the Antichrist, it says, “He shall enter also into the glorious land and many countries shall be overthrown.” And Ezekiel the 38th chapter reveals the approach of the Communistic armies from the north in their effort to destroy the Children of Israel in the land and to take a great spoil. Thus we see that whether the Jews realize it or not, sooner or later, when they shall have returned to the land of their Fathers, they are going to find themselves in the very midst of a furnace of affliction, even as God has prophesied in His Word! Therefore, instead of returning to their land and finding security, they will themselves at
the mercy of the Antichrist on the one hand, and the Communist armies from the north on the other!

**The Abomination of Desolation**

The first thing that will happen to them will no doubt be the deception of the Antichrist, who will commit the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, in Daniel 9:27, and referred to by our Lord in Matthew 24:15.

In Daniel 9:27 we are told that the Antichrist will confirm the covenant with the Jews for one Prophetic week of seven years, and, **In the midst of the week (or after three and one-half years)** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

This act of abomination, which will be committed by the Antichrist, refers to the time when he will exalt himself in the rebuilt Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem, and demand that the people worship him as God. That he will do this very thing is confirmed and explained in Second Thessalonians 2:3 and 4, where it says, “Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God he sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

Looking forward to this very time, Jesus, speaking prophetically, in Matthew 24, said, **When ye therefore shall See the abomination, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.”**

**Great Tribulation**

And then in verses 21 and 22 of the same chapter, He said, “For then shall be 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, but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

**What Satan Will Do**

We are now ready to return to our lesson text in Revelation 12:13 to 16, where it says, **And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly unto the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth, water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.”**

Now, when we understand that the woman of this passage is national Israel, whom Satan has reason to hate, and whom he will seek to destroy, all that is stated here is in keeping and in perfect harmony with what we have said concerning the future of Israel.

**Israel Will Flee to the Wilderness**

This passage plainly reveals that after the resurrection and rapture of the Church, the terrible time of Tribulation will begin. The Antichrist will commit **“the abomination of desolation”** in Jerusalem, and the Jews, who will be at that time in Jerusalem and Palestine, will be compelled to flee into the wilderness to escape from the deception and the tyranny and the persecution of the Antichrist. When the Antichrist exalts himself in their Temple, above all that is called God, all who refuse to worship him at the command of the false prophet, will be killed. This is confirmed in Revelation 13, and verse 16, which we will study more about later on.

But even in that terrible time when the Jews will be deceived and driven from their own land by the Antichrist, and his followers, God will not utterly forsake them; for they will flee into the wilderness where they will be nourished by the Lord for a time, and times and half a time, or three and one-half years, from the face of the serpent. This we know is the exact duration of the awful time of tribulation, prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 12:1, and referred to by our Lord in Matthew 24:21.

**Their Place of Refuge**

It is interesting to know that God has a place prepared into which the Children of Israel may flee at that time, and find a safe place of refuge from the fury of the Antichrist, who would utterly annihilate them if he could.

Concerning this place of refuge it is interesting to note that there are certain countries which will escape the control of the Antichrist when he comes into power in Jerusalem, and strange to say these are not far distant from the holy land. In Daniel 11:41, it says, speaking of the Antichrist, **“He shall enter also into the glorious land, (that is into Palestine) and many countries shall be**
overthrown, but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the Children of Ammon."

The Rock City of Petra

Now, it is interesting to know that Edom takes in the wilderness where Israel wandered for forty years, after they turned back for Kadesh-Barnea, because of their unbelief. It is still more interesting to know that in Edom there is today a city of refuge, called “The Rock City of Petra,” which we are told was a great commercial city in the days of King Solomon. The city is hewn out of the rocks of the mountains, and the houses are made in the cliffs of the rocks. This strange city, which is now vacant, is protected by a long canyon about two miles long, and we are told that no other city in the world has such a wonderful gateway. Indeed, my friend there is no place on earth which would serve as a better place of refuge for the persecuted children of Israel than this rock fortress in the wilderness Edom.

What Man Thinks: What God Says

Present day newspaper articles, in discussing the Jewish question, are wondering where the Jew can go since he is being driven out of Gentile lands, such as Germany and Austria, and elsewhere. In their conferences, many fine schemes for colonizing the Jews in other parts of the world, are being made by the statesmen of different countries, but all of these plans will eventually fail because we know that conditions will continue to get worse and worse for the Jewish people; for Jesus said, "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake." We know also that it is God’s plan and purpose to bring them into the wilderness as a place of refuge. The Jews themselves would like to return to their own land, and find refuge there, but we know that God has other plans for them, before He will allow them to enter their land in peace; for in Ezekiel 20:33 to 38, it says, “As I live, saith the Lord, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God, and I will cause you to pass under the rod, and bring you into the bond of the covenant, and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, (that is in Palestine; where they are now returning in unbelief) and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

All this, my friends, confirms what is stated in our lesson text, and when Israel flees from Jerusalem and Palestine into the wilderness, from the hands of the Antichrist, it says, “The serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman (that is, after Israel) that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.”

Satan Will Try to Hinder

There is no doubt but what this passage indicates an effort on the part of Satan to hinder their escape into the wilderness, but it indicates also that his effort will utterly fail, and that Israel by God’s help, will reach her place of refuge in the wilderness, where she will be preserved by the Lord and dealt with by Him until the time of Tribulation is past.

When Satan shall have failed in his purpose of completely annihilating the Jews who will flee into the wilderness, we are not surprised that it says, “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.”

Who Are the Remnant?

The believing remnant spoken of here will no doubt be the one hundred and forty four thousand converted Jews, mentioned in the 7th chapter of the Revelation, who will be called out and chosen and sealed as the ministers of Christ during the Tribulation period. Naturally Satan will hate them also and will do his best to destroy them, because at that time they will be scattered abroad throughout the world, teaching and preaching, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.
A Personal Testimony

IT is my observation that true Christian people everywhere are taking a greater interest than ever before in the study of this remarkable Book of prophecy and perhaps there was never a time when the wicked and the unbelieving and the mere professors of Christ who are Christian in name only, have opposed the truth given in this Book more than they are doing today. I realize that any preacher of the Gospel, who in the fear of God, and without fear of man, begins to preach and teach the things which are written in the Book of Revelation, will have to pay a dear price in one way or another for the privilege of doing so. I know whereof I speak because when I first started preaching from the Book of Revelation I was informed by one of the Elders of the Church of which I was Pastor at that time, that what I was preaching was unsatisfactory to the Church and he promptly gave me to understand that unless I stopped preaching from this Book I would lose my job, because, as he put it, my bread and butter depended upon it. In reply to this statement I gave him to understand that I intended to go right on preaching from the Book of Revelation, even though I was threatened with the loss of bread and butter for myself and family. Well, things worked out as I expected. I kept on preaching as I had been doing and in due course of time enough pressure was brought to bear by the unbelieving minority in the Church to make it a real bread and butter proposition. They withheld their financial support and influenced others to do the same until I was compelled to resign and move my family to Springfield, where I had no job and little hopes of finding one. All we had at that time which induced us to come to Springfield, was a 30 minute program over KWTO each Friday afternoon, which was an opportunity for preaching the word of God but which afforded us no financial income whatever. But I am thanking God that through the years which have intervened since then, He has increased my time over the air, and that even though I have had to pay a great price in poverty and opposition and misunderstanding a reproach, I have been privileged to visit your homes by way of Radio, with message from the Book of Revelation which I do feel is of timely interest and importance to all Christian people everywhere! I only wish that more of fellow preachers were willing to preach to their people the wonderful truth contained in this Book and be willing take the consequences! I believe that if they would do this, God would bless them and use them in a mighty way. God pity the ministers everywhere who have either compromised the truth of God or have withheld the truth of the Book from the people merely because they were afraid of losing their bread and butter! Oh for men with a mighty faith who understand God’s word, who are willing to preach it to the people and who are able to walk into the ever deepening shadows of this dying age with a conqueror’s tread and give their lives in the end, if need be, as martyrs for the cause of Christ.

In our last message based upon Revelation 12:13-17 we gave what might be called an outline or summary of Israel in the tribulation. And we were able to see that during the coming time of tribulation the Jewish people will be persecuted more than ever before, persecution against the Jews which are now taking place, throughout the world is only a beginning of sorrows for them. From our study we learned that before the present Jewish crisis is over God will allow them to return to their own land which they are doing today, in order that he might purge them by affliction! Before their trouble is over, He will allow the Antichrist to deceive them and to desecrate their sanctuary and drive them once again out of their land into the wilderness.

God Has a Place of Refuge Prepared

When all this comes to pass, we were glad to learn from God’s word that He has a place of refuge in the wilderness of Edom in the rock city of Petra for the persecuted children of Israel, and there He will plead with them face-to-face like as He pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt and there He will cause them to pass under the rod and bring them into the bond of the covenant and will purge out from among them the rebels and them that transgress against Him. And then when the tribulation is past, we know that Jesus will come again and lead the faithful believing remnant of Israel back out of the wilderness into the promised land where they will inherit their own land once again and have bestowed upon them all the blessings promised to them in the great Abrahamic covenant.

This we know, that the present persecution of the children of Israel which has already begun and which will continue until the plans and purposes of God for them have been brought to a consummation by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ who is their true Messiah is being brought about by Satan, the old Dragon who has always hated the chosen race of Israel through which Christ came and through which He will even yet accomplish the great purposes of God.

Lesson Text

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 13:1-10 where it says:
“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 head the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed: And all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the beast: “And they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemy; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. “And it was given unto Him to make war with the saints and to overcome them “And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. “If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

This, my friends, is indeed a very wonderful passage which is just filled with profound and important truth. And I am sure that we will not be able to give an exposition of the entire passage in our present lesson, but we want to study the text as a whole, because the passage presents to us one great personage and the picture of this person would be incomplete without studying the entire passage.

Satan Cast Down to Earth

We have already learned from chapter 12 in verses 7-12 that as a result of the war in Heaven (that is, in the atmospheric heavens above the earth) between Michael and his angels and the Dragon and his angels, the Dragon, which is none other than Satan, will be cast out of Heaven down to the earth and it will be because of his presence upon the earth that trouble and tribulation will come.

The Antichrist

It is perfectly logical therefore, that at this stage in the Revelation there would be given to us by Divine inspiration a picture of the Antichrist in whom Satan will eventually incarnate himself for the carrying out of his last diabolical schemes against the purposes of God.

The great personage therefore, presented to us in the passage just read is none other than the coming Antichrist and I dare say that in the light of current events and Bible prophecy, this is a very interesting and timely subject.

For nearly 2,000 years men have studied the Scriptures and have taught the people concerning the origin and the nature and the character and the works of the true Christ. All this has been good and well but strange as it may seem, comparatively little has been taught to the people concerning the coming Antichrist. The very same Bible which gives to us knowledge and information concerning the true Christ, also reveals to us the origin and the nature and the work of the Antichrist. It shall be our present task therefore, to study the Scriptures and to discover all we can concerning this great personage which according to the Word of God, will be the embodiment of all that is evil.

I must confess that this is not a very pleasant subject. Nevertheless, it is one to which we should give our careful and prayerful consideration. Many people do not like to hear about the true Christ because His righteousness condemns them and His power and authority to judge them strikes fear to their hearts. Indeed, my friends, if men do not want to hear about the true Christ, how much less are they willing and desirous to hear about the Antichrist. Be that as it may, it is our firm conviction that men everywhere need to know both about the true Christ, who is indeed and in truth the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world, and they need to know also about the Antichrist who is the opposite of the true Christ and who will be the enemy of God and the very incarnation of all that is evil.

The Spirit of Antichrist Long Present

First of all we must recognize that while the 13th chapter of Revelation describes to us the nature and person and work of the Antichrist as he will appear during the tribulation period, the spirit of Antichrist has been present in every age of human history.

In I John 2:18 it says: “Little children come, it is the last time: And as have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”

From this we understand, that anyone who yields to the incoming and the abiding presence of Satan in their heart possesses to just such a degree the spirit of the Antichrist.
A Remarkable Prophecy

It is interesting to note what is stated in Genesis 3:15 where God said to the serpent: 1 will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In these words we have the first promise of a Saviour! Nevertheless this promise takes into account the fact that the seed of the serpent would be an opposing force to bruise the heel of him who was to be the righteous seed of the woman.

This great truth which applies primarily to Christ who was the seed of the woman and to Antichrist who is to be the seed of Satan has applied in a limited way to all men in every age. Those who have believed in Christ as the Son of God and as the Saviour of the world; and who have believed the word of God and have sought to obey its precepts, have always been opposed by those who have refused to believe and who have yielded their hearts to the spirit of evil. In touching upon this point in his book of Lectures on the Apocalypse, Seiss says:

“All through the ages of our world, there has been a Cain for very Abel, a Jannes and Jambres for every Moses and Aaron, a Babylon for every Jerusalem, a Herod for every John the Baptist, and a Nero for every going forth of God's consecrated apostles.”

Indeed, my friends, how true this has been and no one can doubt the facts in the case but even though the spirit of Antichrist has been present in every age, we must be made to realize that the coming Antichrist is more than a spirit or a system of evil or a mere Satanic influence. From our lesson text in Revelation the 13th chapter it is plain to see that the coming Antichrist will be a person in whom Satan will incarnate himself, thus making him the very embodiment and consummation of all that is evil.

Names of the Antichrist

In Revelation 13:1 the Antichrist is spoken of as a Beast but let us not think for one moment that this is the only name which has been given to him in the Scriptures, for the fact is that he has many names given to him in the Bible, some of which we find in the Old Testament and some in the New.

For instance, - In Isaiah 10:5-6 and chapter 30:27-33 this same evil person is called by Divine inspiration The Assyrian." - In Isaiah 14:4 he is referred to as "The King of Babylon." - And in Isaiah 14:12 as “Lucifer.” - In Daniel 7:8 and chapter 8:9-12 he is called the “Little Horn.” - In Daniel 8:23 he is spoken of as “A King of Fierce Countenance.” - In Daniel 9:26 he is referred to as ‘The Prince that Shall Come", - In Daniel 11:36 he is called ‘The Willful King.”

In the New Testament we have already seen that the Apostle John spoke of him as the Antichrist, and in II Thessalonians 2:3-8 the Apostle Paul speaks of him as “The Man of Sin,” “Son of Perdition,” and as “That Wicked (or Wicked One).

Let us now return to our lesson text in Revelation 13:1 where it says: “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having 7 heads and 10 horns and upon his horns 10 crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.”

Here the Antichrist is spoken of under the symbolism of a great beast which John saw rise up out of the sea. Since the name Beast represents the person of the Antichrist, it is natural to believe that the sea, in this instance, represents the masses of the people from whom the Antichrist will arise.

The Numbers 7 and 10 Important

But what are we to understand by the 7 heads and the 10 horns and the 10 crowns which were upon the heads of this composite nondescript Beast which John saw?

No. 7

You will remember that in the beginning of our study in the Book of Revelation, we gave a brief lesson or study in Scripture numerics, in other words, the importance of numbers as used in the Scriptures. In regard to the number 7 we said: “7 is the number of dispensational fulness. Therefore, when the number 7 is used, it represents completeness in relation to the subject in question. If in the Scriptures it is used concerning judgment, it represents the fulness or completeness of judgment. If the number 7 is used concerning grace, it means the fullness or completeness of God's Grace.”

No. 10

And we also said that: “Ten is the number of worldly completion, especially as related to the fact of evil.”

Applying these principles to what is stated in our lesson text, we may say that since this Beast had 7 heads, he must be looked upon as being invested with full or complete intelligence; and since he had ten horns, which represent power, he was invested with
full or complete worldly power; and since upon the ten horns there were ten crowns, which represent regal authority, he was
invested with full or complete power and dominion, that is, from a worldly point of view.

What we have, therefore, in this nondescript Beast is a symbolic presentation of the political sovereignty of this world, as it will be
headed up in the person of the coming Antichrist who is so vividly described to us in the chapter we are now studying.

This is confirmed in the second verse of our lesson text where John said: “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 Beasts Which Daniel Saw

Now this portion of our lesson text would mean very little if we did not know what is written in Daniel the 7th chapter where Daniel
was given a vision of four beasts which bore individually the same marks or characteristics as those mentioned in our lesson text
concerning the Beast or Antichrist. Remember it says that this Beast which John saw was like unto a leopard, his feet were as the
feet of a bear, his mouth as the mouth of a lion.

The Great Image

Now before we take up a study of these symbols of political power, we wish to remind you of the fact that God gave to King
Nebuchadnezzar a certain dream in which he saw a great image in the form of a man. The interpretation of the dream and the vision
which the King had, was given to Daniel and in Daniel 2:31-33 He said: “Thou O King, sawest, and behold a great image. The
great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was
of fine gold, His breast his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs were of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and
part of clay.”

Thus my friends, we see that four different kinds of metal were present in this image and that there was a deterioration in value from
the top to the bottom of the image, beginning with gold at the top and ending up with an admixture of iron and clay in the of the
image.

The Image Destroyed

Now in Daniel 2:34-43 it says: “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet
that were iron and clay and break them to pieces. “Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to
pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; And the wind carried them away, and no place was
found for them and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

The Interpretation

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the King. “Thou O King art a king of kings; for the God of
Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever, the children of men dwell, the Beasts
of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given unto thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this
head of gold.

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over
the earth.

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: And as
iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. “And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters
clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided but there shall be in it the strength of the iron forasmuch as thou
sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. “And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall
be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with
the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another even as Iron is not mixed with clay.”

The March of Empire

From what is stated here it is plain to see that the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw and which Daniel interpreted as a symbol of
the march of empire during “the times of the Gentiles,” symbolized by the image of a man.

An Interesting Quotation

Concerning the passage just read in his book on The Revelation, the late Clarence Larkin, well known Bible expositor, said:

“From what has been said we see that the ‘COLOSSUS’ of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream symbolized the ‘World Kingdoms’ in
their Unity and Historical Succession. Gentile dominion is represented by a huge ‘METALLIC MAN.’ The degeneration of the ‘World Kingdoms’ is seen in the diminishing value of the metals used. Silver is worth less than gold, brass than silver, iron than brass, and clay than iron. The weight of the ‘COLOSSUS’ also declines; the specific gravity of gold is 19.5, of silver 10.47, of brass 8, of cast iron 5, and of clay 1.93. ‘The Colossus’ is TOP HEAVY. The character of the governing power also deteriorates from an ‘Absolute Monarchy’ under Nebuchadnezzar, to an ‘Autocratic Democracy’ symbolized by the mixture of the iron and clay of the Feet. “In other words the governing power passes from the Head, the organ that ought to direct the members of the body, to the Feet, which are only made to carry the body whither the Head directs. We have dealt thus at length on the ‘Colossus,’ for it is only as we understand it, that we can understand the meaning of the ‘Wild Beasts’ that Daniel saw come up out of the sea.”

Conclusion

Now having come to understand these things, we will be ready in our next lesson to study about the four beasts which Daniel saw as recorded in Daniel the 7th chapter which were like a lion and a bear and a leopard and one which had ten horns, all of which correspond to the likeness of the nondescript beast described to us in our lesson text in Revelation 13.
mixed with clay. It is plainly evident therefore, according to the metallic construction of this image, that it was top heavy, thus indicating that the governing power would pass from the head eventually to the feet, which ordinarily are made only to carry the body and not to direct its course! Judging from present day political conditions throughout the world, it would seem as if we have just about arrived at this condition. Instead of the nations being governed by the upper and better classes of the people, the powers of government are more and more being controlled by those from the lower walks of life and from the lower strata of society, who rule by force rather than by intellect.

Empires Symbolically Represented

Now, we want to remind you of the fact, that the four different kinds of metal used in the image were each of them, representative of an empire. The head of gold represented the world empire of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, the silver in the image represented the world empire of Media-Persia and the brass of the image represented the World empire of Greece while the iron Presented the fourth world empire of Rome. And we know from other Scriptures that the feet and toes of the image which were part of iron and part of clay, represent the Roman Empire as it will be in its revived state, during the closing days of the present dispensation.

The March of Empire

Therefore, in the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw and which Daniel interpreted, we have a prophetic foreview of the march of empire during "the times of the Gentiles." History confirms this fact and current events compel us to realize, that we are living in that period symbolized by the feet of the image, which means that the time is not far distant when the stone cut out without hands, will smite the image upon its feet. And when this happens, we are told, that the entire image will be broken to pieces and become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and that the stone, which will smite the image, will become a great mountain (or kingdom) and fill the whole earth.

In this connection, it is interesting to note what is stated in Daniel 2:44-45, where it says: And in the days of these kings, (that is, the ten kings represented by the ten toes of the image) 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. For as much as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: And the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Lesson Text

Now, referring to our lesson text in Revelation 13:2 John said: "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." These words are, of course, descriptive of the beast which John saw rise up out of the sea, having 7 heads and 10 horns and upon his horns, 10 crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

What Does This Nondescript Beast Represent?

Now, what do you suppose, could be the significance in the fact, that this nondescript beast bore the characteristics of a leopard, a bear and a lion?

The Beasts Which Daniel Saw

By turning to Daniel the 7th chapter, we get some light and help upon this difficult subject. In Daniel 7:1-7 it says:

“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. “Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. “And behold! another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it; and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this, I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl: the beast had also four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and beheld a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth: It devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it, and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.”
We are told that it was 48 years after King Nebuchadnezzar had his dream concerning the metallic image, which represented the march of empire during the times of the Gentiles that Daniel himself received this vision of the four beasts, rising up out of the sea.

Divinely Given Symbols of Political Power

There are many things that might be said about these four beasts which Daniel saw, but our main purpose now, is to point out the fact that these beasts, which were like a lion, a bear and a leopard, and the fourth beast dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly; which had great iron teeth were divinely given symbols of political power as it would be during the “times of the Gentiles.” In other words, just as the march of empire was represented by the four different kinds of metal in the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw just so, the four beasts which Daniel saw represent the march of empire during the same period. In other words, the lion, which Daniel saw, symbolized the Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar, and the bear, symbolized the world empire of Media-Persia, and the leopard which he saw, symbolized the world empire of Greece under Alexander. And the fourth beast which was dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, symbolized the Roman Empire as it in the beginning.

The Meaning of the Nondescript Beast

Now with these facts in mind, we can see the significance of what is stated in our lesson text concerning the beast which John saw, which was like unto a leopard and had feet like a bear whose mouth was like the mouth of a lion to whom the Dragon gave his power and seat and great authority!

Upon reading the description of the nondescript beast which John saw, we are able to see at a glance that it included all of the characteristics represented in the four different beasts which Daniel saw. Since this is true, we are shut up to one conclusion, i. e., that the beast which John saw rise up out of the sea, represented the last stage of Gentile world dominion as it will be headed up under the coming Antichrist, who is described to us in this chapter, and whose kingdom will have the combined characteristics of all the other kingdoms of the Gentile period.

One Head Wounded to Death

Now in Revelation 13:3 speaking concerning the nondescript beast, which he saw, John said: “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.”

Here, again my friends, we have another interesting and perplexing problem to solve, and we shall need both grace and wisdom in order to arrive at the correct answer.

We have already stated that this chapter is descriptive of the coming Antichrist, but since unto the Antichrist, the Dragon is to give his power and his seat and great authority, the Antichrist represents the kingdom also over which he is to rule! There is, therefore, both personal and a political application which must be made of the truth stated here, if we are to understand all which the passage is intended to teach.

The Political Application

As a matter of convenience, let us make the political application first. Since the nondescript beast represents not only the person of the Antichrist, but also his kingdom, we may well ask which of the four metals of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw represented the final kingdom of the Antichrist and which of the four beasts which Daniel saw represented the same kingdom?

This should not be difficult to do, because in the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, we learned that the fourth and last world empire was Rome and that it would continue until the very close of the Gentile period, as represented by the legs of the image and the feet of the image also, which were of iron mixed with clay.

An Interesting Comment

In his footnotes on this verse, Dr. Scofield says:

“Fragments of the ancient Roman empire have never ceased to exist as separate kingdoms. It was the Imperial form of government which ceased: the one head wounded to death. What we have prophetically in Revelation 13:3 is the restoration of the Imperial form as such, though over a federated empire of 10 kingdoms; the “head” is “healed,” i. e., restored; there is an emperor again—i. e.,) the beast.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the Roman empire although it was severely wounded, has never ceased to exist, and that it will continue until the very end of the Gentile period! We have every reason to believe that it will be revived and eventually come under the leadership and headship of the coming Antichrist.

Rome the Fourth World Empire
There is a very interesting statement in Daniel 2:40-43 concerning the fourth world empire, i.e., Rome, which we quote as follows:

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; for as much as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, for as much as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

Complete Prophetic Forecast

Here, my friends, you have a complete prophetic outline and forecast of the Roman empire. First, as it was in the beginning, when it rose to power and subdued and broke in pieces all the other kingdoms. Then came the time when the kingdom was divided into an eastern and western division as represented by the two legs of the image, both of which were of iron. And the last form of the Roman empire is represented by the ten toes of the image which were part of iron and part of clay.

What Is Meant by the Clay?

Now, in order to understand what is stated here, we must inquire as to the significance of the clay, referred to in this passage. If iron represents the strength of the Roman empire, what does the clay represent? In Daniel 2:43 it says: “And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

Now this, my friends, is a statement which I believe is very little understood, and one which is seldom referred to in an exposition of this passage. If I did not believe it to be of importance, I would not take time to make mention of it here, but in the light of current events, I feel that it well deserves our attention.

Roman Empire to Be Ruled Over by the Antichrist

We have already seen that when the Roman empire is revived it will be ruled over by the coming Antichrist. This ruler will have under him, the ten kings represented by the ten toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw and by the ten horns of the beast which Daniel saw, and by the ten horns of the nondescript beast which the Apostle John saw. Since this is true, when these things come pass it is easy to see that all Gentile political authority will be in the hands and under the dominion of the Antichrist.

A Jewish State in Palestine

But what about the Jewish question, and the problem of a revived Jewish state in Palestine? If the Roman empire is to be revived and the Scriptures plainly teach that it will be, and if all Gentile authority is to come under the jurisdiction and dominion and over lordship of the Antichrist, which the Scriptures also teach, what will happen to the revived Jewish state in Palestine which the Jews are now struggling to bring about? Will the Jews submit to the overlordship of the of the Antichrist, even as the Gentiles will be forced to do? I think the answer is given in Daniel 2:43 where it says: “And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

Personally, I believe that the miry clay of this passage represents the Jews as compared to the Gentiles who are represented as being under subjection to the revived Roman power. We all know that the Jews are an exclusive race of people, but we should not hold this against them because they inherited this characteristic and God made them this way for a very purpose. Although the Jews have been dispersed among the Gentiles for nearly 2,000 years, they have not intermarried with the Gentiles but very very little, and this fact has meant the preservation of their race, which in itself has been a miracle! Thus, we see that their separation has resulted in their preservation!

The Jews Have No King Now in Jerusalem

Now, as we know, during all these centuries, the Jews have been without a king and without a temple and without a ruling high priest. The political convictions of the Jewish people are based not upon the wisdom of men or upon the political policies of the Gentiles, but upon the conditions of the Abrahamic and the Davidic and the Palestinian covenants, which are recorded in God’s word. Therefore, as the Jews are now returning to their own land, with hopes of reestablishing a revived Jewish state, it is natural to believe that they will seek to build their government upon the foundation of the covenants which God has made with them, and upon principles in keeping with Jewish tradition.

The Jews Will Not Compromise
The present political conflict in the Holy land is positive proof of what I have just stated and shows that the Jews are determined not
to compromise their present or future political ambitions with any Gentile government, not even with England, who holds the Present
Mandate over Palestine. What the Jews want is a leader who will confirm the covenant with them so that they can go back to their
own land and rebuild their temple and reestablish a revived Jewish state in Palestine. And that, my friends, is exactly what the
coming Antichrist will do. In Daniel speaking of the Antichrist it says:

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the Week, he shall cause the sacrifice and
the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate, even unto the consummation,
and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Now, we do not have time to enlarge upon this passage in this message but this is a confirmation of what is stated in Daniel 2:43
where it says: “And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but
they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

The Jews Are Returning

In other words, the Jews are now returning to their own land with a determination to build a revived Jewish state in Palestine! In their
desperation to throw off the yoke of Gentile overlordship, they will seek out a king of their own choice and accept him as their
Messiah! All because he is willing to confirm the covenant with them for a period of one prophetic week of seven years.

Thus, “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men” i. e., for political purposes and advantage, but God says: “They
shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” We know that God will not be pleased with this Gentile-
Jewish compromise in government.

Thus, my friends, we see that the last form of Gentile world dominion will be a revival of the Roman empire, headed up by the
Antichrist, who will subdue all Gentile authority by mere force of power and who will bring the Jews also under his dominion by
making with them a deceitful covenant as stated in Daniel 9:27.

Summary

Now, in Revelation 13:3 when John said concerning the nondescript beast, “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,” — from what we have said, I am sure that you
have been able to see and to understand the political application of what is stated here; i. e., that the fourth world empire would be
wounded unto death and later healed and restored to power during the latter days of the present dispensation. That is what was
prophesied and that is what is coming to pass and it is plain to see that power will be given to the Antichrist as head of the revived
Roman empire over all kindreds and tongues and nations, as stated in Revelation 13:8.

Now, in our next lesson, we shall show how this very same passage concerning the head that was wounded, and then was healed,
will apply personally to the Antichrist himself.

LECTURE 41 ON THE REVELATION

The Book of Revelation a Recognized Part of the Inspired Word of God — It Should Be Studied by All True Christians — The Book
of Revelation Tells Us More Than Any Other Book in the Bible About the Second Coming of Christ — The Thirteenth Chapter of
Revelation Is a Prophetic Word Picture of the Coming Antichrist — The Nondescript Beast Described in This Chapter Was Symbolic
of the Political Power of This Coming Man of Sin Antichrist Will Be a Real Person — Satan Always an Imitator — He Will Use the
Antichrist to Imitate the True Christ — Antichrist Will Be Wounded and Will Die and Be Resurrected — the Power of Satan —
Antichrist Will Be a Blasphemer — He Will Have World Wide Dominion for a Short Time Only — Even the Wicked People of the
World Will Worship Antichrist — Some People Who Are Warned Will Be Unprepared to Hear the Truth — It Will Do No Good to
Oppose the Antichrist

IT is comforting to know that truth is truth and that truth does not change, neither can it be destroyed. We are confident that these
things which are written in the Book of Revelation, both for our instruction and for our comfort, are true. They are just as true as any
other portion of God’s Word, for we are told by the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 3:16 and 17 that “All Scripture is given by inspiration
of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God
may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

The fact that this Book belongs to the regular Canon of the Bible, and that it has been a recognized portion of the New Testament for
nearly two thousand years certainly justifies a careful study and a prayerful investigation of its contents. I wonder what excuse many preachers will give when they stand before the judgment seat of God for their having failed to study this book, as much as the Gospels of the New Testament. I am wondering what excuse they will give for having withheld the wonderful truths of this Book from the people.

The Book is declared to be "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." This expression, as used elsewhere in the New Testament relates to the great subject of the second coming of Christ. This is confirmed I Peter 1.13, where it says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

We may rightfully say, therefore, that the revelation of Jesus Christ has to do with the second coming of Christ. Therefore, what we are studying in the Book of Revelation is nothing more nor less than a detailed account of those things and events which will occur incidental with, and at the time of the second coming of our Lord.

Certainly, my friends, this is important truth and truth which should be of interest to every believing regenerate child of God. For the promise given in Acts 1:11 was, "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."

We should be glad and thankful, therefore, since the promise has been given that Christ will return that we have this great Book of Revelation as a source of information concerning this timely and important subject of the second coming of Christ.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 13th chapter and the 3rd verse, where our lesson will begin.

We repeat again that the 13th chapter of Revelation is of great importance because it reveals to us the nature and person and work of the coming Antichrist.

To refresh our minds, concerning what has been said, we shall read the first three verses of this chapter again, where John said, "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, upon his heads the name of blasphemy."

A Symbol of Political Sovereignty

We have already stated that the nondescript beast which John saw was symbolic of the political sovereignty of this world, as it will be headed up in the person of the Antichrist, who will rule as the last great emperor of the revived Roman Empire, and who will have associated with him ten kings as symbolized by the ten toes of the image with Nebuchadnezzar saw, and by the ten horns of the beast which John saw.

In the first verse just read, we are told that the beast which John saw had seven heads and in the third verse, John said, I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed."

In our last message we gave you the political application of what is stated here and pointed out that the head of the nondescript beast which John saw, which was wounded as it were unto death was none other than the Roman empire in its original form, and that today, after long centuries, the same Roman empire is being revived and that one of these days it will have an emperor again, thus fulfilling in a political sense the truth of this passage.

A Personal Antichrist

But there is a second application of the truth which is stated in the third verse, and that is to the Antichrist himself. For after all, it is the person and works of the Antichrist which are brought to our attention more especially in this chapter.

The nondescript beast, therefore, represents not only the kingdom of the Antichrist but the Antichrist himself. In which case we have every reason to believe that during the career of the Antichrist he will be wounded unto death and be brought back to life again by the power of Satan, thus imitating the death and resurrection of the true Christ!

Satan Always Imitates

It has always been the work of Satan to imitate the works of Christ; where Christ has sown the good seed, Satan has sown the tares. We all know that Satan has imitated many of the miracles recorded in the Bible, and we may expect that he will not cease his work of imitating the works of God until he has produced a false messiah by bringing him again from the dead. This he will do in an effort to deceive the people and to cause them to believe in the false messiah rather than in Christ.
Now, what foundation do we have for our convictions that the Antichrist will be wounded unto death and then be healed by resurrection power? If you will turn to Revelation the 17th chapter you will find some interesting statements in this regard.

In Revelation 17:8 to 11 it says:

"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 here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, or kingdoms, 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. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

**Counted Twice**

Here again, my friends, we have added information concerning the nondescript beast which John saw. The first fact revealed is that the Antichrist, who is symbolized by the beast, when he comes, shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.

The fact that he is of the seven kings and yet is the eighth, can only be counted for by the fact of his death resurrection, in which case he could counted twice and yet be the same individual.

**Another Reason**

Another reason which makes us believe that the Antichrist will be killed and resurrected is stated in Revelation 13:12 and 14; where we are told that the false prophet will cause them which dwell upon the earth to worship the beast whose deadly wound was healed!

**Resurrection**

These two verses confirm the fact that the Antichrist will be killed and that his deadly wound will be healed. They also suggest the manner in which his death will be accomplished; namely, by the stroke of a sword. But in spite of this his deadly wound is to be healed and he will live again and to the mind of the false prophet this will be a sufficient reason why the world should worship the Antichrist.

So this, my friends, is what we have every reason to expect! Sometime during the career of the Antichrist he will be smitten by a sword and will be killed. He will then descend to the bottomless pit while his body lies in state on the earth, and then by Satanic power his spirit will ascend out of the bottomless pit and re-enter his body, causing him to come back to life again.

When this great miracle is accomplished the people will recognize that this is the same man who was killed by the sword, and being a great leader and a man of world renown they will wonder after the beast and hail him as their leader and worship him as their lord, even as if he were God himself.

And all who refuse to worship the image of the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live, which the false prophet will set up, will be killed.

Thus, my friends, we see that in Revelation 13:3 when John said, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed," these words apply in a personal way to the death and resurrection of the Antichrist by the power of Satan. The purpose of this Satanic miracle will be in order to imitate the death and resurrection of Christ and thereby secure for the Antichrist the worship and homage and allegiance of the people of the whole earth, who will follow him because of this great miracle.

We know they will do this because in Revelation 13:4 it says, "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

**Supernatural: Yes, by Satanic Power**

We must recognize, therefore, that the Antichrist when he comes will be a man of supernatural power, but the source of his power will be Satanic, for we are told that the dragon, namely Satan, will give unto him his power and seat and great authority. Because of his miraculous resurrection from the dead he will be universally known. Although the source of his power will be satanic he will not be low and base so far as his appearance is concerned. On the contrary, he will be Satan’s masterpiece. No doubt he will be neat in appearance, and one with a master intellect, who will stand head and shoulders in intelligence above the other statesmen of the world. No doubt he will be a man of eloquence and of unusual personality, with a personal magnetism that will all draw men to him,
just as such men as Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin are doing today. Indeed, my friends, the coming Antichrist will be a composite character who will possess all of the characteristics which go to make for true greatness so far as the world’s ideas of greatness are concerned. Thus, by the very attributes of his being and by the strength of his mind and by the strength of his personality, he will draw men unto himself and they will follow him to their own destruction.

Antichrist to Be a Blasphemer

In Revelation 13:5 it says, "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."

From this statement we learn that the Antichrist will be a boastful egoist. Boasting has always been a characteristic of the devil. This is confirmed in Isaiah 14:12 to 15 where it says: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

Men Blaspheme God Today

Thus, my friends, we see that from the very beginning Satan was given to boasting and throughout all ages and even today men who yield their hearts and lives to Satanic influence are guilty of doing the same thing. The spirit of Satan is one of self-exaltation, with a desire that men should worship him. He wanted even the Christ of God to worship him and followed Jesus to the wilderness of temptation with the very purpose in mind of securing the worship of Christ if he possibly could by tempting Him to do so. Thus we see that the egotism of the Antichrist, who will be utterly filled and controlled by the spirit and power of Satan, will know no bounds and will cause him to speak great things and blasphemies against both God and man.

Will Continue Only a Short Time

But there is some comfort in knowing that his boasting and his blasphemy will not continue forever but only for a comparatively short time, for in the 5th verse of our lesson text it says, "and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months" or 1260 days, or three and one-half years, which all informed students of Bible prophecy know is the exact duration of the tribulation period. Therefore, as wicked and as boastful, and as full of blasphemy as he will be, his time will be comparatively short and there are bounds beyond which he cannot pass!

Far-Reaching Blasphemies

It is interesting to note, however, how far reaching his blasphemies will be. In Revelation 13:6, it says "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."

Someone has said that blasphemy is the last weapon with which men may fight against God. In other words, when they have exhausted everything in the catalog of sin and know they are condemned, they will stand, as it were, on the last round of the ladder of moral descent and blaspheme God by pouring out of their lips vile maledictions against Him in an effort to defend their guilt against the justice and the judgments of God.

This, my friends, is what the Antichrist will do, and out of the hatred of his heart he will blaspheme the very name of God, which is repulsive to his mind. He would much prefer not to think of God at all, but being unable to do this, he will curse the name of God, with language born of Satanic inspiration.

The Tabernacle

Not only, will he blaspheme the name of God but he will also blaspheme the tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven. We all know that there is a true tabernacle in heaven, which served as a pattern for the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness, which Moses was commanded to build. It is difficult to understand why the Antichrist will blaspheme the tabernacle of God, but it would stand to reason that if he hates God he will hate the very place where God dwells in His highest heaven.

Those in Heaven

It says that he will also blaspheme those who dwell in heaven. This may include the angels, but there is little doubt but what the reference here is to the church saints who are members of the body of Christ, who by this time will have been resurrected and raptured away to heaven to be with Christ. And even though we will have escape to that place of refuge the Antichrist, inspired by Satan, will hate us even as he hates Christ.

In verse 7 it says, "And it was unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them: and power was given him over
all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Not Present Day Church Saints

Now, let us not think for one moment that the saints referred to here are the church saints who are living upon earth now, for this is not true, for we already shown that before these things come to pass the church will have been completed and raptured away to be with Christ. The saints referred to here, therefore, could be none other than the tribulation saints. In other words, they will be those who will believe the truth is it will be made known even during the tribulation period. We know that many people will be saved during the tribulation period, both from among the Jews and the Gentiles. This is confirmed in Revelation the 7th chapter, where we are told that 144,000 Jews from among the twelve tribes of Israel will be chosen and saved and sealed and preserved for the work of God, during that period.

A Great Multitude

In Revelation 7:9 and 10 it says: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Thus, my friends, we see that the saints whom Antichrist will overcome will not be the church saints of the Present age, but the tribulation saints who will believe during that awful time, of spiritual darkness and persecution. From what is stated here it is plain to see that most of those who believe, if not all of them, will die as martyrs for their faith during the tribulation period when Antichrist shall have become the Political and religious dictator of the world.

World-Wide Dominion

In the seventh verse it also says, "And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." This is a statement which I have often heard questioned by many professing Christians. Somehow, it just seems impossible for them to realize that so much power will be given into the hands of one individual. It is difficult for them to realize that the world will ever come under the dominion of this one supernatural person. Yet, that is what is plainly stated here in God's Word. It says that power was given unto him over ALL kindreds, and tongues, and nations. Certainly, my friends, all means ALL, and since this is true, no nation, not even our own, will escape the dominion and the blighting tyranny and the oppression of the coming Antichrist. Certainly, there is a note of warning in these words which produces a feeling of fear in our hearts. They are powerful words fraught with dire consequences for all who fail to believe and to be warned by them.

World-Wide Worship of the Antichrist

In the eighth verse of our lesson text it says, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Here again, my friends, we have words that are hard to understand. Do these words mean what they say? Do they mean that this man, highly endowed and filled with the spirit of Satan will deify himself and that men will worship him as if he were a God? That, my friends, is exactly what they mean.

The Godless Wicked People Will Become Worshippers

You can believe it or not, the people of this godless, wicked, unrepentant world will some of these days all of them become worshippers, not worshippers of God, but worshippers of the Antichrist.

That the Antichrist will deify himself and exalt himself above all that is called God is confirmed in II Thessalonians 2:3 to 5, where it says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"

Human God’s

We do not need to be surprised at this because ever since the serpent said to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," men have been deifying themselves and making themselves objects of worship! History confirms this to be a fact and even today in Japan the Japanese people worship their Emperor as if he were a God, and they affectionately call him "Ten-No-Ha-Ka," which being interpreted means “The Son of Heaven.”

Modern Dictators
We also know the tendency of modern dictators to more or less deify themselves and require the adoration and worship of the people! And this, my friends, is exactly what the Antichrist will do. When that time comes, worship will not be a matter of choice but a matter of compulsion and all whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world will worship him. Indeed, when that time comes the covetous man, and the drunkards, and the thieves, and the harlots, and the gamblers, and those who love the pleasures of this world, whose hearts are filled with hate and malice and every other foul spirit will all be called upon to worship the Antichrist and to bow before the image of the beast or be killed Is it any wonder, therefore, that in verses 9 and 10 of our lesson text it says, “If any man have an ear let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Hear the patience and the faith of the saints.”

**Warning: Yet Unprepared to Hear**

These words bear a note of warning and we are admonished to hear and heed the things that are spoken in this chapter concerning the Antichrist. But, frankly, not all men have ears to hear these things. In some instances they are unprepared to hear them and in some instances they do not want to hear them, and in other instances men absolutely refuse to hear and to heed the words of this Book. But those who have faith and a desire to hear these words are admonished to hear them because they are true and we know that all of these things recorded in this chapter will surely come to pass.

**No Use to Oppose the Antichrist**

In the tenth verse it says, ‘He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.’ This is a warning to those who would take up arms against the Antichrist when he comes, in an effort to take him captive. The Antichrist will be taken captive in the end by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when He appears on the stage of action every kindred and tongue and nation will be given into His hands, and God warns that those who take up the sword against the Antichrist will be killed with the sword. That is exactly what will happen. And it says, “Here is the patience and the faith of the saints” in other words, the saints who will be upon the earth at that time must abide their time and be submissive to the will of God in all things until the Lord Christ returns from heaven and destroys the Antichrist with the brightness His coming.

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**LECTURE 42 ON THE REVELATION**

The Bible Is a Complete Book Containing All Needed Light and Truth Relative to Redemption — God’s Word Is Forever Settled in Heaven So That Nothing Needs to Be Added — The Thirteenth Chapter of the Revelation a Prophetic Word Picture of the Antichrist — What Other Scripture Passages Have to Say Concerning the Antichrist — Why God Will Allow the Antichrist to Deceive Many People — Antichrist’s Relation to the Jews and to Palestine a Matter of Great Importance — The Final Doom of the Antichrist — Christians Are Looking for Christ to Come and Deliver Them Before Antichrist Is Revealed

**Introduction**

THERE is a comfort in knowing that the Bible is a complete book and that not only this last Book of the Bible, but the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation is a revelation of God and of His plans and purposes pertaining to redemption! The Bible is complete so that nothing needs to be added to it. The Bible, therefore, is a complete book, which reveals a complete plan of redemption.

Since this is true, we can say in the language of Psalm 119 and the 89th verse, ‘For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven’ How strange that men in every age have sought to destroy God’s Word, but every attempt to do so has utterly failed because God’s truth is unchangeable and immutable.

The Book of Revelation should be of special interest to us because of the time, and the manner and the purpose for which it was given. In Revelation 1:1 and 2, it says, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him (that is, after He had ascended unto heaven) to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

The fact therefore, that the truth of this book was not given until after Jesus had been crucified, buried, and risen again and had ascended into heaven, is proof that it was His last message to man since He went away. Therefore, being His last message, and being also the last Book in the Bible, we may rightfully call it the Book of the Consummation, which means ‘the end of all things in God’s plan of redemption.’ How unwise, therefore, and how foolish it would be for anyone to study the Book of Genesis, which is the Book of Beginnings, and the words of the prophets which tell us of things to come, and to study the four Gospels, which tell us of those things which came to pass, and then to read the New Testament Epistles, which give us light concerning present-day conditions in this age of grace—and then fail or refuse to read the Book of Revelation and not find out what the end of all of these
things is going to be! Imagine, if you can, someone reading a novel, which contains a very interesting plot, and then laying the book aside before reading the last chapter, which reveals the? end of the story! You would count such a person to be very foolish indeed. But what about thousands of Christians who have studied other portions of the Bible with delight, and yet fail or refuse or neglect to read and to understand this last Book of the Bible, which tells them in advance how everything recorded in the Bible, concerning the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church, is going to come out!

May God help us, therefore, to realize the importance of the truth contained in this last Book of the Bible, and by His Holy Spirit may He lead us into an understanding of these things which are recorded here for our instruction and for our comfort.

Review

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 13th chapter and the 11th verse, where our lesson will begin.

In our study of this chapter thus far, we have discovered that the nondescript beast, which John saw rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy, which was like unto a leopard and which had feet as the feet of a bear and a mouth as the mouth of a lion, was a symbolic representation of the political sovereignty of this world as it will be headed up under the leadership and headship of the coming Antichrist.

Verses one to ten, therefore, of this chapter are a prophetic word picture of the Antichrist in person, and of the kingdom over which he will rule for a short period of time.

Bible Picture of the Antichrist

We want to say, however, that these words which introduce and make known to us the nature and person and works of the coming Antichrist do not, in any wise, exhaust the scriptural teaching concerning this diabolical superman, for we find mention made of him in other passages of scripture. Therefore, before we leave this subject of the Antichrist, we feel that we should give to you, as nearly as possible the entire Bible picture of this coming man of sin.

Permit us, therefore, to merely read Revelation 13:1 to 10 again and then to make a study of other scriptures bearing upon this subject of the Antichrist.

In Revelation 13:1 to 10 John said,

“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 head the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

Will Be a Despised Leader at First

We should not think that the Antichrist described to us in this chapter is going to rise to world power and dominion all at once, for that is not true. In studying the scripture outline of career of the Antichrist, we discover that he will begin his career as a despised leader, as one unhonored, to whom at first no one would think of giving to him the honor of the kingdom.

In Daniel 11:21 speaking of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a type of the Antichrist, it says, And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom : but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries."

These words reveal the very humble beginning which this man of sin will have. But they also announce the fact that in the end he will succeed in his purpose of securing the kingdom. We are told that in the beginning, he shall come in peaceably and that he will obtain the kingdom by flatteries. This is exactly what we might expect from one as subtle and as cunning and as crafty as the
Antichrist will be.

**Will Become Strong with a Small People**

In spite of the humble beginning which he will have, and even though at first he will be a despised leader, once he has gained his position and place of influence by flatteries, we are told in Daniel 11:23 that he will become strong with a small people. In Daniel 11:23, it says, “And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.”

**Will Confirm a Covenant with the Jews**

It is generally accepted that the league referred to here, is none other than, the covenant which the Antichrist will make with the Jews as stated in Daniel 9:27, where it says: “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of dominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the Antichrist may rightfully be called a covenant-breaker because he will break his covenant with the Jews and instead of being their friend, he will turn out to be their worst enemy.

We do not wonder, therefore, that it says, ‘After the league made with him he shall work deceitfully’ for his entire, program will be based upon deceit and by the practice of deceit he shall ascend to the throne of world dominion. He may rightfully be called therefore, the CHIEF OF LIARS.

**A Refuge of Lies**

We all know that today the world is full of liars, and it is difficult to know sometimes who and what to believe, because men have given themselves so completely over to telling lies one to another! Therefore, because men have so utterly forsaken the truth and have given themselves over to falsehood, God will allow them to be deceived by the Antichrist who will be the biggest liar the world has ever known! He will be even as Satan himself, who was a liar from the beginning, for there was and is no truth in him. But why will God allow the coming Antichrist to lie to the people and to deceive them with lying words and with flattering lips? The answer is given in Isaiah 28:15 to 18, where it says: “Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.”

Thus, my friends, we see that God will allow the Antichrist to deceive men by lying unto them in order that all liars may be caught in the trap which they have set for others.

**That They All Might Be Damned**

Another reason why God will allow the coming Antichrist to deceive men with his own lies and by his subtle craftiness is stated in Second Thessalonians 2:8 to 12, where it says, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

Now listen, friends, we do not need to be surprised when all this comes to pass because even today Satan has a lot of folks blinded with strong delusion by the lies which he is peddling around among the people. Those who are following after the teachings of false cults of every kind, are, for the most part, people who have at one time known the truth, but who have been persuaded to believe a lie. In consequence, they reject that which is true as being false and they accept that which is false if it were the truth. We may expect this condition to grow worse and worse among the people until it reaches a final consummation under the rule and reign of the Antichrist.

**Antichrist Will Become Rich**

Another thing we learn about the Antichrist is stated in Daniel 11:28 where it says, “Then shall he get into his land with great riches; and heart shall be against the holy covenant and he shall do exploits, and return his own land.”
You know as well as I do the world has little use for anyone who is not possessed with a fair degree of riches. In other words, the richer a man is, the more people there are who will follow him. In spite of the fact that the Antichrist will start out as a poor, despised, unhonored leader he will eventually become rich by doing exploits and retuning to his own land.

This verse also reveals that in the course of time he will break the covenant which he will make with the Jews as stated in Daniel 9:27, and go against the covenant and act contrary to it.

**Antichrist Will Be a Lawless One**

Another thing we learn about the Antichrist is that he will be a lawless one. In other words, he will do according to his own will. This is confirmed in Daniel 11:36, where it says: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that, that is determined shall be done."

Notice the king shall do according his will. Willfulness is the very spirit of lawlessness. Men who are willful have no regard for the laws of God or the laws of men, but become a law unto themselves. You know as well as I do the terrible spirit of lawlessness which is sweeping the world today, and mind you, this lawless age will head up under the overlordship of the wicked Antichrist, who will be the very incarnation of the spirit of lawlessness! When that time comes, the very words of the lawless one will become law to those who have hitherto accepted no law whatever except that of their own hearts.

**Antichrist Will Prosper**

This same verse reveals that the Antichrist, even though he shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished. What! Do you mean to say, that such a man as this will prosper and succeed in his practice of wickedness? Yes, my friends, that is what the Word of God teaches. But we do not need to be surprised at this, for even today things seem to be headed in that direction. Today those who are wicked and whose hearts are filled with unbelief and who practice deceit and dishonesty are the ones who seem to prosper and are able to spread forth heir branches even as a green bay tree. This condition, my friends, will continue to exist until the rise and fall of the Antichrist. This does not mean that God loves the fruits of unrighteousness, and that He despises those who are good who seek to live righteously, but it means that sin and iniquity will continue until the harvest is ripe.

**A King of Fierce Countenance**

There is a very interesting passage in Daniel 8:23 to 25, which says of the Antichrist, "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark Sentences, shall stand up. And his bower shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy the might and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."

Thus, my friends, we may expect the Antichrist to prosper and succeed and that during his reign it will be a part of his policy to usher in material prosperity, so that the people will follow him all the more.

**Antichrist Will Be an Egotist**

Nevertheless, in spite of these things, he will be an evolutionary egoist, which is confirmed in Daniel 11:37 to 39, where it says, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain."

**A Religionist**

What! Do you mean to say that such a wicked man as the Antichrist will be interested in religion? Yes, but not out of sincerity. Until the time comes for him to deify himself and demand that the people worship him, he will pretend, as this passage reveals, to honour the god of forces. Thus he will deceive the people and will bring all those who worship at the shrine of materialistic philosophy under his control. In this age, when men have turned away from the true God and no longer worship the God of creation, there is a tendency everywhere for men to worship the creation of God, and men look upon the natural forces of the universe and worship them as if they were the source of all power.

**Antichrist Will Enter Palestine**
In Daniel 11:41 to 45, we have another very interesting comment concerning the Antichrist. It says, He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many. "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

This passage, my friends, reveals the fact that in due course of time the Antichrist will become a great military leader, and that he will conquer and subdue many countries. It is especially interesting because it reveals the interest which the Antichrist will have in the land of Palestine, called here the "glorious land." It says that he shall enter into the glorious land, and that he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain. All this accounts for the fact that when he does these things he will exalt himself in the rebuilt temple of the Jews in Jerusalem above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as god, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is god—as confirmed in Second Thessalonians 2:4. Thus he will commit the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, by causing the Jewish sanctuary in Jerusalem in the built temple to become desolate once again.

What We Have Learned

In addition to what we have said our study today concerning the Antichrist we have learned already from Revelation the 13th chapter that he be a world dictator, that he will killed and brought back to life again and that his followers will worship him. The 13th chapter of Revelation also reveals that his co-worker will be the false prophet, and that he will mark his followers. We will discuss these points, however, in our next lesson.

What Will Become of the Antichrist

I know you are anxious to find out what will become of the Antichrist after he has risen to a place of world dominion and power! Certainly, no one would want to live under the power and influence of such a character as the Antichrist for any continued period of time. We can be comforted, therefore, in the fact that his reign will be of short duration. We have scriptures to prove that he will come to his end and that none will help him.

That Christ will come and destroy the Antichrist is confirmed in Second Thessalonians 2:8, where it says, "And then shall that Wicked (or wicked one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

But When?

When will Christ do this? And the answer is, at His revelation. And that will be when He comes to rule and reign Himself at the end of the tribulation period. The Antichrist will be defeated, as we are told, at the battle of Armageddon. This is confirmed in Revelation the 19th chapter, verses 19 to 21, where it says, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Christians Need Not Fear

Thus, my friends, in our present lessen we have sought to trace for you from the scriptures the rise and fall of the coming Antichrist. There is no question but what he will be a terrible personage and woe be unto those who fall under his deceitful ways and his Satanic power.

But let me remind you that we, who are Christians, although we understand these things about the Antichrist, have no fear of coming under his power, because we are looking for the true Christ and we are waiting for the time when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, it says, comfort one another with these words."
The Book of Revelation a Light in the Midst of Darkness — It Is Also a Book of Truth — A False Prophet Also Will Arise Who Will Exercise the Power of the Antichrist — The False Prophet Will Be a Worker of Miracles — The False Prophet Will Set Up an Image of the Antichrist and Demand Worship — The “Times of the Gentiles” Began with the Worship of an Image and Will End in the Same Way — Under the Antichrist and the False Prophet All Religious Liberty Will Be Gone — The Mark of the Beast and the Number Six-Six-Six — An Interesting Summary of the Thirteenth Chapter

Introduction

CERTAINLY, we should be thankful for this last Book of the Bible, because we are finding it to be a light in the midst of spiritual darkness. History tells us of the dark ages, but those who understand the Word of God, and who are able to read current events in the light of scripture prophecy know that the world is now entering a period of spiritual darkness greater than that which has existed at any time in human history. This is confirmed in Isaiah 60:2 where it says, “For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people;” as the darkness draws on apace and deepens into spiritual night, the light and truth contained in the Book of Revelation will shine forth even brighter than ever before to light the way of those who are lost, back to God.

A Book of Truth

We should be thankful for this Book of Revelation because it is a Book of truth in the midst of lies and falsehoods. The closing days of the present dispensation and the tribulation period are to be marked by the presence of false teachers and false prophets, who will preach and teach false doctrines to the people; but in the midst of all this, the truth of this Book will remain and will stand against every effort to discredit or to destroy it, and through the truth recorded in this book many will be made free. In John 8:32 Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

We may rightfully say, therefore, that the truth of this Book, which we are now studying will be a real joy to those who are in sorrow, and that it will serve as a foundation for the faith of those who are standing upon sinking sand. It will be an anchor for multitudes of needy souls when everything else around them gives way.

Earnest Attention

Understanding these things, therefore, why should we not give our earnest and prayerful attention to the wonderful things recorded for our instruction in this Book? We sincerely believe that all who are following us in these studies are getting just the light and blessing and help they need in these trying times in which we live. Therefore, we bespeak once again the blessing pronounced in Revelation 1:3, where it says, “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.”

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 13th chapter and the 11th verse, where our present lesson will begin.

We have already pointed out that the first ten verses of this 13th chapter of Revelation are a revelation of the Antichrist and of the kingdom over which he will rule, when he comes into power during the tribulation period.

In our last lesson we summarized these verses by giving to you a scriptural outline of the rise and fall of the Antichrist.

Lesson Text

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written Revelation 13:11 to 18, where John said:

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. “And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 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. 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.”
Here again, my friends, we have very interesting and enlightening passage, for our consideration.

**The Two Beasts**

The first beast which John saw, who we have already studied about, came up out of the sea; but the second beast which he saw was coming up out the earth; that is, at the time when John beheld the vision, and he is described as having two horns and it says he spake as a dragon.

By way of comparison, it is interesting to note that the nondescript beast that John saw in the beginning of this chapter had ten horns, all of which were crowned, indicating imperial dominion and authority! But the second beast which John saw had only two horns, which were not crowned. This would seem to indicate that he will be invested with civil and ecclesiastical power and authority, but in a subjective sense. In other words, the Antichrist is the one in whom all imperial authority will be vested during that time, and all others, including the second beast, and the ten kings, who are to be associated with him, will receive their authority and power from the Antichrist. The fact, therefore, that the second beast which John saw had only two horns like a lamb and that they were uncrowned indicates that the second beast will receive his civil and ecclesiastical authority from and be in subjection to the Antichrist!

**The Power of the Second Beast**

This is confirmed in the 12th verse of our lesson text where it says: "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."

Thus, my friends, we see that this second beast with the two horns will be associated with the Antichrist in his diabolical schemes, and purposes to be accomplished during the tribulation Period. This second beast is commonly called the false prophet.

This is confirmed in Revelation 16:13, where it says, "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."

Also, in Revelation 19:20, it says, "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

Thus, my friends, we see that the alliance which will be between them in the beginning will continue on through to the very end until the judgments of God are brought upon them both and they both go to the same place.

**A Worker of Miracles**

In the 13th verse, we learn that this false prophet will be a worker of miracles, for it says, "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men."

Many people nowadays boast of their unbelief in the supernatural and a lot of modernistic preachers refuse to believe the miracles which Jesus performed and try to explain them as the result of natural causes; but when this time comes even the most unbelieving among men will be compelled to believe in the supernatural, for this false prophet will be a worker of miracles and no one will be able to doubt this fact because he will produce the evidence of his power. No doubt he will perform many miracles, but one in particular is mentioned; namely, he will make fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

**The False Prophet an Imitator**

This is of unusual interest because the very same thing has been done before. We cannot read this passage without remembering the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal recorded in I Kings the 18th chapter. The contest was based upon the statement, spoken by Elijah, when he said, "How long halt we between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

Then Elijah said, "Call ye upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the Lord: and the god that answereth by fire, let him be God." And it says, "all the people answered and said, It is well spoken"

I trust we all know the story full well of how the four hundred prophets of Baal prayed in vain for an answer to their prayers and no fire fell upon the sacrifice, which had been placed upon the altar. But when Elijah prayed, it says, "Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Thus, my friends, we see that fire was used as the supreme test in the case of Elijah and the false prophets of Baal to prove the power of God and that Elijah was the divinely chosen prophet of God.
Also in Second Kings 1:3 to 16, there is an interesting account of how Elijah called down fire from heaven upon the different companies of men which were sent unto him. In the tenth verse it says, "And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty."

The Purpose of Such Miracles

After reading these things we do not wonder that when the false prophet comes into power associated with the Antichrist that he will seek to convince the people of the deity of the Antichrist and of the fact that he is his prophet by performing a similar miracle to the one which Elijah performed so many centuries ago. Satan has always been an imitator of the true things of God and by this power of imitation he has deceived multitudes of people in every age and has drawn them to himself and away from God. Just imagine, if you can, how people will be led to believe and follow the beast and the false prophet when he actually makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. No doubt, at that time many who witness this miracle, failing to realize that it will be accomplished by the power of Satan in imitation of that which happened so long ago, will believe that this is being done by the power of God, when in fact it will be accomplished by the power of Satan, working through the Antichrist to whom he will have given his power and his seat and great authority.

The Result of This Miracle

Now what will be the result of this miracle when the false prophet calls fire down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men? The answer to the important question is given in the 13th and 14th verses of our lesson text where it says, "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."

The "Times of the Gentiles" Began with an Image

We do not need to wonder at the fact that he will do this, because just such a thing has been done before. It is of striking interest to note that 'the times of the Gentiles' began with the erection and worship of a great image, which fact is confirmed in Daniel the 3rd chapter, where it says:

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. "Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. "Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the comet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. "Therefore, at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the comet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up."
Three Faithful Witnesses

This, my friends, is what happened away back in Babylon when the children of Israel were in captivity, and we know of how the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to worship the image and were cast into the midst of the fiery furnace and were delivered by the power of God.

The Gentile Age Will Close with A Great Image

And so, my friends, according to our lesson text, the Gentile age will end with the erection of a great image by the false prophet in honour of the Antichrist, who will deify himself, and who will require that men worship the image of himself which the false prophet will set up.

Another Miracle

We are told that the false prophet will perform another miracle in connection with the erection of this image, in that he will have 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."

No doubt, this will be the first time in history that any such thing was ever done. It seems unreasonable to believe that anyone would have power to give life to an inanimate object such as this image will be, but, believe it or not, that is what the false prophet will do. By reason of this miracle he will deceive the multitudes into paying homage and will cause them to worship to the image of the beast. And we are told that as many as will not worship the image of the beast will be killed.

Not a Matter of Choice

Thus, my friends, we see that worship of the image of the beast will not be a matter of choice but a matter of compulsion. This was true of the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up, and it will be true of this image of the Antichrist, which will be erected at the command of the false prophet when the Antichrist comes into power. This is an age of grace in which men may or may not worship God. During this age men may accept or reject the Lord Jesus Christ as God's Son and as the Messiah of Israel and as the Saviour of the world. During this age men may worship what they choose, or they may not worship anything at all, but when the Antichrist and false prophet come into power it will not be so. Today, in this age of grace, there are multitudes of people who refuse to attend church and refuse to worship God in any way whatever. Imagine, therefore, how they will feel when they will be compelled contrary to their will, to worship the image of the beast or be killed.

Religious Liberty Will Be Gone

Indeed, my friends, when that time comes, religious liberty will be a thing of the past! Men, whether they are thieves, drunkards, gamblers, agnostic atheists or what not, will become worshippers of the Antichrist, either by choice or by compulsion.

The Work of the Antichrist

Now, in Revelation 13:16 to 18, it says, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save that he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 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."

An International Monopoly

These words are very clear and straight to the point. They reveal that when the Antichrist and the false prophet reign there will be an international monopoly on the necessaries of life and that in order to enforce their edicts and to secure the allegiance of the people, they will literally mark them in the right hand or in their foreheads with the mark of the beast. At that time, conditions will be so bad that no man will be able to buy or sell unless he has the mark or the name of the beast or the number of his name. This is just another way of letting us know that in those times, men will either bow to the will of the Antichrist and the false prophet and do the things which they require, or starve. It will be a pitiful thing when a man will be unable to buy food for his family or even to exchange what he may have on hand on the market for the kind of food he needs, merely because he will not swear allegiance to the Antichrist and the false prophet and will not submit to receiving their mark upon him. But that, my friends, is exactly what we are headed for! In many nations of the earth today we already have systems of controlled agriculture, which control both production and consumption. Therefore, with conditions as they exist today, when the Antichrist does come into power it will not be difficult for him to bring this about. Surely the world stage is being set for just these very things. How long it will be before these things come to pass, no one knows, but certainly any thinking man who observes what is taking place today knows that they are coming.

The conditions as they are now will continue to grow worse until the climax is reached under the jurisdiction of the Antichrist and the
false prophet.

**What Will the Mark of the Antichrist Be?**

Many people ask what the mark of the beast will be. We are unable to discover from the text just exactly what the mark will be like. But whatever it is to be, it will signify personal allegiance to the Antichrist and the false prophet. Let me say right here that it will be better for a man to die than to receive that mark, for it will spell his final doom as we shall learn in our studies later on.

**The Number of the Beast Will Be 666**

We are plainly told that the number of the beast will be 666. This is of great significance because six is the incomplete number and is the number of man. Three, we are told, is the number of manifestation; and since the number of the Antichrist is three sixes what we have, therefore, is a full and complete manifestation of everything pertaining to man summed up in the person and works of the Antichrist.

There has been a great deal of speculation concerning the number 666, but we shall avoid going into a discussion of these things. Suffice it to say, that “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.”

**An Interesting Summary**

In his book on the Revelation, William R. Newell gives us the following summary of the 13th chapter of Revelation, quoting:

“In brief review, we find Revelation 13 to reveal:

1. As to Satan:
   (a) His hatred toward God and toward His saints.
   (b) His peculiar rage at being cast from heaven to earth.
   (c) His deadly ambition to be worshipped as God.
   (d) His copying God’s plan: of a “Christ,” or one fully empowered, under his control, through whom to work; and then of an agent or “prophet” of that false Christ, who will carry directly into effect the Satanic program; and of astonishing miraculous energy to accredit before the world his system and himself. (All this God calls “the lie” in Second Thessalonians 2:11—Greek).

2. As to Man:
   (a) Man’s willingness to lose his own soul to gain the whole world (as do these “beasts,” who are human beings.)
   (b) Man’s desire, from the fall onward, to be as gods.”
   (c) The finale of man’s refusing to have God in his knowledge,” and his turning to the “likeness of an image of corruptible man” (Romans 1).
   (d) The development by man to the full of that final form of economic life, godless international commercialism, by which man falls into Satan’s steel-trap: they can “neither buy nor sell,” except they have the beast’s (that is, Satan’s) mark. 3. As to God:
   (a) The inexorable, inescapable, righteous operation of God that gives up such to believe an eternal damning falsehood (II Thessalonians 2).
   (b) The bringing upon the earth of the “third woe.” “The Great Tribulation”: because of which, except, for His elect’s sake, God had “shortened the days,” no flesh would be saved! (Mark 13:19, 20). (c) God’s infinite unconquerable grace, which preserves His saints, “patience and the faith” even in the frightful days (Revelation 13:8-10).

“We must read and ponder the scenes of Revelation 13: as we hope be protected from the last-day errors; as we hope to understand the prophetic Scriptures of both Old and New Testaments; as we desire to “escape all these things that shall come to pass, and stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

For all the forces of hell that head up in Revelation 13 are marshalling public or in secret today!”

**LECTURE 44 ON THE REVELATION**
The Book of Revelation a Book of Truth — Those Who Oppose It Are Making a Mistake— It Is Not a Mistake to Preach the Truth of This Book — Chapter Fourteen Is a Parenthetical Passage — The Passage Presents an Earthly Scene and Refers to the Earthly Mt. Zion in Jerusalem — The One Hundred and Forty-four Thousand Who Will Be with Christ the Lamb of God Upon Mt. Zion — They Will Be Filled with Joy and Will Sing a New Song — They Will Be the First Fruits Unto God and the Lamb of the Millennial Period or Kingdom Age — They Will Be Pure and Holy and Blameless Before the Throne of God and the Lamb— God Will Send an Angel to Preach the Everlasting Gospel to the People of All Nations — It Will Be a Gospel of Love and Warning — Such an Angelic Testimony Will Be Needed Different Aspects of the One Gospel Explained

A Word of Defense

MANY OF OUR FRIENDS have expressed their joy and appreciation for the light and truth which have come to them as a result of our present study of this last book of the Bible. It is natural that they would do this, for in Psalm 33:4 the Psalmist David said, "The word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth." These words apply as much to the Book of Revelation as to any other portion of the Bible. How strange it is that we who are ministers of the Word must first defend our right to teach the Book of Revelation. Why should the teaching of this wonderful Book be an offense to some professed ministers of the Gospel and to many so-called followers of Christ?

If the Word of God is right, and we know it is, and this last Book of the Bible is a portion of His Word, then it must be right also, and we are right in making a study of it in an earnest effort to discover the truths which the Book contains. If all God's works are done in truth, then those works of God which are revealed to us in this wonderful Book are true also,—as much as the works of God revealed to us in any other portion of the blessed Book. True enough, the things of God revealed to us in this last Book of the Bible have much to do with the works of God in judgment; nevertheless, when we come to understand what they mean we will be compelled to say with David "The word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth," including those of the Book of Revelation.

We urge, therefore, in all sincerity that as individual Christians you do not allow either the unbelief of your preacher, or the criticism of your friends, or the persecution of those who have no knowledge of God or His Word to rob you of the light and truth and blessing which may come to you through a study of the Book of Revelation.

For our own and for your defense, we quote again Revelation 1:3, where it says, "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."

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the fourteenth chapter, where our lesson will begin. In our last lesson we concluded our study of the remarkable thirteenth chapter of the Revelation, in which we studied concerning the coming Antichrist and the False Prophet.

Lesson Text

We shall now advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 14:1 to 7, where John said:

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. “And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. “These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

A Parenthetical Passage

Although we have not concluded our reading of this chapter, we wish to state just here that the fourteenth chapter of Revelation is a parenthetical passage revealing conditions as they will be when other events of the Revelation shall have run their course, and Christ Himself will have returned from heaven back to earth to Mount Zion.
There is no question but what the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation presented to us the darkest picture we have studied thus far in this Book. How refreshing, therefore, that in this chapter God should make known to us some of the brighter things that are ahead which will come to pass, after the judgments of God shall have run their course.

The 14th Chapter Presents an Earthly Scene

We must remind you, first of all, that this is an earthly scene because reference is made to Mount Zion. This is a place within the city of Jerusalem, and there is no other place upon the earth referred to in the Scriptures by this name. We know that there is also a heavenly Jerusalem referred to in Hebrews 12:22, as Mount Sion, where the Apostle said, “But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.” And so we see, that there is both a heavenly place and an earthly place called by the same name, but when we understand our lesson text in the light of its context, there is little doubt but what the passage here refers to the earthly Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, to which Jesus will come when He returns to rule and to reign upon the throne of David over the nations of the earth.

The Lamb, therefore, of this passage is none other than Christ, and the 144,000 spoken of here are none other than the 144,000 spoken of in Revelation the 7th chapter which we have already studied. There we learned that during the tribulation period 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel will be called out and sealed in their foreheads and be preserved by reason of this mark upon them throughout the tribulation period. From our study of chapter 7, we learned that these 144,000 sealed ones from the tribes of Israel will be the ministers of God’s Word and witness for Him during the tribulation period during the reign of the Antichrist.

We see, therefore, that there are 144,000 in each case and that both are described as having been sealed. These marks of identification, therefore, seem to reveal that the 144,000 of chapter 14 are the same as the 144,000 of chapter 7, and the inference is that having been sealed and preserved by the power of God, will live through the entire tribulation period and enter with Christ upon Mt. Zion in Jerusalem into the joys of the Millennial reign.

Joy in Heaven

According to our lesson text this event, when it comes to pass, will cause joy in heaven, for John said, “I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.”

There seems to be no way of telling just who these harpers will be, but when the Lamb; that is, when Christ, returns from heaven back to the earth and ascends to the throne of David in Jerusalem on Mount Zion and the 144,000 are gathered about Him to join with Him in establishing the reign of righteousness upon the earth, all heaven will be moved with joy and the harpers will play and sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders in heaven. When they sing this new song, the 144,000 assembled in Jerusalem will learn that new hymn of joy and praise and they will sing for joy also because of their redemption and because of the reward which they are to receive because of having been faithful in their witness and testimony for Christ during the dark hours of the tribulation period.

They Will Be the First Fruits Unto God and the Lamb

In verse four of our lesson text, it says, “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.”

From this statement we discover, that these 144,000, whether this number is exact or representative of a larger group, are designated as being pure in the sight of God. The fact that they are called virgins indicates their purity. The language used here does not necessarily indicate physical chastity only, but spiritual chastity also. We must not forget that the tribulation period under the reign of the Antichrist will be a time of lewdness, and of unfaithfulness, both physically and spiritually. It will mean much, therefore, for any man or woman to maintain the high Bible standards of physical and spiritual purity at that time. But these 144,000 will succeed in doing so; therefore, they are called virgins. As a reward for their walk of separation and their physical purity and spiritual faithfulness Lord God, we are told that they will be permitted to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” What a privilege that will be!

In the fourth verse it also says, “These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.”

Let us not think for a moment that the firstfruits spoken of here refer to the Christians of this present day, who are being called out as members of the body of Christ. We know that Christ was the firstfruits of them that slept, and that we who are Christians are the firstfruits unto God as pertaining to the church, which is the body of Christ, which is being called out during the age from among both Jews and Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel as a people for His name. But the Word plainly teaches that before the
events indicated in our present lesson come to pass, the church will have been completed and raptured away to be with Christ.

The firstfruits in our lesson, therefore, do not refer to the church, but to the firstfruits of the Millennial period. These 144,000 who will come through the tribulation period and will be with Christ on Mt. Zion will be the very first ones to enter with Him into that glorious period of peace and blessing, which is to follow the tribulation! They may rightfully be called, therefore, “the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb,” in this new order of things yet future.

Blameless Before God

And last of all it says, of these 144,000 redeemed ones, ‘And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.’

Let us remember that the tribulation period will be a time of lies and falsehood, when Antichrist will reign by reason of signs and lying wonders. The great lie which will be propagated during that time will be that Satan is God and that the Beast is his Christ and therefore should be worshipped. Countless multitudes will believe such a lie as this.

But the 144,000 will neither believe such a lie nor will they be given to telling lies, for it says, In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Indeed, my friends, they will neither tell nor believe nor act a lie. Therefore, they will be without fault before the throne of God.

The Everlasting Gospel

Now, let us turn our attention to what is stated in verses 6 and 7, where John said: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

This is a striking statement, which is suggestive of many things. We should not forget that by this time in the ongoing of events during the tribulation period, Antichrist and the false prophet will be in supreme command of the forces and powers of the earth as indicated in the thirteenth chapter, which we have just studied. We know that they will make every effort to destroy the witnesses of God on the earth. In the first place, all who will not worship the image of the beast are subject to be killed. We learned in chapter 11, that when God sends His two witnesses to prophesy forty and two months, during the tribulation period, even they will be overcome and killed and their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days, after which the spirit of life from God will enter into them and they will stand on their feet and then will be caught up into heaven.

In the twelfth chapter we learned that 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.

This would indicate that even the testimony and witness of the 144,000, who will be God’s witnesses during the tribulation period will be greatly hindered by the work of Satan.

An Angel Messenger Needed

We see the necessity, therefore, and the reason why God will send an angel to come and fly in the atmospheric heaven above the earth “to preach the everlasting gospel to every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people.” The angel will be able to do this without hindrance because by that time, according to chapter 12, Satan will have been cast out of the atmospheric heaven, where he is now the prince of the power of the air, down to the earth. His angels also will have been cast out with him, therefore, the atmospheric heaven above the earth by that time will have been cleansed of all Satanic and demonic influence, so that an angel commissioned of God can safely come into the heavens above the earth and preach the everlasting gospel to the people without being hindered by Satan and his angels. The people of the earth will be able, therefore, to hear the message of the angel, but the Antichrist and false prophet will be unable to silence the voice of the angel. This will be one testimony which they cannot overcome.

Today men refuse to hear the message of God as it is preached by faithful ministers everywhere. They refuse to heed or take warning. And during the tribulation period they will refuse to listen even to the terrible judgments which God will send upon them, but when the angel flies in the midst of heaven they will be compelled to hear the message which God has for them whether they want to hear it or not.

Different Aspects of the Same Gospel

But what are we to understand from the expression “the everlasting gospel” as it is used here? We all know that there is but one gospel. On the other hand, in the Testament, we find the gospel referred to in several different ways, bringing to our attention certain distinctions which must be kept in mind, if we hope to understand what the Word of God teaches on this subject.
For instance, in Matthew 24:14, Jesus said, “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations and then shall the end come.” This phase of the Gospel was first preached by John the Baptist and then by Jesus and His disciples. We know that in due time they rejected Jesus as their king and He was crucified and buried, after which He rose again and ascended into heaven. But in spite of these things, the gospel of the kingdom announces that God intends to set up a kingdom upon this earth over which Jesus, as the Son of David, will rule and reign in righteousness, as prophesied in Luke 1:32 and 33. When Elijah the prophet returns to the earth, as promised in Malachi 4:5 and 6, he will once again preach the “gospel of the kingdom” much as John the Baptist preached it at the time of Christ’s first advent, announcing to everyone the soon coming of Christ as King to occupy the throne of David.

Jesus was rejected, nearly two thousand years ago, and since His death and resurrection, and ascension into heaven, men have been preaching the “gospel of the grace of God,” which the Apostle Paul refers to in Acts 20:24, where he said, “But none of these things move me, either count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

This phase of the Gospel is referred to in the scriptures in many different ways. - In Romans 1:1, Paul said he was Separated unto the gospel of God.” - In Romans 1:16, He said, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

- In Ephesians 6:15, it is spokes of as the gospel of peace” We know that it is a glorious gospel, for in I Timothy 1:11 it says, “according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which is committed to my trust”

The outstanding characteristic of the Gospel in this present age, therefore, is grace, and its chief subject is Christ and it is the power of God unto salvation.

The Everlasting Gospel

But “the everlasting gospel” which will be preached by the angel flying in the midst of heaven, according to our lesson text will not be a gospel of grace but it will be a gospel of judgment. It is a message of warning, for the angel will say, “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.”

This statement is of great significance when we remember that when the angel comes, the people of the earth will, for the most part, be worshipping the Antichrist by bowing before the image of the beast, which the false prophet will set up in Jerusalem. When the angel appears flying in the heavens, he will appeal to all people in every nation not to worship the Antichrist, but to worship the true God, who made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters. Thus, we see, there will be a distinct note of warning in the message of the angel, who will preach the everlasting gospel to the nations of the earth, while the people upon the earth are engaged in the worship of the Antichrist.

LECTURE 45 ON THE REVELATION

The Attitude of Many People Concerning the Truth Contained in the Book of Revelation — People Everywhere Including Jews, Gentiles and Christians Need the Truth Contained in the Book of Revelation — The Fourteenth Chapter a Synopsis of Coming Events — The One Hundred and Forty-four Thousand to Be the First Fruits Unto God and the Lamb During the Early Days of the Millennial Period or Kingdom Age — The Fall of Babylon — The Fourfold Meaning of the Word Babylon — A Literal City — Political Babylon — Religious Babylon a Commercial Babylon — The Fall of Babylon Divinely Announced by an Angel — The Doom of the Beast Worshippers Also Announced by an Angel As a Message of Divine Warning — The Wrath of God to Be Poured Out Without Mercy — Terrible Punishment Ahead for Some People — The Patience of the Saints — The Blessed Dead — The Reaper with the Sharp Sickle — The Coming Harvest of Iniquity

The Attitude of Some Christians

EVERYWHERE I go I meet with people who seem to feel that there is no need for preachers of today to study and teach the Book of Revelation. The attitude of the average Christian seems to be that the Book of Revelation is something entirely unnecessary, and they look upon it as if it were a sort of an appendix to the main Bible itself, which can be left unread or passed over at will by the reader. Frankly, my friends, this is all a mistake. The Book of Revelation, instead of being something superfluous to the other portions of the Bible, is in fact one of the major Books of the Bible and a very important part of it. It is, therefore, not a Book to be left unread or to be passed over or left out, either as a matter of teaching or of personal Bible study.
People Need to Hear

We have no excuse to offer, therefore, for teaching from this Book, and our reason for doing so is because we know that Christian people everywhere need to understand the great truths contained in this Book in order to prepare them for impending events. We know also that the wicked unrepentant masses of humanity need to hear the teachings of this Book in order that they may be warned in advance of their certain doom if they fail to repent and turn to God by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

People Need Spiritual Light

Another reason for teaching this Book is because we know that the people everywhere need light, even light from God, because of the spiritual darkness which is settling down upon the world during these closing days of this present dispensation. Darkness which is the result of ignorance is bad enough; but darkness which is the result of rejected light is worse still, because it strikes the soul with spiritual blindness causing men to lose their way even while light and truth may be shining all about them. This is the kind of darkness that is coming upon the world today, and only such light and truth as that which is given in the Book of Revelation can save men from such darkness as this.

Another Reason

Another reason for teaching the Book of Revelation is because Christians everywhere today need strength as never before. This is an age of international conflict and spiritual warfare and often times even Christians grow weary and faint in their minds, and there is great danger that unless they receive spiritual food to nourish their souls they will be overcome by the enemy, ere the battle is finished and the victory won. Nothing can possibly give strength to a Christian’s heart like an understanding of the great truths contained in this Book.

People Need Divine Guidance

Still another reason for teaching the truth in this Book is because all true Christians stand in need of divine guidance. This has been true in every age, but it is especially true now, because of the religious confusion which exists everywhere. The truth of this Book is, therefore, like a beacon light and as a guiding star to all true saints of God.

People Must Have Hope

There is still another reason for seeking the truth of this Book and that is because men need something to give them hope in an hour of despair. Unless we understand the Word of God and especially the truths of this Book, the outlook for the world would be utterly hopeless. But when we understand the great truths of this Book of Revelation, we are able to see beyond the coming storm and beyond the judgments of God, which must surely come to pass, to the new day of blessing and reward which lies beyond.

May God grant unto each and every one of us, therefore, an open mind and receptive heart and the presence and help of the Holy Spirit to illumine the Word of God as we advance in our study of His Word.

The 14th Chapter a Synopsis of Coming Events

We have already stated that the 14th chapter of Revelation, which we are now studying, is a parenthetical passage, which serves as a sort of synopsis of those events, which are yet to come in the on-going drama of events, contained in the Book of Revelation.

Review

In our last lesson based upon Revelation 14:1 to 7, we studied concerning the 144,000 redeemed ones who are to stand upon Mt. Zion in Jerusalem with Christ, as the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb, of the millennial period. Their presence on Mt. Zion with Christ as the Lamb will be an occasion for great joy both in heaven and upon the earth. Those in heaven and those upon earth will sing, as it were, a new song and will shout for joy, because of the purposes of God, which they know will soon be fulfilled.

In our last lesson we also learned that when the Antichrist and the false prophet shall have forbidden the preaching of the Gospel upon earth and shall have done their utmost to kill and to destroy the witnesses of God, who have the testimony of Jesus Christ, God will send an angel, who will fly in the midst of heaven, *“Having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”*

The angel will do this while men upon the earth are busily engaged in worshipping the image of the beast, which the false prophet will set up in Jerusalem. The everlasting Gospel, therefore, will be preached by the angel as a warning to those upon the earth, who will be worshipping the Antichrist, urging them to forsake doing this and to worship the true God.
We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 14:8 to 20, where it says,

“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. “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up 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. “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. “And I looked, and beheld 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 in the sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. “And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle unto the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. “And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out the winepress, even unto the horses bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”

A Prophetic Announcement

The message of the second angel, recorded in the eighth verse just read is of striking interest and importance! In view of what is written later on in the Revelation. What we have here is a prophetic announcement of things which are to follow. Please note the message of the second angel is that “Babylon is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

What the Word Babylon Means

These words were spoken by the angel in anticipation of those things which will surely come to pass. Few people realize the importance of what is stated here because they fail to understand all that the word “Babylon” really means. The word “Babylon” comes from the word “Babel,” which, as we know, stands for “Confusion,” for it was at the Tower of Babel, that men rebelled against God under the leadership of Nimrod, and God found it necessary to interfere with their plans and purposes by confusing their tongues, which compelled them to scatter themselves abroad in keeping with God’s original plans and purpose for them. The word “Babylon” therefore stands for rebellion and confusion.

There was also a literal city of Babylon, which in the beginning was the metropolis of the Babylonian Empire and which was built upon both sides of the Euphrates River. We are told this city was also sometimes called Babel.

In the 17th chapter of Revelation mention is made of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

So, we see that when the angel said, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen” the statement is very important because there is not only a literal but spiritual application of these words.

It is expected that the ancient city of Babylon will be rebuilt, in which case these words could apply to the future as well as to the past.

But since we shall be studying about Babylon later on in the Revelation, we shall accept the words of the second angel merely as a prophetic announcement of things to come and we shall pass on to a study of those things, which shall come to pass upon those who worship the image of the beast.

A Divine Warning

The doom of those who worship the beast or Antichrist and who receive his mark in their forehead or in their hand is of such importance that God will send a hird angel to warn the people against the worship of the beast and against taking his mark.
I received a letter some time ago asking whether or not men will be deceived into taking the mark of the beast and whether or not I thought the mark could be in use before people come to know what it is. This passage seems to answer the question. Although it does not state what the mark is to be, it is plainly evident that God intends to warn the people not to take it. If God sends them warning and they insist upon taking the mark of the beast any way, then God will be justified in judging them according to their own choice in the matter. And that is exactly what He will do.

The Wrath of God

To all those who will worship the Beast and receive his mark in spite of the warning from God the angel says, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up 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."

An Angelic Messenger Necessary

Upon reading such a passage as this, I can realize why God will send an angel to preach such truth as this to the people. Even now, if any servant of God should preach the sort of doctrine concerning justice and judgment which this passage contains, men would reject his message and would despise and persecute the messenger.

When Stephen told the absolute truth to the rulers of Israel they took him out and stoned him to death. Today men will scarcely believe the truth, and in some instances will not allow it to be preached. This will especially be true during the tribulation period. Therefore, when the witness and testimony of God-called and God-sent men shall have been largely put to silence through the persecution of the Antichrist and the false prophet, God will send this third angel to preach this short but tremendous sermon on the theme of certain doom for those who willingly receive the mark of the beast. Upon those who are willfully disobedient in doing this thing God will pour out His wrath upon them without mixture.

Terrible Punishment Ahead for Some People

Today God is pouring out His wrath upon the wicked of the earth, but even so, His wrath and His judgments are in moderation, because they are mixed with the spirit of grace. As we know, grace means unmerited favor, unbought love, and undeserved mercy; (but) "of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace," as stated in Hebrews 10:29.

In Hebrews 10:31, it says, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' All those who receive the mark of the beast are going to find this out to their own hurt, when it is too late; for it says, they, "Shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up 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."

I know some people will be disinclined to believe what is stated here, and they will do their best to explain away the meaning of these words, or will change the meaning to suit themselves. As for myself, I am willing to let the Word of God stand as it is without making any effort to change the meaning of it. Surely these words can mean nothing less than terrible, unrelenting enduring punishment upon those who receive the mark of the beast. All who hear these words will do well to take warning from them, for remember that nothing is impossible with God.

The Faith and Patience of the Saints

In the twelfth verse of our lesson text, it says, 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'

The saints referred to in this passage could not in any wise be the church saints of the present period of grace because we have already shown that before these things come to pass, the church will have been completed and caught away to be with Christ. The passage therefore, could refer to none other than the saints of the tribulation period, who at that time will keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The passage seems to indicate that they will need to exercise patience until the judgments of God have been executed upon the beast, and upon the false prophet, and upon those who will worship the beast and who will have received his mark. Do not think for one moment that it will be an easy thing for anyone to stand alone in those days and refuse to take the mark of the beast, because it will be the order of the day! It will take a great deal of patience and faith for a man to stand true to God in those days and wait for the execution and fulfillment of God's plans and purposes against the wicked.
The Blessed Dead

In verse 13 of our lesson text, John said, “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.”

Upon this point Clarence Larkin in his book on the Revelation says,

“This is blessedly true of all saints but refers here to those who die after the False Prophet has issued the command that all who will not worship the “Image of the Beast” shall be killed, as stated in Revelation 13:15. This is settled by the word “Henceforth.” This warning is given for the benefit of those who in that day shall be tempted to compromise with evil in order to preserve their lives. Better to live and reign with Christ a thousand years, than with Antichrist 3 ½ years. “This special class of dead who “Die in the Lord” will be blessed because they will be delivered from the trials and sufferings of the Great Tribulation, and will receive the “Martyr’s Crown” as indicated in Revelation 2:10, and they shall rest from their labors of stemming the tide of iniquity of those days, and their works follow with them. During the great tribulation they that are loyal to God have no prospect before them but martyrdom, hence the need at this time of a special message of blessing to those who are faithful unto death. What a contrast between the “Blessed Dead,” and those who have the “Mark of the Beast.” The former will rest from their labors, while the latter shall not rest day or night.”

The Reaper with the Sharp Sickle

In verses 14 to 20 of this remarkable chapter, we have a very interesting announcement and a prophetic foreview of the coming of the Son of man to reap the harvest of the earth, which by that time will be fully ripened.

In verse 14, John said, “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.”

There can be no question, therefore, as to whom the reaper of this passage is to be. The fact that He is spoken of here as the Son of man and that He is represented as having a golden crown upon His head and that He is seated upon the white cloud identifies Him immediately as the Christ of God. The sharp sickle is an instrument of reaping and indicates the purpose for which He will come.

In the 15th verse, it says, “And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

The Coming Harvest

The idea of a coming harvest is not new, but is clearly taught in the scriptures. Even John the Baptist spoke of Jesus as one “Whose fan is in His hand,” and that He would thoroughly purge His floor and gather His wheat into the garner, and that He would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Again in Mark 4:26 to 29, Jesus Himself said, “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”

A Harvest of Evil

Now, it stands to reason that if the good seed which has been sown is to bring forth a harvest of good, that the evil seed which has been sown will bring forth a harvest of evil. We know this is true for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. This statement applies not only to the individual but also to nations and to the whole world as well. We may expect, therefore, that when the earth’s harvest of iniquity is ripe, Jesus will come and thrust in his sickle to reap. It would seem sometimes as if the earth’s crop of iniquity is well nigh ripe unto the harvest already.

In verse 16, it says, “And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.”

An Interesting Comment

Concerning this statement in his lectures on the Apocalypse, Seiss says,

“Tremendous words! What an experience for the race of man is bound up in their awful brevity! What plagues descend with that sharp sickle! What a crash comes with its alighting upon a world now dead ripe for final judgment! What powers and systems fall before it! What sores and agonies it brings to them that bear the mark of the beast and worship his image! What
new blazes of consuming heat it gives to the sun! What torment it inflicts upon the throne of the Beast, and darkness and anguish upon his kingdom! What cries, and thunders, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and hailstorms, and trembling of nations, and anxieties of men, it arouses into activity! How does every upas growth give way before the sharp edge of that terrible sickle! Just how much of this great Harvest pertains to the reaping, as distinguished from the vintage, we are not fully informed; but it cuts from their foundations all the main sinews of the Antichrist. It includes all the disasters that come from the pouring out of the great bowls of wrath. It brings down great Babylon with a crash that fills the world with lamentations and horror! It strips the great adulteress of all her pride and queenliness, and fills her with torment, and sorrow, and burning. It sinks all the riches and glories of a godless world into one common ruin, never to be brought up again!"

The Clusters of the Vine

The last few verses of this chapter have to do with what is spoken of as the vintage, for the angel said, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

This statement seems to refer more especially to God’s dealings with Israel, for throughout the Scriptures Israel is referred to as a vine which the Lord hath planted. In Isaiah 5:7 God said, “For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."

We know that Israel, as the vineyard of the Lord, hath brought forth wild grapes, hence the necessity for reaping the clusters of the vine, which by this time will have become fully ripe.

Therefore, in verses 19 and 20 of lesson text it says, "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”
God's Judgments Classified and Progressive

Before we take up our study of the things suggested in our lesson text, we would do well to remember just here that the judgments of God recorded in the Book of Revelation are classified and are to be carried out under the symbolism of the seven seals and the seven trumpets and the seven vials of the wrath of God.

From our study of the seven seals and the seven trumpets, we have discovered that God is faithful, and that He will not bring these judgments upon men without having first warned them of the error of their ways and of the judgments, which He is about to perform against those who refuse to believe and obey.

It is expected that when the judgments indicated under the opening of the seven seals have been brought to pass, that God will send forth the 144,000 sealed ones of chapter 7 to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, which will be a call from God to repentance. We have every reason to believe, however, that for the most part the masses of the people will fail to heed the call and will refuse to repent of their sins.

A Second Warning

When the judgments under the seals have been executed and the warning has been given, God will resume His judgments as indicated under the first six trumpets. This series of judgments, when they shall have been accomplished, will be followed by a second warning from God, who will send His two witnesses to witness and to prophesy during the tribulation period; thus warning men concerning the dangers of believing Satan’s lie and of their failure to believe the truth.

But even under the preaching of the two witnesses, men will not repent except for a believing remnant. The masses of the people will go right on in wicked unbelief and will actually rejoice when the two prophets have been killed, as indicated in the eleventh chapter.

A Third Warning

Following the sounding of the seventh trumpet and just before the pouring out of the seven last vials of the wrath of God, we discover that God will warn the people again, even though He will have to send an angel to proclaim His message! The message of the angel is recorded in Revelation 14:7, where the angel is quoted as saying, “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.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the work of judgment, although it is necessary, is painful unto God Himself, and before He finally afflicts men, He is kind enough to warn them of the error of their ways.

Concerning this point, Louis T. Talbot, in his book, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” says, “If any man finds himself in eternity unsaved and lost, that man will have no one to blame but himself. In every age, and even in the days of tribulation, God is, as it were, trying to blockade the way to judgment.”

Mr. Talbot says: “Several years ago, I saw a fearful sight. I was walking along a street in the city of Chicago, toward a place where there were some railroad tracks. As I walked, I could see those tracks, and in the distance a train approaching. I saw the signal arms come down and block the way to make known the fact that the train was coming. There was a man just ahead of me. He was walking in a leisurely fashion. “There was nothing about him to indicate that he was desperate, or that he was going to do anything unusual. You can imagine my astonishment and horror when I saw that man reach the blockade, throw it up, and cast himself right in the pathway of that oncoming train! In a spiritual sense, every man in this day, as well as in the tribulation period, who goes on to the judgment bar of God unprepared, does that very thing.”

Indeed, my friends, the judgments of God are based upon justice and truth and God only executes His judgments upon men after they have rejected the truth and have turned against the light, and have refused to hear and to heed the warnings which He has given them. It is still true, and always will be, that “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” This is true of man individually and it is also true of nations.

Another Sign in Heaven

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

The Scene Changes

At this point in our study, the scene in the on-going drama of events changes from the earth to heaven. There in heaven, John saw another sign—great and marvelous—seven angels having the seven last plagues. The fact that John speaks of this as “another sign,” reminds us of the fact that in chapter 12, he spoke of two other signs; namely, the sign of the Sun-clad Woman and the sign of
the great red Dragon. It was in reference to these two great wonders that John spoke of this as “another sign.”

All through history God has spoken to men through signs and wonders. In Matthew the 24th chapter, Jesus gave three signs which were intended to warn the people of the fact of His second coming. In Matthew 24:29 and 30, He said, “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: 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.”

He then gave them the sign of the Fig Tree, saying, Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” The third sign which He gave them was that the world would lapse into the same condition as it was before the flood. This is confirmed in Matthew 24:37-39, where He said, “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

So, here in the Book of the Revelation we have another sign which is described as being “great and marvelous,” and even so it was. It was a marvelous thing that God revealed to John these seven angels having the seven last plagues, which God is going to pour out in wrath upon the wicked of the whole earth. The words “seven last plagues” should impress us deeply, for they indicate that the purposes of God in judgment will, by that time, be nearly to a close.

Nearing the End

When this time is reached, many of the judgments of the tribulation period will have already passed, and when just a few more blasts of the terrible storm will have come, the storm will be over, and the end will be in sight. This in itself will be a cause for rejoicing.

The Song of Moses and the Lamb

Considering these things, we are not surprised to hear John say, in verses 2, 3 and 4, I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

We know very little about this sea of glass which is mentioned here. We know there is a sea of glass in heaven, because such a sea is mentioned in Revelation 4:6, where it says, “And before the throne was a sea of glass like unto crystal”

Whether the sea of glass mentioned here and the one mentioned in Revelation 15:2 in our lesson text today are the same or not, we cannot say, for the one is described as being clear as crystal and the other is described as a sea of glass mingled with fire.

Martyrs of the Tribulation Period

The thing that interests us most is that those who will have gained the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name are going to stand before God. The very language used here identifies these victorious ones as the martyrs of the tribulation period. Having gained such a wonderful victory, it is little wonder that their hearts will be filled with praise and gratitude to God, and that they will sing “The song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

The Song of Moses

I presume we all know what the song of Moses is. It is recorded in Exodus the 15th chapter. The song was sung by the Children of Israel just after they had passed through the Red Sea and immediately following the drowning of Pharaoh’s hosts in the waters of the sea, when they had attempted to follow them.

We do not have time to read the entire song, but we will read a portion of it to show you what it was like. In Exodus 15:1 to 11, it says,

“Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying I will sing unto the Lord, for he
hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him. “The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sendest thy forth wrath, which consumed them as stubble. “And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea! “The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them: I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

Just as the Children of Israel escaped from the hands of Pharaoh and his armies, just so will these martyrs of the tribulation period have gotten the victory over the beast, over his image, over his mark, and over the number of his name. They shall stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they shall sing the song of Moses all over again because of their rejoicing over the great deliverance that God will have given them.

Not only will they sing the song Moses, but we are told they will the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

Another Song of Moses

Also in Deuteronomy 32; we have recorded another song written by Moses, in which he ascribes praise unto Christ whom he calls The Rock. In Deuteronomy 32:1 to 4, Moses said, “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.”

Thus, did Moses in prophetic language ascribe praise unto the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not wonder, therefore, that those who shall be redeemed during the tribulation period and who will stand upon the sea of glass will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, for Moses sang of Him and they will sing of Him also because of their redemption.

We do not wonder that they will say of the Lamb, ‘Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

The Temple in Heaven

In verses 5 and 6 of our lesson text, John said, And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.”

We know that there is a temple in heaven, which served as a pattern for the tabernacle which Moses pitched in the wilderness. In the tabernacle which Moses made, there was the outer court the holy place, and the holy of holies. In the holy of holies was the ark of the covenant, containing the two tables of stone on which were written the commandments of the law. There in the holy of holies God revealed Himself in His Shekinah glory between the cherubims above the mercy seat.

The holy of holies was separated from the rest of the tabernacle by a great vail, and no one was allowed to enter this holy place except the High Priest, and he only once a year. Later the temple was built in Jerusalem and the vail was hung in the temple the same as it had hung in the tabernacle in the wilderness. Years and centuries passed by, but the holy of holies in the temple remained closed. The holy of holies continued to represent the secret purposes of God. It was a great day, therefore, in human history when Jesus died upon the cross and the vail in the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom by an unseen hand, thus exposing to view the contents of that sacred place to the gaze of all men. Thus, the secrets of God were revealed and the purposes of God in bringing the dispensation of the law to a close and the ushering in of a dispensation of grace upon all men were made fully known.

The Purposes of God to Be Made Known

Understanding these things, we can more nearly realize the importance of John’s words when he said, ‘The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.”

These words would seem to indicate that by that time the purposes of God will no longer be kept secret but will be made known,
both to angels in heaven and to men upon earth.

The fact that God intends to make His purposes known was revealed to John, when he said, “And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.” From the language used here, we discover that these angels are the priests of the heavenly temple, for they are dressed in priestly robes, which indicate their office and high calling.

In verses 7 and 8 of our lesson text, John said, “And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.” Here we see these heavenly priests exercising themselves in their high office in preparation for the pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God upon the earth, which will bring a conclusion the awful judgments of the tribulation period, which, when they have been brought to pass will be followed by the ushering in of a new day, a new era of peace and blessing, the like of which the world has never known.

LECTURE 47 ON THE REVELATION

Many People Willing to Hear and Heed the Words of This Book — The Unbelieving Violently Opposed — We Are Studying About the Seven Last Vials of the Wrath of God — Principles of Interpretation Very Important — Those Who Will receive the Mark of the Beast to Suffer for it — What Happened in Egypt — Under the Second Vial the Sea Will Be Turned to Blood — Under the Third Vial Men Will Be Given Blood to Drink — Men Will Be Scorched with Great Heat Under the Fourth Vial — Only One Way of Escape — To Great Heat Will Added a Plague of Great Darkness Under the Fifth Vial — The Prophets Confirm This Fact of Coming Darkness — The Euphrates River to Be Dried Up to Prepare the Way the Kings of the Fast As They March to the Battle of Armageddon

As we continue our study of this wonderful Book, we are finding many people, who have open minds and receptive hearts to receive the light and truth which its pages contain.

On the other hand, we find some even among professing Christians who are violently opposed to a study and consideration of those things which have been recorded here for our instruction. Frankly, I feel sorry for anyone who takes this attitude toward the wonderful things recorded in this last Book of the Bible. By refusing to study and to believe the things which are given to us here, in this Book, people are robbing themselves of a personal blessing and are exposing themselves to the displeasure of God for we have been warned, in Revelation 22:19, that “If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book.”

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 16th chapter where our present lesson will begin.

In our last lesson which was based upon Revelation the 15th chapter, we discovered that in due course of time in the on-going drama of events of the tribulation period, there will be poured out upon the earth the seven last vials of the wrath of God.

We learned also that those who will gain the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, will stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, “And that they will sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

We learned, also, that the temple in heaven will be opened at the time when the seven vials of the wrath of God will be given unto the seven angels to pour out upon the earth.

We are now ready to advance in our study of Revelation the 16th chapter.

Lesson Text

In Revelation 16:1 and 2, the Apostle John said, “And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. 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.”

Before taking up a discussion of these things, let us remember that the judgments which will come to pass under these seven vials are declared to be the seven last plagues, for in them, we are told, is filled up the wrath of God. From this standpoint, they are very
interesting and very important, because when they shall have been poured out upon the wicked of the earth, and shall have run their course, the end of God’s terrible judgments will be passed, and then we may look for and confidently expect the dawning of a new day upon the earth and the ushering in of God’s kingdom of righteousness.

The terribleness of these judgments is indicated in the fact that they are called the “vials of the wrath of God.” These words would seem to indicate that in these seven last plagues, God will pour out His wrath upon the wicked of the whole earth without admixture, and without mercy.

Principle of Interpretation

We remind you again that the only safe principle of interpretation in studying the Word of God is to accept every passage at its face value. In other words, we must accept the plain meaning of the text in its literal sense, unless there is some reason why we should not do so. If the text is symbolical and warrants a spiritual interpretation it is generally inferred in the text itself.

Acting upon this principle of interpretation, we are compelled to accept the judgments indicated under the pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God as literal.

A Plague Upon Those Who Receive the Mark of the Beast

In other words, when it says “The first (angel) went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image,” we believe that it means exactly what it says and that this is exactly what will come to pass.

Why should we have difficulty in believing this when we have a historical example of this very same thing; for instance, in Exodus 9:10-11 it says of Moses and Aaron, that, “They took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.”

Indeed, this was what happened by the power of God when Moses and Aaron brought the plagues upon Egypt. It stands to reason, therefore, that what God did perform locally in the Land of Egypt, He could bring to pass upon the inhabitants of the whole earth who will take the mark of the beast upon them and who will worship his image. We must confess that such a judgment brought to pass upon those who will be guilty of these things will be justly deserved.

In Deuteronomy 28, through Moses, God gave a list of conditions which would bring chastisement upon the people in the land. In Deuteronomy 28:15, He said: “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.”

And in verses 27 and 35 of this same chapter, it says, “The Lord will smite thee with the botch, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.”

Understanding these things, we need not wonder if God sends a grievous sore upon the men who receive the mark of the beast and who worship his image.

The Sea to Be Turned to Blood

In the third verse of our lesson text, it says, “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.”

Certainly, my friends, these few words present to us a terrible picture of what awaits the world in the future. When this comes to pass, the people of the world will already have had a touch of these things for in chapter 8 under our study of the seven trumpets in versed 8 and 9, it says, “And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”

It would seem, therefore, that under the second vial the judgment referred to under the second trumpet will be enlarged to include all of the sea instead of just a third of it. Whether the sea referred to here is the Mediterranean Sea or to the Seven Seas, we are unable to determine.

Blood Instead of Water to Drink

In Revelation 16:4 to 7 it says:
“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, and righteous are thy judgments.”

An Historical Example

Again we should have no difficulty in believing what is stated here, because a similar miracle was performed by Moses and Aaron in the Land of Egypt. This is confirmed in Exodus 7:20-21, where it says: “And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout the land of Egypt.”

Such a Judgment Will Be Deserved

When God brings this terrible judgment of turning the rivers and the mountains of waters into blood, we note from the lesson text that He will be justified in doing so. In the fifth and sixth verses the angel of the waters is, quoted as saying: “Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.”

Indeed, my friends, no one who suffers the judgments of God will ever be able to rightfully accuse God of injustice. On the contrary when these things come upon them they will only be receiving what they justly deserve.

Men Will Refuse to Repent Under Judgment

Again in Revelation 16:8 and 9, it says: “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.”

These words present another terrible picture of conditions as they will be upon the earth during the tribulation Period under the fourth vial of the wrath of God, which we are told will be poured upon the sun.

A Prophetic Announcement

The fact that men will be scorched with great heat is confirmed in Deuteronomy 32:22 to 24, where it says: “For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with anger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction.”

Also in Malachi 4:1, it says: “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

The very thought of these things fill one’s heart with fear and dread and I am sure that none of us would want to be upon the earth when these terrible conditions come to pass, but there is only one way to escape the judgments of God, whether here or hereafter and that is to accept God’s way of salvation, which means that we must accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as the Saviour of the world, and as the Messiah of Israel. In I John 5:12 and 13 it says: “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

In Revelation 16:10-16 it says:

“And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain. “And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. “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. “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he
walk naked, and they see his shame. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.” Literal Not Symbolical

We remind you again that all of these plagues suggested under the seven vials of the wrath of God, which are to be poured upon the earth are literal, and not symbolic, as some would have us think. The possibility of their being literal is argued from the fact that many of the plagues were performed literally in Egypt long ago under Moses and Aaron, the servants of God.

The plague of darkness upon the kingdom of the beast, as announced under the fifth vial will be only a duplication, on a wider scale of the ninth plague which came upon the Egyptians as recorded in Exodus 10:21 to 23, where it says:

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

“And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:

“They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.”

What Isaiah Said

Indeed, my friends, men do not need to be surprised if these things come to pass again upon the earth, for they have been prophesied in the Word of God. In Isaiah 60:2, the Prophet said to Israel, “For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.”

Joel

The prophet Joel also said in Joel 2:1 and 2, Blow ye the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

“A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains”

Also in verses 30 and 31, of this same chapter, it says: “And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come”

Nahum

Again in Nahum 1:6 to 8, it says: ‘Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

“The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him

“But with an overrunning flood, will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies”

Our Lord Prophesied of These Things

Jesus also prophesied of these things in Mark 13:24 to 26, where He said: ‘But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light.

“And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory”

A Mysterious Darkness at the Cross

For any who may be inclined to disbelieve these things, we remind you of the fact that as Jesus hung upon the cross; a mysterious darkness came and settled down upon the whole scene in the very midst of the day. In Mark 15:33 it says: “And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.” By reason of this darkness, they were compelled to sit down at the foot of the cross, until the full and complete tragedy of the crucifixion of Christ had been accomplished. In the midst of that darkness, which lasted for three hours, they had time to meditate upon the person and nature and works of Christ, and to search their own hearts and discover the wickedness that was in them.

A Strange Thing
Indeed, my friends, let us not doubt for one moment that when the time comes, the kingdom of the beast will be full of darkness, and that they will gnaw their tongues for pain. The strange thing, however, is that even under such a judgment as this; men will refuse to repent of the error of their ways. We know this is true, for we are told in the seventh verse of our lesson text that they will blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pain and their sores, and that they will not repent of their deeds. It is characteristic of a wicked person to blame someone else instead of themselves for the very thing of which they themselves are guilty. And so, when, God undertakes to punish them for their sin and wickedness and unbelief, instead of blaming themselves, they will seek to blame God for their unfortunate condition.

**The Euphrates River to Be Dried Up**

In verse 12 of our lesson text it says: “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.”

The words of this verse are of striking interest in view of what is now taking place in the Far East. In the Orient, there are six hundred million people in Japan, Korea, and China, to say nothing of the teeming millions of India. War is now raging in China, and nations who have been asleep and conservative for centuries are being compelled to awaken and become militaristic. No one who understands the situation can deny but what these teeming millions of the Far East are being Communized and Nazi-ized much faster than they are being Christianized by the so-called Christian nations of the world. The fact is that they are increasing faster by natural propagation than they are being evangelized with the Gospel, which means that heathenism is on the increase year after year.

Understanding these conditions, we can realize more fully the words of our lesson text, which speak of the fact that the great River Euphrates will be dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared.

**The Kings of the East Will March to Armageddon**

We know from other scriptures that these teeming millions of the Orient will join the other nations in their march to Armageddon. Before they can do this, however, the way must be prepared, and in order to do this, when the sixth vial is poured out upon the River Euphrates, it will be dried up. We do not need to question whether or not this is symbolic or literal, because we have every reason to believe, that it will be literal. The same God who drove back the waters of the Red Sea, and permitted the Children of Israel to go over dry shod is able to dry up the waters of the Euphrates River when the time comes, if it is His will to do so. When will we cease to dishonor God and to limit Him in His mighty works through wicked unbelief?

In Isaiah 11:15 and 16, there is a passage which says: “And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams and make men go over dryshod.

“And there shall be an highway the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it Israel in the day that he came up of the land of Egypt.”

Thus, my friends, we see that drying up of the Euphrates River permit the remnant of God’s people to return from Assyria, and it will also make possible the march of the kings of the east and their armies to the Battle of Armageddon, which will take place in Palestine.

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**LECTURE 48 ON THE REVELATION**

**The People Today Need a Revelation of Divine Truth — Thank God for the Book of Revelation — A Crisis Hour for All Nations — The True Church Is Waiting for Christ to Come — The Satanic Trinity of Evil — The Spirits of Devils Will Lead Men to the Battle of Armageddon — Where the Battle of Armageddon Will Be Fought — What Kind of a Battle It Will Be**

IF ever there was a time when people needed a revelation of divine truth it is today. How wonderful, therefore, that in the midst of the appalling spiritual darkness of these days in which we live we have in the Bible, the Book of Revelation, which reveals Christ unto us in His relation to things in heaven and to things upon the earth. He Himself was once upon the earth, at which time He walked among men and taught them the words of God, and finally He was rejected and crucified. On the third day, however, He arose from the dead and ascended to the heaven, “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:—”

A Crisis Hour, Jesus Understands
It is interesting and comforting; therefore, to realize that Jesus, the Son of God, and the Saviour of men, is now secure in His place above, sheltered from the wrath of those who hate Him. True enough, we have reached a crisis hour in human history, and the world all about us is filled with spiritual darkness and confusion. We are naturally troubled by all of these things, which are coming to pass, but from His exalted position in the heavens at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Jesus views all that is coming to pass with perfect calm and deliberation because He knows full well what is in the mind and heart and purposes of God for the future. Just as in olden times, He endured the cross, despising the shame, because He knew of the glory that was to follow, just so He now waits at the right hand of God for the purposes of God to be accomplished. He knows full well that because men have rebelled against God, terrible judgments will be brought upon them for their sin and wickedness. He sees more clearly than we do that terror of the oncoming storm, yet He is undisturbed for He knows that when the impending conflict has come and gone, there will come the dawning of a new day of peace and blessing for the whole world.

**When the Church Is Completed Jesus Will Come**

He knows exactly what is written in the Bible concerning His return in the clouds of heaven to receive His church and that He is to come later to establish His kingdom of righteousness throughout the world. Therefore, while we, who are Christians, are waiting with ever-increasing expectancy for Him to come and receive us unto Himself. He is waiting also with anticipation for that very moment when He shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trump of God—at which time “the dead in Christ shall rise first and then we, who 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.”

After this glorious event has taken place, we know and He knows also, that He will come again in His Revelation back to the earth to punish the wicked and to establish His kingdom.

This is confirmed in Second Thessalonians 1:6 to 10, where the Apostle said: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be Punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from glory of his power; When he shall, come to be glorified in his saints, and to he admired in all them that believe in that day.”

Understanding these things, let us enter heartily, sincerely, and prayerfully into our study of the Book of Revelation.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation 16:13, where our present lesson will begin.

In our last lesson we continued our study of the seven vials of the wrath of God, which are to be poured out upon the earth during the tribulation period. Our last lesson was based upon the judgments which are to occur under the fifth and sixth vials, as stated in verses 10 to 12, where it says: “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. 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.”

**Advance Lesson**

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 16:13 to 21, where it says:

“...And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophets. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done! And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. “And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”
A Satanic Trinity of Evil

In the thirteenth verse just read, mention was made of the three unclean spirits like frogs, which are to 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.

It is plain to see that here you have a Satanic trinity of evil, corresponding to the divine trinity of righteousness. In the trinity of evil, Satan may be called the Anti-Father; the dragon may be called the Anti-Son; and the false prophet the Anti-Spirit.

The Spirits of Devils

From the mouths of these three, there are to come three unclean spirits like frogs. Now, please don’t get the idea that these are to be literal frogs, because that fact is denied in the fourteenth verse, where it says: “They are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

The lesson text merely states that they are frog-like, in that they will come forth from the quagmires of spiritual darkness and uncleanness, represented by the hearts and the mouths of these from whence they come forth. Frogs do not come forth except in the evening, of the day. They sit and croak in darkness while the rest of the world is asleep, and so it will be with these frog-like spirits, who shall 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. They will not come forth until the evening of man’s day, and in the darkness of that terrible hour they will fill the world with their noisy demonstrations.

The work which they are to accomplish is clearly stated. It will be their purpose to 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.

Some people are inclined to think that the frog-like spirits have already gone forth, and I have read articles in religious magazines inferring that the unclean spirits were Communism, Fascism, and Socialism, but this argument breaks down at every point, because the things which we are studying about here pertain not to things which are coming to pass now, but to events which belong to the closing days of the tribulation period. Let us remember that we are here studying the last seven vials of the wrath of God, which are to be poured out upon the earth, during the closing days of the tribulation period. It is inconsistent, therefore, and also unreasonable, to believe that these three unclean spirits like frogs have already gone forth because the dragon and the beast, or Antichrist, and the false prophet, out of whose mouths they are to come have not yet appeared upon the stage of action.

Seducing Spirits

We know that in I Timothy 4:1 and 2, it says: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron,” but these words reveal what is taking place now, while the words of our lesson text in Revelation 16:14 refer to the future. Today, seducing spirits are going forth teaching the doctrines of devils, in order to get men to depart from the faith; thus, their work is to bring about the great apostasy and who can deny but what these things are fast coming upon us?

Nevertheless, the work of the three unclean spirits like frogs which are to 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 are to be the spirits of devils working miracles. Nothing is indicated in the lesson text, which would make us believe that they have anything to do with the teaching of false doctrine. On the contrary, their work will be to perform miracles and to 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.

Armageddon

In the sixteenth verse, it says: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

In view of this striking prophetic announcement concerning the going forth by the three unclean spirits, and the preparations for the battle of Armageddon, in the fifteenth verse, the Lord gave a prophetic warning to those who will be living upon the earth at that time, saying: “Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”

These words of our Lord refer, not to the rapture of the saints, but to those who will be living upon the earth at that time. It is expected that long before the things mentioned in our lesson text come to pass, the church will have been completed and raptured away to be with Christ.

Be Ready for the Rapture

Nevertheless, we who are living now are admonished also to be ready for the rapture of the church, when Christ will come for His
saints, as much as those who will be living then are admonished to be ready for the coming of Christ at His revelation. The call to watchfulness, in view of Christ's coming for His saints was given by the Apostle Paul in I Thessalonians 5:1 to 6, where he said: “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

Let us consider the fact that the three unclean spirits were to go forth to the kings of the earth and gather them together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, and in verse 16 it says: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

Where the Battle of Armageddon Will Take Place

I discover that many people do not seem to have a clear understanding as to the Battle of Armageddon.

Concerning Armageddon, in his Book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says,

“Harmageddon means the Mount of Megiddo, which has also given its name to the great plain of Jezreel, which belts across the middle of the Holy Land, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. The name is from a Hebrew root word which means to cut off, to slay; and a place of slaughter has Megiddo ever been. It is the great battlefield of the Old Testament between the Theocracy and its various enemies. In Deborah and Barak’s time, ‘the kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo.’ (As stated in Judges 5:19.) When the good king Josiah fell before the archers of Pharaoh-Necho, ‘he came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.’ (as stated in II Chron. 35:22-25). And where God’s King, in mortal flesh, thus fell a victim to the power of the heathen, there God’s King in resurrection glory, shall revenge himself on His enemies. Whether we take it as the mount or the valley, it makes no difference, for the mount and valley are counted as one, each belonging to the other. It was the valley in Josiah’s fall, it is the mount in Messiah’s victory.”

And so, my friends, we discover that the Battle of Armageddon will be fought on this ancient battleground in Palestine, which is outside the Holy City.

Not a Battle Between Nations

Few people understand that the Battle of Armageddon is to be the last great decisive Battle of the tribulation period. So many have the idea that it will be a battle between the nations of the world, which is not true, for by that time the Antichrist will have arisen to the position of supreme political and religious and military Dictator of the world. There will be no occasion, therefore, for the nations of the world to fight among themselves, for they will all be under the supreme command of the Antichrist.

If this be true, what will be the issue at the Battle of Armageddon? If we understand the scriptures, this will not be difficult to answer.

In Zechariah 12:2 and 3, in speak of the City of Jerusalem, the Prop said: “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.”

Also in verses 8 and 9 of this same chapter it says, “In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

From these things, we are able to see that the Battle of Armageddon will be brought about by one last final effort on the part of Antichrist and the Gentile nations to destroy the Jews and the City of Jerusalem. In order to do this, they will lay siege against the city, and then we know what will happen. At that moment, when the nations of the world are gathered together against Jerusalem to destroy the chosen people of God, Jesus Christ will appear upon the scene with the armies of heaven to judge and to make war against the armies of the earth under the leadership of the Antichrist, and deliver His chosen people.

Jesus Will Come with the Armies of Heaven

This is confirmed in Revelation the 19th chapter, 11 to 16, where it says:

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he
had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

And so, my friends, we discover that the Battle of Armageddon will not be so much a battle between the armies of the earth, as it will be a battle between the armies of earth under the leadership of the Antichrist, and the armies of heaven under the leadership of the true Christ.

Understanding these things, we do not wonder that in Revelation 14:19 and 20, it says: "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

LECTURE 49 ON THE REVELATION

The Word Revelation Means to Reveal — This Last Book of the Bible Is a Real Revelation of the Risen and Ascended Christ — A Blessing Is Promised Upon Those Who Read and Keep the Sayings of This Book — The Battle of Armageddon Will Be Fought in Palestine between the Armies of Heaven and the Armies of Earth — The Final Judgments Under the Seventh Vial — Joy in the Midst of Sorrow — The End of God's Judgments in Sight — The Whole World Will Suffer Under These Last Judgments — The Testimony of the Prophets to These Things — God Will Shake Both the Heavens and the Earth — The Cities of the Nations Will Fall — The Doom of Those Who Will Blaspheme God

LET us not forget that the word, "Revelation," means "to reveal," or "to make known," in the sense of unveiling, or to view. The very title of the Book, therefore, contradicts the idea that the Book of Revelation is a closed Book, and has no message for those of us who are living today. On the contrary, it is as it says,

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it unto His servant, John, who bear record of the Word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ; and of all things that he saw . . . "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."

These words declare the nature and character of the Book and pronounce a distinct blessing upon those who read the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein. We have every reason and every encouragement, therefore, to study the truth which is given to us in this last Book of the Bible. Just as the Book of Genesis is a Book of Beginnings, the Book of Revelation is a Book of Consummation; that is, a Book wherein is revealed the closing days and the last things contained in God's wonderful plan of redemption.

We have already studied the first three chapters of the Book which reveal to us the ascended Christ as Lord among the churches during the entire church age, and we have already studied concerning the judgments of God, which are to come upon the earth, under the breaking of the seven seals of the seven-sealed book, and under the sounding of the seven trumpets.

We are now studying the judgments of God, which will occur under the last seven vials of the wrath of God to be poured out upon the earth during the closing days of the tribulation period, the account of which is given in Revelation, the 16th chapter.

Review

In our last message, we spoke chiefly concerning the three unclean spirits like frogs that are to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. These three unclean spirits, we are told, will be the spirits of devils working miracles, which will go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the Battle of that great day of God Almighty.

We also discovered in our last lesson that when this time comes, the nations will be gathered together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon, which means the Mount of Megiddo in Palestine, which belts across the middle of the Holy Land from
the Mediterranean Sea to the River of Jordan. In this place the Battle of Armageddon will be fought as the last great decisive battle of the tribulation period.

We learned also that the Battle Armageddon will not be a battle between the nations of the earth, but will be battle between the armies of the earth under the leadership of Antichrist, and the armies of heaven, under the leadership of the true Christ. When this coming battle is fought in Palestine, we know that blood will come out of the winepress of God's wrath, even unto the horse bridles by the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs.

Advance Lesson — The Seventh Vial

We are now ready to advance in our study, by reading what is written in Revelation 16:17 to 21, where it says,

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

These words, as terrible as they are, bring to us in our study a sense of joy and relief, because the judgments contained under the seventh vial are the very last ones to be poured out upon the earth under the judgment plans of God to be accomplished during the tribulation period.

This fact is confirmed in the words, **"It is done,"** contained in the 17th verse, which indicates a turning point in the order of events, during the tribulation period. You will remember that when Jesus died upon the cross, He cried out, saying, **"It is finished."** In other words, the great sacrifice for sin was complete because He had shed His own precious blood in love, and suffering, and sacrifice upon the cross to make atonement for the sins of the world. His death upon the cross, therefore, marked a point of dispensational change in God's plan of redemption. In like manner, when the judgments included under the Seventh vial are poured out and accomplished, the purposes of God in judgment will be finished, and another point of dispensational change will have come.

We do not wonder, therefore, that in the 17th verse of our lesson text it says, **"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."**

The Whole World Will Suffer Under This Judgment

It is interesting to note that the seventh angel will pour out his vial into the air. This would indicate that the whole world will be affected by these last and final judgments to be executed under the seventh vial.

In our studies thus far, we have learned that under different judgment scenes, the atmospheric heavens above the earth will be disturbed, but no doubt when the Seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, the atmospheric heavens will become so affected that many of the things recorded in the scriptures by the prophets will be brought to pass.

The Testimony of the Psalms

For instance, in Psalms 102:25 and 26, the Psalmist said, **"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed."** Isaiah's Prophecy Again in Isaiah 51:6, the prophet said, **"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."**

What Jesus Said

Also in Matthew 24:29, Jesus Himself said, **"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."**

A Divine Warning
In Hebrews 12:25 to 29, there is another very interesting and instructive passage, which says, **See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace; whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.**

**Another Prophecy**

Again in 2 Peter 3:10-14, the Apostle Peter says, **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.**

**God Will Not Keep Silent**

Again in Psalm 50:3, 4, it says, **Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, for he may judge his people.**

**It Is Done**

Understanding these things, we do not wonder that when the seventh angel, in the vision which John saw, poured out his vial into the air, there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, **It is done.** These are things which have long been written in the Word of God for our instruction, and they are still there as a warning from God to men upon earth, who will refuse to repent until these things come upon them.

**The Earth Also Will Quake and Tremble**

When the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, not only will there be terrible commotion in the atmospheric heavens above the earth, but the earth itself will shake and tremble with a great earthquake. This is confirmed in the 18th verse, where it says, **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.**

**Fear Will Come Upon All Men**

No doubt, when this time comes, the words of Isaiah 2:19-21, will be fulfilled. In these verses, the prophet saith, **And they shall go into the holes and the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty, when ariseth to shake terribly the earth.**

No doubt then will be fulfilled the words recorded in Haggai 2:6, 7, where it says, **For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.**

**The Cities of the Nations Will Fall**

The Apostle John, himself, gives added details concerning the result of this terrible earthquake, which is to come upon the world as one of God’s last judgments, in verses 19 and 20 of our lesson text, where it says, **And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.**

**A Confirmation of This Prophecy**

That the great City of Jerusalem is to be divided by a great earthquake is confirmed in Zechariah 14:4 and 5, where it says, concerning Christ and His return, **And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a
very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee
to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from
before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Not only will the City of Jerusalem be affected by this earthquake, but we are told in verse 19 of our lesson text that the cities of
the nations will fall, and great Babylon will come in remembrance before God, who will give unto her the cup of the wine of
the fierceness of His wrath.

A Personal Experience

I am sure that most of you cannot begin to realize or to sense the meaning of these words, announcing that the cities of the
countries will fall under the impact of this terrible earthquake, but personally, I can realize faintly, at least, the meaning of what is stated here,
because I arrived in Tokyo, Japan, just five months after the terrible earthquake, which occurred in Tokyo and Yokohama on
September 1, 1923. I was able, therefore, to see the disastrous results of an earthquake in which two great cities were virtually
destroyed and in which 90,000 people perished. During our six years of missionary work we experienced many earthquakes, some
of them which were very severe. So we can realize and almost see and feel the tragedy of this last great judgment, which is to come
upon the earth under the seventh vial.

Another Plague to Be Added

To the shaking of the heavens above, and the shaking of the earth beneath men's feet will be added another plague, for in verse 21,
it says, “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed
God because of the plague of hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

Concerning this verse, Seiss, in his Book on the Apocalypse, says,

“The Jewish talent for silver-weight was about 115 pounds, and that for weighing other things was about 135 pounds. The
Egyptian talent was about 86 pounds, as also the Greek. Some make the Ttis talent about 56 pounds, and a talent was used
in Antioch which weighed about 390 pounds. Just which of these is meant we cannot say; but taking the mean of all, or even
the lightest, we have a weight equal to as much as a strong man can conveniently lift. Hail of a pound in weight is terribly
destructive; but this would give us hailstones as large as the blocks of ice which commerce wagons haul about our streets.
Such masses falling upon houses would crush in the strongest of them, batter down walls, stave ships, and leave but few
retreats of safety for human life on the surface of the world.”

An Historical Example

We might suggest also that in this plague of great hail, you will have a repetition of the seventh plague which God wrought on the
Egyptians, as recorded in Exodus 9:23-26, where it says: “And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent
thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was
hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a
nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote
every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was
there no hail.”

Blasphemers Were to Be Stoned to Death

In Leviticus 24:16, there is a passage which says, “And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to
death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he
blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.”

After reading this passage, we do not wonder that God will send this plague of great hail upon those who will be living at that time,
for we are told our lesson text that men will blaspheme God because of the plague of the hail. Being blasphemers, who will have
repeatedly refused to repent under the foregoing judgments, which God will have sent upon them, they will justly deserve being
stoned to death according to the terms of the law, which was originally given by the Lord Himself. Therefore, when God sends the
plague of hail upon them, and literally stones them to death, they will be receiving only what they justly deserve.

Indeed, my friends, to blaspheme God is the last thing which an unrepentant sinner can do, before the judgments of God come upon
him and the only thing left for God to do with a blasphemer is to execute the law against him, and that is what He will do when He
sends the plague of great hail upon them, and literally stones them to death. He does not do this now, because this is the day of
grace, but when the right time comes, He will do this very thing, behooves, everyone of us, therefore, to be mindful of these things
and to take warning for the future.
LECTURE 50 ON THE REVELATION

This Book Brings Needed Light and Truth to Those Who Will Accept It — All True Christians Are Children of Light — The Cities of the Nations Will Fall — Mystery Babylon an Important Subject — The Real Meaning of Babylon — The Rebellion Which Occurred Against God at Babel — The First Leader of the Rebellion at Babel Was Nimrod — The Result of the Rebellion at the Tower of Babel — Mystery Babylon Stands for Political, Commercial and Religious Confusion — Mystery Babylon Headed for Judgment — The Unchaste Woman Up the Beast — This Two-fold Symbol Signifies a Future Union of the Church and State For a Brief Period of Time Ecclesiastical Babylon Will Dominate the Political Scene and Ride the Beast — She Will Later Be Overthrown

Needed Light and Truth

ALL who have followed us in our studies thus far will, acknowledge, I am sure, that there was a need for the light and truth, contained in this Book, or else God would never have caused it to be written. Anyone who is making a study of current events in the light of scripture prophecy, when they read the things which are written in this Book, cannot help but see that the world stage is being set for the enactment of those very things which are recorded here for our instruction. All devout Christians who will make a study of this Book, and will take heed to the things which are written therein, will receive a blessing unto themselves and will be able to understand those things that are coming upon the earth in these days. Indeed, there is a certain comfort in knowing what will come to pass in the future. Therefore, Christians who understand the truth of this Book can well be called “children of light,” but unsaved people and mere professing Christians who neglect their privilege of studying the things which are written in this Book may well be classified as “children of darkness,” who are walking amidst the shadows of earth’s ever-darkening night and are ready to stumble and to fall under the very judgments that are predicted in the Book of Revelation.

Children of Light

But in I Thessalonians 5:1-8, the Apostle Paul said,

““But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

In our last lesson which was based upon Revelation 16:17-21, we studied concerning those judgments which will come to pass under the seventh vial of the wrath of God, when it is poured out into the air. We learned that when this comes to pass, there will be great commotion in the heavens above and that there will also be a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. It will be so terrible that the cities of the nations will fall and the topography of the earth will be changed.

We learned also that under the judgments of the seventh vial, there will be a great hailstorm, which will bring great destruction upon the earth, by reason of which men will blaspheme God.

Lesson Text: Mystery Babylon

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 17:1-7, where it says,
martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.”

The Subject of Babylon Very Important

In these words just read, we have introduced to us a subject that is at once very interesting and at the same time very difficult to understand. We need to pray, therefore, that God will lead us into a true understanding of His Word, so that we can learn what these words are intended to teach.

This is not the first time in the Book of Revelation that we have heard about Babylon. In Revelation 14:8 the Apostle John said, 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.”

Also, in chapter 16, and verse 19, speaking of the great earthquake, the Apostle said, “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.”

Judging from these references, the subject of Babylon is of no small importance and one which we would do well to understand.

The Real Meaning of Babylon

Few people realize the true meaning of the word “Babylon” as used in the scriptures. When the word “Babylon” is used most people think only of the ancient city of Babylon, which was situated on the Euphrates River, but the word also has a mystical meaning so that we often speak of “political Babylon” and “religious Babylon,” and “commercial Babylon.” These terms are all an outgrowth of what the city of Babylon stood for in the beginning.

Where Men Rebelled Against God

You will remember that the River Euphrates, on which the city of Babylon was built was one of the four branches into which the River that flowed through the Garden of Eden was divided. We know also that after flood the whole earth was of one language and of one speech, and according to the account given in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, they came to a plain in the land of Shinar, which was Babylon. It was there, under the leadership of Nimrod that the people rebelled against God and sought to build the tower of Babel.

This is confirmed in Genesis 11:4-8 where it says, “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. ‘Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.”

Nimrod Was the Leader of This Rebellion

A very interesting comment on what happened at that time is written in Genesis 10:8-10, where is says, “And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”

In this passage, when it says that Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord, we understand it to mean that he was a mighty hunter against the Lord, which brands him at once as a rebel, against the Lord, which is well confirmed in the scriptures.

Thus, my friends, we see that Babel or Babylon was built by Nimrod and that it was the seat of the first great apostasy, when men turned away from God and instituted a system of political and religious rebellion against the Lord. A very interesting comment upon what occurred at that time is given by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:21-25. In reasoning concerning the guilt of all men before God, he said that they were without excuse for making idols, “Because, that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and
worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever! Amen.”

The Apostle Paul also explained the result of this former apostasy in a portion of verse 26, where he said, “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections.”

Also in verse 28, he said, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”

The Final Outcome

Now, when God had given them up to uncleanness and to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind, what was the final outcome? The answer to this question is recorded in the same chapter in verses 29 to 32, where it says: “Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

Thus, my friends, we have discovered from the scriptures the origin of Babylon Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.”

Mystery Babylon, therefore, is nothing more or less than the ancient historical system of political and religious and commercial rebellion which had its origin at Babel! The word, “Babylon,” therefore, since it comes from the word “babel” stands for political confusion, religious confusion, and commercial confusion! In other words, all that is wrong in politics belongs to this system. All that is wrong in religion has sprung from the idolatrous system which was introduced by Nimrod at Babel; and all that is wrong in the commercial world belongs to this system also. Is it any wonder, therefore, that in due time great Babylon will come “in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.”

The Judgment of the Unchaste Woman

Now, let us return to our lesson text. In Revelation 17:1, 2 John said, And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

Interesting Comparisons

We must recognize that in the Book of Revelation, both the true and the false are set forth in contrast, so that the whole truth may be known. In this Book, both the true Christ and the false Messiah are revealed and made known in such a way that no one could be mistaken as to their identity. Just as the city of Jerusalem is the city of the true Messiah, so will Babylon be the city of the false Christ. These two cities, therefore, spoken of in the Revelation represent in a comparative way, both true and false religion. True religion is always represented by a chaste virgin. An unchaste woman, therefore, would represent all false religion.

In the scriptures, the New Jerusalem is spoken of as the bride of Christ. This is confirmed in Revelation 21:9, 10, where it says, “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

The True Bride and the Harlot

Thus, my friends, if the New Jerusalem, as the future home of the saints of God is called the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” in a comparative sense, the city of Babylon may be likened to the bride of the Antichrist. The one, we may say, is the true Bride and the other is the harlot. She is so-called because of her unchastity in all matters pertaining to religion, politics, and commerce. All idolatries, whether ancient or modern, have had their origin in Babylon. Therefore, she may rightfully and justly be called, “the great whore that sitteth upon many waters [or upon many peoples], 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.”

The Woman Upon the Beast

In the third verse of our lesson text the Apostle said, “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.”

In simple language, what you have presented here is a union of church and state during the tribulation period, which will occur after the true church, which is the bride of Christ, has been raptured away to heaven as indicated in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. We may
say, therefore, that the woman of this passage represents religious Babylon. There is no doubt but what after the rapture of the true church has taken place, many if not all, of the apostate religions and systems of idolatry will combine into one great ecclesiastical system, in order to bring ecclesiastical pressure to bear upon the state, which will then be under the control of the Antichrist! Since the woman is described as sitting on the beast, which had seven heads and ten horns, her temporary dominance or control of the beast is affirmed.

The Beast Represents the Antichrist

We should have little trouble identifying the beast described in this passage, for we have already had a description of the same beast given to us in Revelation 13:1, where John said, "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."

In our study of the thirteenth chapter, we discovered that the symbolism used here was descriptive of none other than the Antichrist, who will become the final world dictator, in whom all civil authority of the world will, be headed up.

The Woman Represents Ecclesiastical Power

Understanding these things, it is perfectly clear that the woman of verse 3, who will represent all ecclesiastical authority after the true church has been raptured away, will sit upon the scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy representing all civil authority, and will control the beast for a time. In other words, the time is coming, during the tribulation period, when, for a short time, the ecclesiastical power of false religions will dominate and control the civil authority of those times.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that John described the woman saying,

And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

LECTURE 51 ON THE REVELATION

The Great Theme of the Book of Revelation Is “The Second Coming of Christ” — A Knowledge of This Book Is a Help to Understanding of World Events — Mystery Babylon Symbolizes the Whole Body of Organized Alienation from God — All False Religion to Be Destroyed According to Our Lesson Text — The Last Form of Gentile World Power Given in This Chapter — The Coming Antichrist to Be Counted Twice As a World Emperor — This Will Be Brought About Through the Death and Resurrection of the Antichrist — This Miracle Which Will Be Wrought by Satan to Imitate the Death and Resurrection of the True Christ Will Cause the People to Accept and Worship the Antichrist — Men Must Worship he Image of the Beast or Be Killed — The Seven Heads and the Seven Mountains Represent Seven Successive World Emperors and the Kingdoms Over Which They Rule — How Antichrist Will Be Both the Seventh and the Eighth World Emperor — The Last Ten Kings of the Gentile Period Will Give Their Power to the Antichrist

THE only way that anyone can understand the rapid developments which are taking place these days is for them to study the Word of God, and especially the Book of Revelation, which is declared to be, in Revelation 1:3, “a book of prophecy.” The great theme of the Book of Revelation is, after all, the second coming of Christ, for the Book reveals the marvelous events and the judgments of God associated with our Lord’s second coming.

Every devout Christian, therefore, would do well to study the contents of this wonderful Book, wherein is revealed much truth, which is not to be found elsewhere in the Word of God.

We have progressed in our study to Revelation, the 17th chapter and the 8th verse, where our present lesson will begin.

Review

In our last lesson which was based upon Revelation 17:1-7 inclusive, we spoke concerning Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.”

In our study, we discovered from the scriptures the origin and meaning of the word “Babylon” in its literal, political, religious, and
commercial sense. We learned that the expression, “Mystery, Babylon the Great,” refers not to any particular sect or system of evil, but that it symbolizes the whole body of organized alienation from God, which includes all false cults and systems of idolatry throughout the world, whether they be joined to one system of apostasy or another.

It is natural; therefore, that such a world-wide system of evil and falsehood should be symbolized by an unchaste woman, as described in the first seven verses of this chapter.

From our study, we learned also that in the end-time, of the present dispensation, after the true church has been raptured away to be with Christ, the various branches of organized false religions will organize in such a way as to bring ecclesiastical pressure to bear upon the civil government of the earth, which will then be under the control of the coming Antichrist. Hence, the woman is represented as riding for a time upon the beast, thus controlling its movements. In other words, after the true church has been raptured away, for a short time the false religions of the earth will combine, and for a time will dominate and control the political situation! This condition will not last very long, however, as we shall see.

Lesson Text

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written Revelation 17:8-11, where it says,

"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 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. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 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.

And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 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. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

The Last Form of Gentile Power

What we have here in these rather unusual words is a prophetic word-picture of the last form of Gentile world power.

By this time we are very familiar with the fact that the beast spoken of here and also in the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation is none other than the coming Antichrist. The beast, therefore, is none other than a person. The difficulty of interpreting our present passage is that the beast or Antichrist is spoken of in the past, present and future tenses.

In the eighth verse it says, "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.”

A Prophecy of Things to Come

If we will study this passage in its proper setting, we will discover that it was a prophecy of things to come, which would take place during the closing days of the tribulation period. Please remember that we have already studied the judgments which are to come upon the earth under the symbolism of the seven seals and the seven trumpets and the seven vials of the wrath of God. It is perfectly reasonable, therefore, that the seven dooms which we are now studying have to do with things yet future which will come to pass near the end of the tribulation period. Therefore, as a matter of prophecy, when it speaks of the Antichrist in the past, present, and future tenses, these three tenses must be looked upon as being yet future, and that all three of them, as a matter of prophecy, apply to the Antichrist during the time of his earthly career. In other words, in the vision which John saw, he was projected out into the future, and he was given to understand that the Antichrist would be born and that he would die and come back to life again.

What we have, therefore, in this passage is nothing more nor less than a prophetic word-picture of the life, death and resurrection of the coming Antichrist.
Such an event as this could only be spoken of, prophetically, in all three tenses. If it had not been revealed to us in this way, we never could have understood it.

Satan an Imitator

We do not need to wonder that Satan will bring about such a miracle as this, because, as we know, he is an imitator of the true Christ. I doubt if there is anything which Christ did while He was upon earth, that Satan has not already sought to imitate, but it yet remains for him as the father and source of all evil to raise up a man: namely, the Antichrist, and cause him to live and die and be raised again from the dead to imitate the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

We do not need to wonder that the Antichrist will live and die and go into the bottomless pit, and then ascend out of the bottomless pit and later go into perdition. That the coming Antichrist will be killed and rise again from the dead is indicated in Revelation 13:3, 4, where John said, “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. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”

People Will Worship the Beast

These words clearly reveal that when the Antichrist is wounded to death, his deadly wound will be healed, which indicates that he will be resurrected, and that because of this miracle the people of the world will wonder after him and literally worship him.

Satan knows that men today, who accept Jesus Christ as God’s Son, worship Him as Lord, because of the miracle of His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven. Therefore, in order to secure for the Antichrist the worship of the people, he will allow the Antichrist to be killed and by his Satanic power, he will bring him back to life again,—after his soul has descended into the bottomless pit. Therefore, after his resurrection, the Antichrist will be worshipped as God by those who are utterly godless.

Men Must Worship the Image or Be Killed

A confirmation of these things is also given in Revelation 13:13 to 15, where it says, speaking of the false prophet, “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

Thus, my friends, we see that through the work of the false prophet, an image will be set up to facilitate the worship of the resurrected Antichrist, and the penalty for refusing to worship him will be death.

We feel, therefore, that the position which we have taken concerning the death, burial, and resurrection and worship of the coming Antichrist is well supported by the scriptures.

The Seven Heads and the Seven Mountains

After giving us this picture of the Antichrist, in whom all political authority of the world will be headed up during the tribulation period, in verse nine of our lesson text it says, “And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.”

These words, my friends, should not be difficult of interpretation, if we will study them in their proper setting. It says here, “The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.”

We have already discovered who the woman is; namely, that she represent all false religion in all ages of the world’s history.

We know also that in the scriptures, the word mountain or mountains is used symbolically to describe kingdoms.

This is confirmed in Daniel 2:34, 35, where it says, speaking of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, in his dream, “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that, smote the image became a great mountain, or kingdom, and filled the whole earth.”

Again in Jeremiah 51:25, it says, “Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.”
These words were a prophecy against the kingdom of Babylon.

They Represent Seven Successive Kingdoms

We must realize, therefore, that the seven mountains referred to here, in no wise refer to the seven hills on which the city of Rome is situated, as some people think, but they have a far deeper and wider significance than that. Prophetically speaking, they refer to the seven successive world-wide kingdoms, which are spoken of in history; namely; Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. The sixth world empire, as we know, was Rome. The seventh kingdom, we know also will be the forthcoming kingdom of the Antichrist, which is yet to come.

These seven world empires taken together in successive order will fill up the whole span of human history from the beginning of history to the close of the tribulation period. We are told that it is upon these seven mountains or successive world empires that the woman sitteth. In other words, this verse reveals that all of these seven world empires have been influenced by the unchaste woman, who, as we have pointed out, represents all false religion. Is it not a striking fact that each and every one of these empires have been lovers and supporters and defenders of organized systems of idolatry?

So, the Word of God is clear, "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, (or seven kingdoms) on which the woman sitteth." In other words, all of these kingdoms have been or will be affected in their day by the plague and alluring deceptions of false religion. When all this is summed up, what a spiritual tragedy it represents.

One King Is to Be Counted Twice

In verse 10 and 11, it says, "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

It is natural that each of the seven successive world empires would be ruled over by a king. At the time John wrote these words, five of the kings had fallen, that is, had come and gone in their successive order; namely, the kings of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. One king, the ruler of the Roman Empire, existed when John wrote these words, and John said, "the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

This seventh ruler of the seventh and last world empire will be none other than the coming Antichrist.

This is confirmed in the 11th verse, where John said, "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

There is only one way to understand such language as this, and that is that the coming beast or Antichrist will, at the beginning of his career, be the Emperor of the last great world Empire. During his career, he will be wounded to death, and as we have already suggested he will be resurrected by the power of Satan and become the eighth emperor, in the order and succession of kings, referred to in this passage. In other words, because of his death and resurrection, he will be counted twice as king of the last world empire, which would make it possible for him to be of the seven and yet be counted also as the eighth emperor of world dominion.

We have no doubt but what the person referred to here is the Antichrist, for in the end of his career as the eighth emperor of world dominion, when his career is over, he will go into perdition.

That this will be the doom of the Antichrist, is confirmed in Revelation 19:20, where it says: "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Thus will he go into perdition.

What is stated in the 12th verse of our lesson text concerning the ten horns, representing the ten kings, refers back to the third verse of this chapter, where it says, "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."

We have already identified this beast, which had seven heads and ten horns as the Antichrist. The seven heads, we learned, represented the seven successive world empires, and here we are told that the ten horns represent ten kings, "Which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."

Revelation and Daniel Agree

The prophetic information which we have here conforms exactly to that which is revealed in Daniel, the second chapter, where we have an account of the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream and which was interpreted by Daniel the Prophet. You will remember that this image was in the form of a man, with a head of gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of
brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

In previous studies, we have pointed out that this great metallic image was a symbol of the march of empire covering the whole period of the Gentile age, and that the 10 toes represented 10 kings who would arise.

A very interesting explanation of the image is given in Daniel 2:40-45 (Ed: See my notes on these passages), where it says,

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be: partly strong, and partly broken. “And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. 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. “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the ten toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw and the ten horns of the nondescript beast correspond and represent ten kings, “which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.”

The 10 Kings Will Make War Against Christ

In Revelation 17, verses 13 and 14, in our lesson text, we have a striking statement concerning these kings. It says, These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Is it not a striking thing that Mussolini first emerged as the outstanding dictator of the Roman Empire? Following his example, other dictators are arising in Europe and other countries of the world. What else could this mean, except that the world stage is being set for the enactment of the very things which have been prophesied in God’s Word concerning these ten kings, who will give their power and strength unto the beast.

The outstanding thing about these ten kings is that they will make war with the Lamb. In other words, they will make war against Christ. This would be impossible if it were not for the fact that Christ has promised to come again back to this earth to establish his kingdom. We all know that Jesus died, rose again, and ascended into heaven “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come,” as stated in Ephesians 1:21.

As long as Jesus remains in his exalted Place in the highest heavens, these ten kings could never war against Him, but when Jesus descends from heaven back to the earth to establish His kingdom, we are told distinctly that these ten kings will make war against Him. It is natural that they would do this, for did it not say in Daniel 2:44 that, “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?”

Indeed so, and we do not need to wonder that these ten kings who will be associated with the Antichrist will make war with the Lamb; that is, against Christ when He comes to establish the kingdom, which God has promised.

The Message of the Second Psalm

We cannot read this passage without remembering what is stated in Psalm 2:1-3, where it says, Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, end cast away their cords from us.”

The prophetic announcement, however, in verse 14 of our lesson text, is that, 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.”

That Christ will be victorious over them is confirmed in Psalm 2:4-6, where it says, He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the
Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

Also in the Second Psalm, the Lord spoke prophetically to Christ saying, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

So we see that the coming Christ over the confederated kings the earth is assured and prophetically announced as an absolute certainty.

Lecture 52 on the Revelation

Wise Men Would Be Wiser If They Would Study the Book of Revelation — Signs Which Point to the Soon Fulfillment of These Prophecies Recorded in the Book of Revelation — Ten Kings Will Give Their Power to the Beast or Antichrist and Will Oppose the True Christ — God Will Set Up a Kingdom That Cannot and Will Not Be Destroyed — The Ten Kings Will Destroy All Religion Except the Worship of the Antichrist — What Has Happened — Other Countries Makes Us Feel That These Things Are Very Near at Hand

A Wise Thing to Study This Book

SO many people have the idea that the Book of Revelation is a closed Book and that it has no message for us who are living in these days and times, but exactly the opposite is true. The word, "Revelation" means "to reveal, or to make known," in the sense of unveiling something, thus bringing it into full view. Certainly, the study of this Book is bringing hidden truth to light for all of us, whether we be Jews, Gentiles or Christians. Certainly, this Book contains truth that we all need to know. No man is so wise but what he would be wiser if he understood the things that are written in this Book, which have been given to us, both for our instruction and our comfort.

Therefore, let no man who has not made a study of these things boast either of his wisdom or place a premium upon his ignorance concerning the important things which are given to us in this last book of the Bible.

I am more and more convinced that the days are fast approaching when the things recorded in this Book will come to pass and will be fulfilled exactly as they are written.

The Falling Away

One reason I feel this way is because we seem to be in the midst of the great falling away spoken of by the Apostle Paul in Second Thessalonians 2:3, where he said, "Let no man deceive you any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

I am sure that no thinking person who has understanding of the religious situation throughout the world will deny that men are falling away from the truth and are being turned unto fables.

The Church Is Lukewarm

Another reason I feel we are nearing the end of the church age is that we seem to have reached the Laodicean period of the church, which is declared to be one of lukewarmness and of material prosperity and of spiritual poverty. This is confirmed in Revelation 3:15-18, where it says, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

The Return of the Jews an Important Sign

A third reason I believe that the fulfillment of these things is drawing very near is because of the present desperate effort on the part of the Jews to return to their own land while still in unbelief with the purpose of reestablish a new Jewish State in Palestine. This is causing trouble, and will continue to do so, which fact is confirmed in the Scriptures. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 30:3-7, where it says: "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of
Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

**Dictators Are Arising**

Another very convincing reason for believing that we are living in the days just preceding the coming to pass of these things is the rise to power of a small group of dictators, who seem to be succeeding in their purposes against all opposition of conservative forces. That such dictators would arise is well confirmed in the scriptures. In Revelation 17:12, it says, “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.”

**Military Preparedness**

Still another reason I believe that the events recorded in the Book of Revelation will be fulfilled in the not far distant future is because of the great military preparations which are being made throughout the world for the present conflict. In Jeremiah 25:31, 32, it says, “A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.”

Generally speaking, it is the nations who have rejected Christ already, such as Russia, and Germany, who are attacking other nations and by their own show of strength are forcing other nations into the present conflict.

With such things as these which have been prophesied in the word of God coming to pass in the current events of our day, what man is there among men, be he college professor, or a religious leader, who dare gainsay and deny that the scriptures are not being fulfilled and that the Book of Revelation does not have a message for us in these times?

Indeed, my friends, with all faith and confidence in the Word of God, we are making a study of these things, and in keeping with the promise recorded in Revelation 1:3 we are receiving blessing from the Lord in doing so.

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation, the 17th chapter and the 15th verse, where our lesson will begin.

**The Ten Kings**

In our last lesson which was based upon Revelation 17:12-14, we studied chiefly concerning the ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but which will receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

In our lesson study, we learned that these ten kings will make war with the Lamb; that is, against Christ when He comes in His revelation to establish His kingdom. We know that Christ is coming for this purpose, because in Daniel 7:13, 14 (note), Daniel said, “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

**God Will Set Up a Kingdom**

In view of what is stated here, it is significant that in Daniel 2:44 (note), it says, “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.”

**What the 10 Kings Will Do!**

In the meantime, before these things come to pass, some very interesting things are told us about the ten kings, mentioned in Revelation 17:15-18, where it says,

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“And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 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 fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigned over the kings of the earth.”
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These words are rather self-explanatory and should not be difficult of interpretation.

We have already learned from our previous studies that the unchaste woman of this chapter symbolizes all false religion in every
age and throughout the world. True enough, there are many different religious systems; throughout the world that are false in their teachings all because they fail to honor and worship God and because they do not teach the truth of God's Word. Any one or all of them, therefore, may be symbolized by the unchaste woman because of their spiritual unchastity and because as religious systems, they have been and are still untrue to God.

We have learned also that the beast of this chapter is none other than the coming Antichrist, and that the ten horns are ten kings, who shall have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

**False Religions to Be Destroyed**

Not only will these ten kings make war against the Christ when He comes to establish His kingdom, but we are told in our lesson text that these ten kings, “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 fulfill his will and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”

In simple language, this means that the time is coming when the political powers of the earth, headed up under the Antichrist, and the ten kings, will become angry at all of the false systems of religion and will destroy them without recourse and without mercy.

We have already seen that for a time, the ecclesiastical powers of the earth will largely control the civil powers, as indicated by the fact that the woman was sitting upon the scarlet-coloured beast, as stated in the third verse of this same chapter, but this will not last long, as indicated in our lesson text. In due course of time, the ten kings, representing the political powers and civil authority of the kingdom of the Antichrist, will rebel against the false, corrupt ecclesiastism of their day and will completely destroy all religion existing upon the earth, except the worship of the Antichrist!

We have already learned in the 13th chapter that the Antichrist will desire to be worshipped as God, and for this purpose, the false prophet will erect an image of the beast and demand that everyone worship him. The penalty for failing to do so will be death.

It is reasonable, therefore, to believe, that in his effort to obtain the worship of the whole world, the Antichrist, working through the ten kings will seek to destroy all false systems of religion. This will include apostate Christendom; or those in our churches who have denied Christ and who will be left here upon earth after the true church has been resurrected and raptured away to be with Christ. It will include all false cults and systems of idolatry, such as Mohammedism, Confuciousism, Shinto-ism, Hinduism, and all other systems of heathen idolatry. It stands to reason that before men will give attention to the demands of the Antichrist to worship him, all of these false religions, which have been enemies of Christ and foes of the truth as presented in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, must be destroyed! That, my friends, is exactly what is going to happen, for God hath put it into the hearts of these ten kings “to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”

**How Long?**

When I was a missionary in Japan, Korea, and China, and saw how the people were almost entirely given to idolatry, I used to wonder how long in the plans and purposes of God these idols would stand and be worshipped by those who refuse to hear and to heed the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ! This question is clearly answered in our lesson text. These ancient systems of idolatry will continue in spite of all the missionary work that can be done, until the days of the coming Antichrist and the ten kings, who will give their power unto the beast.

Then when the Antichrist, “exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God,” as stated in II Thessalonians 2:4. Then the ten kings will go forth and will exercise their power and authority to destroy all other religions in the world, in their effort to compel men to worship the Antichrist.

**This Judgment Will Be Deserved**

This will not be an unjust judgment upon these false systems of religion for in verses 4 to 6 of this same chapter it says, And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”

It is plain to see, therefore, that these false systems of religion will only be receiving their just dues and that their judgment, even though it will be severe, will be justly deserved.

Thus, my friends, we see that the time is coming when God will use an evil system of political power to destroy the evil systems of false religion and that they shall utterly perish from off the earth. We know that in due time, God Himself will judge the Antichrist and the ten kings, but that is a matter of future study.
In the 1th verse of our lesson text says, “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

LECTURE 53 ON THE REVELATION

A Great City to Reign Over the Earth — The City of Christ and the City of Antichrist Compared — Will the Ancient City of Babylon Be Rebuilt? — Arguments in Favor of the Rebuilding Idea — The Prophecy of Zechariah in Zechariah 5:11 — A World-wide Business Monopoly Will Seed and Call for Such a City — There Is at Present Renewed Interest in This Ancient Section of the World — If the City of Babylon Is Rebuilt, It Will Be a Wealthy, But at the Same Time a Wicked City — In Due Time Babylon Will Utterly Fall — Babylon Also Means World-wide Political and Religious Confusion — The Announcement of the Mighty Angel — Who the Angel Was — Marks of Identification — A World-Wide Monopoly of the Necessaries of Life Is What We Have Reason to Expect — Something Great Merchants Forget — The Prophetic Invitation for God’s People to come Out, and Separate Themselves from Any Connection with Babylon — The Church Saints Not in Question Here — Babylon to Be Punished with Judgment

IN our last lesson based upon Revelation 17:15-18, we saw that the time is coming when the ten kings, which shall arise and give their power and strength to the beast, or Antichrist, will hate and destroy all false systems of religion upon the earth in their efforts to compel men to worship the Antichrist.

The Great and Powerful City

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 17:18, where it says, “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

We read this verse in our last lesson, but for want of time we were unable to enlarge upon it and there are some things here well worth our attention, before we pass on to the next chapter.

Certainly, this was a strange prophetic announcement, in which the unchaste woman of this chapter is said to symbolize also That great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

Two Important Cities Compared

In the Bible, two cities are mentioned; i. e., the New Jerusalem, which is to be the future habitation of the redeemed; and the City of Babylon, which is called to our attention in our lesson text. Just as all true light and true righteousness will head up in the New Jerusalem, even so, all that is evil and filled with spiritual darkness and unbelief will head up and find its consummation in the great City of Babylon, which, as we know, stands for political, religious and commercial confusion.

Will Babylon Be Rebuilt?

Before these things can come to pass, however, it will be necessary for the ancient City of Babylon to be rebuilt. This is a point of controversy among Bible students because the ancient City of Babylon has fallen, and has gone into decay, as suggested in Isaiah 13:17-22 (see notes), where it says,

“Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingsdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrows Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwell in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.”

There is no question but what there has been an historic fulfillment of many of these things in some degree, at least, but, there is reason to believe that they have not been fulfilled in such a degree as to fully meet the prophetic requirement concerning the City of Babylon.

The Prophetic Side of the Question
In reasoning upon this point Seiss, in his book, "Lectures on the Apocalypse" says,

“When did Babylon ever fall with so complete a fall, or meet with such an utter obliteraction from the earth, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah?" Sodom and Gomorrah were completely blotted out. But this has never been the case with Babylon. Such was not its fate when the Medes and Persians seized it from the hands of the infamous Belshazzar, for they made it one of their royal cities. In the time of Alexander it still stood, and was the chosen capital of the Graeco-Macedonian Empire, the second city of Alexander's dominions, where he himself lived and died. It continued to be a populous place under the Syrian kings, who succeeded Alexander in the rule over it. In the time of the apostles it was still a populous place, for both Peter and Bartholomew preached the Gospel there, and there Peter wrote his first Epistle. As late as A. D. 250, there was a Christian church there and an influential bishopric for many years thereafter. Five hundred years after Christ there were Jewish academies there, who issued the celebrated Babylonian Talmud. Here, then, was a lengthening out of the existence of Babylon as a populated city for more than a thousand years subsequent to the taking of it by Cyrus. And even to this present hour there is a city in the middle of the area occupied by Babylon containing 10,000 people, and which pays to its governor a revenue of more than $17,000 a year. "Shepherds do make their folds there, as testified by all modern travelers, and the Arabians do pitch their tents there. It is not an utter desolation without inhabitant, and never has been since Nimrod laid its first foundations. The sentence upon Babylon is therefore not yet fulfilled, and cannot be unless that city comes up again into something of its former consequence.

“In the next place, there are Scripture prophecies which I am at a loss to understand except upon the theory that Babylon will be restored, and become a great commercial center, and be the last of this world's great centers to go down under the terrific visitations of the day of the Lord.”

The Prophecy of Zechariah

To substantiate what Dr. Seiss has said concerning the City of Babylon and the possibilities of its being rebuilt, in Zechariah 5:5-11, there is a very interesting prophecy concerning an ephah, or measure, which is the generally accepted symbol of commerce. In verses 9 to 11 of this chapter, the Prophet said, “Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked and, behold, there came out two women and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar, (or Babylon): and it shall be established, and set thereupon her own base.”

Once these words are understood, they seem to indicate that the time is coming when a commercial center will be established in Babylon that will represent the worldwide commercial Babylon which has arisen in these last days. We have reason; therefore, to believe that renewed interest will be taken in the area where ancient Babylon was situated and where we expect the rebuilt City of Babylon to arise.

Renewed Interest in Iraq, or Ancient Babylon

This is confirmed by Keith L. Brooks in his book, "Harvest of Iniquity" on pages 80 and 81, where he says,

“An article in The Advent Witness says: 'Mesopotamia is now absorbing very wide and general interest. And no wonder, for Palestine and its neighboring countries will shortly become the center of operations both political and military. King Feisal tells us that he has, at heart the construction of a railway from Bagdad to Haifa that will bring his country within a few hours of the Mediterranean. King Feisal has great irrigation schemes in view which will make Mesopotamia 'the granary of the world.'"

“In 1924 King Feisal called what was known as 'The Assembly of Babylon,' summoning the people to a period of construction, which has since moved forward with great strides. Bear in mind that the land of Babylon, Nineveh and Bagdad entered the League of Nations in October, 1932, under the name of Iraq, as the 57th member of the League. ‘This occurred on the Jewish Fast of Gedaliah. By this step the ancient land of Nebuchadnezzar acquired statehood and complete independence in fulfillment of previously ratified treaties between Iraq and Great Britain.

“Today the Mediterranean is linked with the Persian Gulf by air routes. There are also good automobile roads all the way. Great pipelines will carry oil from Iraq to the Mediterranean port of Haifa. Rich gold mines have just been discovered a little north of old Babylon.

"Is all this paving the way for a literal fulfillment of Revelation 18?"

To Become the Capitol City of the Antichrist

“We believe that the new Babylon will be the capital of the Antichrist, a latter-day Sodom. The city described in this chapter is a habitable place, not simply a figure. It is the center of a great commercialism.
“Could such a great city as is here described spring up within a comparatively short time? In these days of rapid transit and marvels of scientific construction, who need think that it could not? Consider the modern city of Tel Aviv which has sprung up in Palestine almost overnight. What can be done under Antichrist, a superman, when he sees the possibilities of old Babylon?”

To say the least, my friends, this is interesting information concerning an important subject, which should be of timely interest to all of us because of events, which are taking place these days, in that portion of the earth.

Understanding these things, we can begin to realize what is meant in Revelation 17:18, where it says, ‘And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’

We assume, therefore, upon the authority of God’s Word and from current events that the ancient City of Babylon, which represents total alienation from God, will be rebuilt in the last days of the present dispensation and become the final center of commercial Babylon.

**Babylon Will Fall**

Now let us read what is written in Revelation 18:1-8, where it says, “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

**A Local and World-Wide Application of This Truth**

Certainly, my friends, these are wonderful words which describe the future downfall, not only of the city of Babylon but which indicate the overthrow and downfall of world-wide commercial Babylon.

We have already stated that the word “Babylon” comes from the word “Babel” which means confusion. Therefore, we often speak of political Babylon, ecclesiastical Babylon and commercial Babylon. In our study of the 17th chapter have already seen how the last form of Gentile world power will head up under the beast or Antichrist.

The 17th chapter also reveals that political Babylon headed up under Antichrist and the ten kings will hate and destroy ecclesiastical Babylon.

Our present lesson in the 18th chapter reveals the downfall of commercial Babylon.

**The Mighty Angel with Great Power**

In the first verse of the 18th chapter, the Apostle John said, “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.” There seems to be no way to determine just who this mighty angel was, but he is supposed by some to be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The reason for this opinion is that it says of this angel that he had great power and that the earth was lightened with his glory.

There are scriptural reasons which cause us to believe that the angel referred to here is Christ because we know that to Him, great power and authority have been given. This is confirmed in John 5:26, 27, where it says “For as the Father hath life in himself so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”

**Another Mark of Identification**

We know also that glory belongs unto Christ as it does not belong to any created angel. In Isaiah 6:1-3 Isaiah was given a vision of
the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and it says that one cried, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Therefore, if the angel referred to in this passage is the Lord Jesus Christ, He would certainly be in a position to cry out with a strong voice announcing the fall of commercial Babylon, for certainly He is one who could say such things with all authority!

A Prophetic Announcement

In the vision which John saw, this angel cried mightily with a strong voice saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” This was certainly a wonderful prophetic announcement. To the believing children of God, this announcement brings joy and hope and they naturally look forward to the time when these great and mighty things will be accomplished. But to the godless and unbelieving, who are associated with commercial Babylon in any way, or to any extent so as to be guilty of the evils which she represents, it should strike fear to their hearts and serve as a warning for the future.

A World-Wide System of Monopoly

This is a day and age of monopoly and oppression in the business affairs of the world and no one thinks for a moment that the great business systems and corporations of the world today are conducting their business on a Christian basis. Of course, there are many exceptions, but the general rule is to the contrary. Things are heading up in the commercial world rapidly and when the Antichrist comes into power he will have a world system of commerce wherein no man will be able to buy or sell except he shall have the mark of the beast, which fact is confirmed in Revelation 13:16, 17.

When things finally reach such a condition as that, certainly it will be time for God to step in and do something about it.

Men are getting by in the commercial world these days with a lot of things, but it will not always be so, for the time is coming when commercial Babylon, with its world-wide monopoly on the necessaries of life and its unfair traffic in the good things which the world affords, will fall under the mighty judgments of God.

The reason God will destroy the world-wide commercial system of the Antichrist, which will no doubt be headed up in the rebuilt city of Babylon, is suggested in the third verse of our lesson text, where it says, “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”

What Many Merchants Forget

Businessmen of the world who traffic in the commodities which the world affords, forget that their stock in trade, be it lumber, or coal, gold or silver, or what not, were all created and placed here by the Lord God of heaven, and that in reality they belong to the Lord of the universe, and that they are but stewards who are supposed to handle these things and to distribute them for the good of mankind. All too often men engage in business with selfish motives and by deceitful practices use their power and prestige in business to become rich without any thought of doing good to others. Of course, there are many exceptions to this rule, but when the Antichrist, and with him the merchants of the earth, form a world-wide monopoly of the necessaries of life and undertake to starve the people to death who will not receive their mark in their right hand or in their forehead, then it will be time for God to step in and put a stop to such evil practices.

A Prophetic Invitation

Before God destroys the great commercial system of those days, however, I want you to notice that He will send out a special invitation to His people, lest they should share in the impending judgments which He is about to execute upon commercial Babylon. In verse 4, John said, “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

If the city of Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the future world center of commercial activities under the Antichrist, then these words would have more or less of a local application. But looking at the situation as a whole, they would also have a world-wide application, in which case the invitation, where God said, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues,” would apply to God’s people anywhere throughout the world who will be associated in any way with the evil commercial system of the Antichrist. So we see that there is both a local and a general application of these words which can be made without doing any injustice to the text.

The Church Is Not in View Here

We remind you of the fact that before these events come to pass it is expected that the true church, which is the body of Christ will have been completed and caught away from this world at the rapture to meet the Lord in the air as suggested in First Thessalonians
4:13-18. Therefore, when God said, “Come out of her, my people,” He was not speaking primarily to the Christians of our day, but He was speaking prophetically of those who will be upon earth during the tribulation period when these things will come to pass.

It is very likely also when God said, “Come out of her, my people,” that He was speaking primarily to His chosen people Israel, who will then be upon the earth and who, more than likely, will engaged in commerce, much the same as they are today. We all know that the Jewish people are the great commercial leaders of our day, but if they become associated with the Antichrist in carrying on the evil practices of commercial Babylon, they will be in great danger of suffering the judgments of God. Therefore, God in love and mercy has given this prophetic announcement saying, “Come out of her, my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

Double Pay for All Wickedness

Furthermore, the Lord said, “Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

LECTURE 54 ON THE REVELATION

Mystery Babylon Stands for Political Confusion. Religious Confusion, and Commercial Confusion — Present Wrongs Must Be Stopped — Commercial Babylon Also Will Be Judged and Destroyed— Commercial Babylon Is Rich; Nevertheless She Will Come to Poverty and Sorrow Under the Judgments of God — The Church of God Is Poor Now But Will Be Rich Some Day — Kings, Merchants and Shipmasters Will All Mourn Over the Fall of Babylon — The Fall of Babylon Will Be a Cause of Rejoicing for All the Saints of God — The Hallelujah Chorus — Babylon Will Never Rise Again — Even the Glorified Saints Will Share in the Victory and fill Rejoice and Sing in the Hallelujah Chorus — The Marriage of the Lamb Will Come — The Importance of This Event — The Church Is the Bride of Christ

Mystery Babylon

WE have progressed in our present study to Revelation 18:9 where our present lesson will begin. Chapters 17 and 18 of the Revelation have to do with the subject of “Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.”

We have already pointed out that the word, “Babylon” comes from the word, “Babel,” which means “Confusion.” Generally speaking, the word Babylon has a threefold application, so that we speak of religious Babylon, political Babylon, and commercial Babylon. Religious Babylon stands for all that is wrong in religion; political Babylon stands for all that is wrong in politics; and commercial Babylon stands for all that is wrong in business or commerce.

Present Evil Things and Systems Will Be Destroyed

Everyone admits that there are many things which are wrong in these three phases of human life today. It is natural, therefore, to believe that in due time, God will intervene with terrible Judgments to put a stop to all things that are wrong in religion, politics, and business.

From our previous studies we have already learned how the ten kings will destroy ecclesiastical Babylon and will put an end to all false religions in their effort to compel men to worship the Antichrist.

Commercial Babylon Also to Be Destroyed

The 18th chapter, which we are now studying, has to do with the destruction of commercial Babylon! Before the destruction of commercial Babylon actually takes place, however, God will send out a warning to His people lest they should be overtaken in the terrible judgments which He will mete out upon those who are associated with this terrible system.

This is confirmed in Revelation 18:4, 5, where John said, “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

That God intends to bring a terrible reward upon those, who will be associated with commercial Babylon, is revealed in verses 6-8 of this chapter, where it says, “Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in
the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliriously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

A Fateful Boast

Notice please, that in the seventh verse just read, commercial Babylon is quoted as saying, “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”

The Rich Exalt Themselves Above The Church

Certainly, my friends, these are words of boasting that are akin to blasphemy. The rich of the earth have always exalted themselves above the church of God. Today, we who are Christians can right-fully declare that we are the sons of God, for in John 1:11, 12, speaking of Christ, it says, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

We who are Christians know that Christ was born King of the Jews and that someday He will reign as King over all the earth, and that those who suffer with Him shall also reign with Him.

But we must also admit that during the present dispensation those who are Christians, are, in many instances, the poor of the earth.

Just now, Jesus, the Son of God, the head of the church, the Messiah of Israel, and the Saviour of the world, is absent from the earth; for after His resurrection from the dead, He ascended into heaven. Therefore, the church of Christ, now upon the earth is in widowhood, as it were, while Christ, the head of the church is absent. All the future hopes of the church, therefore, await and depend upon the return of Christ to receive the church, which is His bride, unto Himself.

Commercial Babylon Full of Pride

Commercial Babylon, therefore, seems to be taking all of these things into account, and in her pride and carnal security she boasts, saying, “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”

Why should those who have become rich through their association with commercial Babylon feel themselves in want of anything? As long as men have money, they have plenty of friends, and their joy is full.

On the contrary, most of the people of God, these days are poor, despised, and persecuted. Is it any wonder, therefore that commercial Babylon despises the church of God upon earth today and lifts up herself in pride and boasts because of her carnal and material security?

Note, however, that because of her boastful attitude, God has forewarned her of complete destruction, saying “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

The Fall of Babylon

Now, let us read what is stated in Revelation 18:9-19, where we have a detailed account of the fall of commercial Babylon, it says,”

“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. “And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. “And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goody are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. “The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! “And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were
Even the Kings of the Earth Will Mourn

In receiving his vision of these things, the first thing the Apostle John saw and took note of was the mourning of the kings of the earth over the destruction of the City of Babylon. When this comes to pass, however, that is what we have every reason to expect. No one doubts but what the kings of the earth, for the most part, are closely associated with commercial Babylon, and that the very success and future of their thrones, in most cases, depends upon their cooperation with the evil system of commercial Babylon. No wonder, therefore, when they see the City of Babylon, which will become the fountainhead of the great commercial systems of the earth, destroyed in a single hour, they will weep and mourn and bewail their loss. Without the support of commercial Babylon, they know that their very thrones are endangered, and that they will crumble and fall.

Merchants and Sailors Also Will Mourn

Not only will the kings of the earth mourn over the loss of this great city, but in verse 11, it says, "And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more."

Also in the 17th and 18th verses it says, "And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!"

The Righteous Will Rejoice When Babylon Is Overthrown

Now while all this mourning is going on upon earth over the destruction that will come upon commercial Babylon, in verses 20-24 of our lesson text, we have an entirely different view of the subject, for it says,

"Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Thus, my friends, we see that the destruction of Babylon, which will cause great mourning upon earth will cause great rejoicing in heaven and rightfully so. For long centuries of time, the godly men and women of the earth have witnessed, and testified against the unjust practices of commercial Babylon, but the great leaders of industry in every age have given little heed to the combined testimony of the prophets of old, or to the witness and testimony of the Christians of the present age. Just because those of us who believe in the things that are right, are in the minority, the leaders of these great commercial systems have despised and rejected us and have made us poor by withholding from us their financial support. This they have done in spite of the fact that we are the servants of God and are actively engaged in those things that are well worth while, both for time and eternity.

The Righteous Have Long Been Persecuted

On the other hand, as Dr. Seiss says, in his book on "The Apocalypse":

"If the world can find a Balaam, ready to compromise himself for gold, to bless it for a price, and to speak God's benediction on its lusts and passions, him it will honor, and to him will Balak's nobles come; but for the Elijahs, Isaiahs, Jeremiahs, Peters, and Pauls, their fate has ever been to be mocked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, nailed to the cross, thrown to wild beasts, or compelled to seek asylum in deserts, mountains, and dens and caves of the earth, being destitute, tormented, afflicted, because they condemn the godless, its Ahabs, Jezebels, its Herods, and its sins. Compared with the great mass of mankind the true church has always been a 'little flock,' toiling with difficulties, opposition and hatred, and never able to make effective headway against the powers holding sway over the race."

But in spite of all these things, we can rejoice to know that the time is coming when all that is false and unjust in commercial Babylon will be destroyed, after which a new order of things will be established upon the earth.

Now let us continue our study reading what is written in Revelation 19:1 where it says,
And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. “And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

A Cause for Rejoicing

Certainly, my friends, these words indicate a time of great dispensational change.

These words are often spoken of a “The great Hallelujah chorus.”

The word, “Hallelujah” is a compound Hebrew word which really means “Praise-Ye-Jah,” or “Praise Ye Jehovah.” We are told that it occurs 24 times in the Old Testament and 4 times in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the word in the original is often translated in the English as “Praise Ye the Lord.”

In the New Testament the word has been written “Alleluia,” which means the same.

The word “Alleluia” appears 4 times in the lesson text which we have just read.

The first “Alleluia” we are told was spoken by much people in heaven. They were filled with rejoicing because God had executed His judgment upon Mystery Babylon the Great. Therefore, they sang in united chorus, “Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.”

Conditions Will Change

Indeed, my friends, when people think that things are going to continue as they are now forever, they are entirely mistaken. Today the spirit and power of ecclesiastical Babylon and commercial Babylon and political Babylon reigns supreme over the earth, and those of us who belong to God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, constitute only a small minority. We are only a believing remnant from among the millions of earth’s population, and because we are outnumbered and because the powers that be are against us, (that is, humanly speaking) we have little or no occasion to rejoice over conditions as they are now. The word “Alleluia” is the cry of victory for the saints of God. We do not hear it used often these days even in our churches because there seems to be so little victory, even among the children of God. But when the church has been resurrected and raptured away to heaven, and God executes judgment upon Babylon, and she falls never to rise again, then in united chorus the saints of God in heaven will sing “Alleluia,” for their hearts will be filled with rejoicing over what God has done, and they will give glory and honor and power unto the Lord, and will acknowledge that the judgments of God upon the evil systems of this world were just and right and were executed in righteousness.

Wicked Babylon Will Never Rise Again

In verse 3 of our lesson text it says, “And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.”

From these words we gather that when these things are accomplished, those in heaven will rejoice and be glad and sing “alleluia” because the judgments of God upon Babylon will be permanent and will last forever. In other words, once these wicked systems go down with a crash, they will never rise again! Certainly my friends, a realization of these things should be enough to make anyone want to sing “alleluia” unto God, for His righteous judgments upon those who were the enemies of all righteousness.

The Redeemed and Glorified Saints Will Also Rejoice

Next to join in the Hallelujah Chorus, according to our lesson text, will be the elders and the four beasts, or living creatures. This is confirmed in the fourth verse, where it says, “And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.”

The four and twenty elders and the four living creatures, were mentioned in the fourth chapter of the Revelation, in verses 4-11. In our study of that passage we learned that the enthroned elders and the four beasts, or living creatures, represent the redeemed
saints of the Old and New Testaments. They, as such, will join in the Hallelujah Chorus, which will occur when God has executed His judgments upon the wicked of the whole earth. As they sing the Hallelujah Chorus, we are told that they will fall down and worship God, saying, “Amen; Alleluia.” Thus, will they give their assent to all that God will have accomplished by His mighty power.

Many Voices Will Join in Praise

In response to their worship, in verse 5 and 6 it says, “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

Thus, my friends, we see that when this time comes all heaven will reverberate with the Hallelujah Chorus of the saints, and with the voice of God out of the throne encouraging them in their singing of the Hallelujah Chorus! It is simply impossible, I am sure, for us to comprehend now, what an event of rejoicing that will be. What a peon of praise will ascend from the redeemed multitudes to the God of heaven for having executed His justice and judgments upon the wicked. It will then be time for all the saints everywhere to sing “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

When we anticipate these things what a joy for us to know that those of us who are upon earth now and are redeemed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have been born again by His Holy Spirit, and whose sins have been atoned for by His blood, will be in that great throng and join with them in singing and saying these very things as an act of true worship unto God.

The Meaning of the Lamb

Now, let us consider what is stated in verses 7 to 10 of our lesson text, where it says, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

The Marriage of the Lamb of Universal Interest

Here are words, my friends, which, even though they are brief, bring to our attention an event of tremendous interest and importance. It is an event which angels in heaven, and men upon earth have long waited for with joyful anticipation. What could be of greater interest to anyone than the forthcoming marriage of the Lamb of God to the church, which is declared throughout the scriptures to be the bride of Christ.

Had it ever occurred to you that all the time Christ was upon earth He remained unmarried? When He is finally married, however, according to the plans and purposes of God, His bride will not be chosen from among the seraphim and the cherubim or any of the angelic hosts of heaven, but the bride of Christ is to be made up of men and women of this world who have believed upon Him and have accepted Him as God’s Son and as their Saviour. In other words, the great mystery is that the bride of Christ will be made up of sinners saved by grace.

Such a marriage could never be consummated unless Christ had consented to be born in the flesh, which He did nearly two thousand years ago when He came from heaven and was conceived by the Holy Ghost and was born of a virgin mother in Bethlehem of Judea. We must recognize, therefore, that He was truly both God and man. In other words, He possessed the nature of God and the nature of man in one personality.

Our Bodies to Be Like His Glorified Body

We who are Christians know that in the moment of our resurrection from the dead, we shall receive a glorified body like unto His glorious body, which means that when these things have been accomplished, His nature and ours will be one, for by that time He will have perfected us in His own image!

Understanding these things, the Apostle Paul was justified in saying in Second Corinthians 11:2, “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.”

Truly, my friends, we who have believed in Christ are betrothed to Him, and just as we are waiting for Christ to return for His bride, Christ Himself is waiting for His bride, the church, to be called out: from among both Jews and Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel, as a people for His name.

When the Church Is Completed Christ Will Come

When those who are to make up His bride have been called out and the number is completed, then the church age will come to a
close, and Christ Himself will descend in the clouds of heaven to receive the church, which is His bride, unto Himself.

This is confirmed in I Thessalonians 4:16-18, where it says, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Then the Marriage Will Take Place

When these things shall have taken place then the marriage will be consummated in heaven at which time Christ will present us to Himself as a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, as stated in Ephesians 5:27.

Thus, my friends, from these and many other scriptures, we are ready to affirm that Christ is the Bridegroom and that the church which He purchased upon the cross with His own blood is to be His bride, and that this future marriage is to be consummated in heaven, following the completion and rapture of the church and the destruction of "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth," who now claims to be the true bride of Christ.

The Church to Be Beautifully Arrayed

Therefore, in our lesson text, it says of the true church, "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."

It is hard to imagine how beautiful and how glorious the true bride of Christ will be when she hath made herself ready and is robed in the garments of righteousness.

The Bride of the Antichrist

How this description of the bride stands out in contrast to the description of the bride of the Antichrist given in Revelation 17:4, where it says, "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."

Indeed, my friends, the bride of Christ will not be gaudily attired as the bride of the Antichrist will be, but she will be arrayed in fine linen clean and white, and we are told that the linen is the righteousness of the saints.

The righteousness referred to here will not be the imputed righteousness of Christ, which will already have been given to the saints, but it will be righteousness which they themselves will have earned by their righteous deeds while upon the earth. It will be righteousness which they will deserve as a reward for what they have done. What a glorious thought that Christ will not only impute unto us His own righteousness, but that we will be rewarded with the garments which we will have earned as a result of our own righteous deeds done here upon the earth. Certainly, this will make our joy full and complete, for we will then have received His righteousness and our own reward. We cannot speak about the marriage supper of the Lamb just here, but will discuss these things in our next lesson.

LECTURE 55 ON THE REVELATION

The Marriage of the Lamb Will Be an Important Event — The Marriage Supper Will Follow the Wedding and Will Take Place Upon the Earth After Christ Returns with His Bride the Church — There Are Two Great Suppers Mentioned in This Chapter, i. e., the Supper of the Great God — Who the Guests Will Be at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb — Not the Church Saints of Today — A Prophetic Foreview of Christ Coming to the Battle of Armageddon Christ As a Great Warrior Will Make War in Righteousness Against the Antichrist and His Armies

In our last lesson based upon Revelation 19:1-9, we spoke chiefly of the four "Alleluias" of the glorified saints which will be sung immediately upon the downfall of commercial Babylon, which event was vividly described to us in the 18th chapter.

We also discussed the interesting subject of the marriage of the Lamb, which is stated in Revelation 19:7, 8, where it says, Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

The Marriage Supper Which Will Follow the Wedding

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in verses 9 and 10, where it says, '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. “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

In our last message, I pointed out that the marriage of the Lamb will be one of the greatest events of all time. Of course, we understand that the Lamb in this case is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ and that the bride is none other than the church, which is being called out during this present age of grace, through that preaching of the Gospel, from among both Jews and Gentiles as a people for his name. When those who are to make up that body have been called out, the rapture of the church will take place as described in First Thessalonians 4:13-18, at which time all who belong to the body of Christ will be resurrected or changed while living and caught up to meet Him in the air.

Following this wonderful and glorious event, the marriage of the Lamb will be consummated in heaven, which of course, will be followed by the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is mentioned in the ninth verse of our lesson text where it says, “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

This is a very brief passage which brings to our attention an important event but in no wise explains it. It is left to us, therefore, to find out as best we can just what the marriage supper is and the significance of it. It certainly must be of some importance or else it would not have been mentioned at all in this important book.

The Marriage Supper Always Follows the Wedding

First of all, we wish to point out that the marriage supper is not the wedding itself. The marriage supper is always that which follows after a marriage has already been solemnized.

This marriage feast will be of such importance that John said, ‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

Certainly, my friends, it will be a grand event!

Two Great Suppers Mentioned in This Chapter

It is interesting to note that in this same chapter, mention is made of two different suppers, the first of which is the marriage supper of the Lamb. The other is a supper which God will prepare for the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, and is mentioned in the 17th and 18th verses, where John said, “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

From these words we see that the present age or dispensation of grace is going to end with two great suppers, which will be the marriage supper of the Lamb and the supper which God will provide for the fowls of the earth, which, of course, will be following the battle of Armageddon, as we shall see. Certainly, these two suppers stand out in contrast one against another.

It was natural, therefore, that John should say, ‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb’

The Wedding in Heaven — The Marriage Supper on the Earth

In considering the subject of the marriage supper, I am constrained to believe that even though the marriage itself will take place in heaven, the marriage supper will take place upon the earth, for according to Oriental custom, the marriage supper is always held after the wedding in the future home of the bridegroom and the bride, which in this case will be here upon the earth.

The fact that the marriage supper will take place upon the earth when Christ returns with His bride, seems to be taught or implied in the parable of the ten virgins, recorded in Matthew 25:1-13, “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. “While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. “Afterward came also the other virgins, saying Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”
The Bridegroom Returns with the Bride

You will recognize that these words teach the second coming of Christ from heaven back to this earth accompanied by His bride, at which time a marriage supper will be held, to which there will be invited guests. At the marriage supper some will be accepted and others refused entrance, because they lack special qualifications.

The Only Safe Thing to Do Is to Watch

In view of these things, the admonition is “Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh,” (that is, the marriage supper). These words apply, of course, to those who will living upon the earth at that time when Christ returns with His bride to the earth where the marriage supper will be held.

Who Are the Guests to Be?

One more question remains, however, concerning the marriage supper, and that is, “Who are the guests?”

This is a rather difficult question but I am inclined to believe that it will include all of the Old Testament saints, from Abel to John the Baptist. John the Baptist, you will remember, announced himself as a “friend of the Bridegroom.” This is confirmed in John 3:28, 29, where John said, “Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy, therefore is fulfilled.”

The Guests Could Not Be Church Saints

It stands to reason, that we who are Christians of the present are will not be guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb for we are members of the church, which is His bride. We could not, therefore, be considered as guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The guests at the marriage supper will no doubt include the blood-washed multitude that will come out of the great tribulation after the church has been caught away to be with Christ, for they, too, are to be included in the first resurrection.

We may safely say, therefore, that the invited guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb will include all the saints of God in every age who are worthy except those who belong to the elect body the church itself, which are declared to be the bride of Christ. I think we may safely say, also, that angels will be spectators of this wonderful event, but the Bible says nothing about their being included among those who are guests, because that honor is reserved for only those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Understanding these things, we do not wonder at what is stated in tenth verse of our lesson text, where John said, “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

The vision of the marriage, and the marriage supper of the Lamb were so great and wonderful that John was impressed with a desire to worship and he was about to worship the messenger who had revealed to him these things, but this he was forbidden to do by the messenger himself. There seems to be no way of telling who the messenger was, but whoever he was, he commanded John to worship God, for the testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy. In other words, all prophecies, whether in the Old or New Testaments, speak directly or indirectly of Christ, and look forward to the time when the marriage of the Lamb and the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place.

The Return of Christ to Armageddon

We now come to a very interesting and important part of the chapter, where we have an unusual word picture of the second coming of Christ in great power, back to this earth to fight the battle of Armageddon.

In verses 11-16 of our lesson text, John said, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. ‘And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. ‘And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ‘And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’”

An Unusual Revelation of Christ

Frankly, my friends, this is a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is new and hard for many to understand. We are so accustomed to think of the Lord Jesus Christ in the language of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, where He is presented in His humiliation,
as a Man, despised and rejected, and as a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that it is hard for us to picture Him as a mighty Warrior, who is coming to wage war against His enemies. We are so accustomed to think of Jesus as the One who submitted Himself to His enemies in the Garden of Gethsemane and who was falsely accused and who was buffeted and spit upon and mocked by His enemies, and Who was finally nailed to the cross; that it is difficult for us to realize that He will ever come again in the manner described in our lesson text. But one portion of the Word of God is just as true as another. Therefore, if we believe what is stated of Christ in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and what is stated of Him in the gospels of the New Testament, we must believe what is stated of Him in this passage also. If we will remember that Jesus Who was crucified, also rose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven, where He is exalted and has received a name above every name, we will not find it difficult to believe and to understand what is written of Him here in this unusual passage.

He Will Make War in Righteousness

In the 11th verse John said, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” These words reveal Christ in heaven all prepared to depart from heaven back to the earth to judge and to make war. He is pictured riding upon a white horse. We should be careful, however, not to confuse this white horse rider with the white horse rider mentioned in Revelation 6:2. We have already pointed out that the white horse rider in that instance was none other than the coming Antichrist, who shall go forth conquering and to conquer. But in order to keep us from being confused, the Rider upon this white horse is called, “Faithful and True,” and we are told that in righteousness he will judge and make war. Certainly this name and these characteristics stand out in contrast to those of the Antichrist, who will go forth conquering and to conquer, all right, but who will judge and make war in unrighteousness! There can be no question, therefore, but what the words of our lesson text refer to the true Christ, for He alone could rightfully be called, “Faithful and True.” He alone is the One who can, and who will judge and make war in righteousness.

Wars are raging in the earth today in many places, but frankly, they are being waged in unrighteousness by those who are responsible for them. But when Jesus comes to judge and make war, He will not champion an unrighteous cause but He will make war against His enemies in order to deliver His own people and to destroy those who are wicked out of the earth. This is justly a part of His work and for this very purpose, He was manifested. This is confirmed in 1 John 3:8, where it says, “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

Jesus Will Act in His Own Right

Therefore, in coming to wage war against those who are the servants of Satan, Jesus will be acting entirely within His own right and we should not in any wise criticize Him for doing so, for the deliverance of the righteous depends upon the destruction of the wicked.

Marks of Identification

To further identify this Rider upon the white horse, in verse 12 John said, ‘His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.”

We cannot read these words without thinking of what is written of Christ in Revelation 1:14, 15, where it says, His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.”

Certainly, my friends, these words identify the One mentioned in our lesson text as the true Christ, Who is now in heaven. The fact that His eyes were as a flame of fire reveals that He will come with divine intelligence and that by the very look of His eyes, He will search out the hearts of men as with a powerful X-ray and will be able to judge them in righteousness before executing judgment upon them for their sins.

The fact that He is described as having many crowns upon His head indicates His true kingship and that He will come invested with all the authority of heaven to execute judgment against the wicked.

John said also that He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself. We do not need to be surprised at this, for in Matthew 11:27, Jesus said, “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”

Some Things Yet Secret in God’s Plans and Purposes

From these words, we discover that there are some things, which are yet secret between the Father and the Son, and it is neither our right nor our privilege to inquire into the secret things of God. But the words of our lesson text in Revelation 19:13 indicate that when Jesus comes in righteousness to judge and make war, He will know exactly what He is about, and that He will do so in order to fulfill the secret purposes which are known to Himself and to His Father only.
In Rev 19:13-16 of our lesson text it says, “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

LECTURE 56 ON THE REVELATION

The Revelation of Jesus Christ Is the important Theme of Revelation the Nineteenth Chapter and Verses Eleven to Sixteen — Few People Realize That Jesus Is to Be a Mighty Warrior Who Will Subdue All His Enemies — A Day of Vengeance Is in Christ's Heart — When Jesus Comes He Will Not Be Alone — Jesus Will Execute the Judgment Written — Christ Will Yet Become King of Kings and Lord of Lords — The Battle of Armageddon To Be a Supernatural Conflict Between the Armies of Heaven and the Armies of the Earth — Where the Battle Will Be Fought — Why the Battle of Armageddon Will Be Fought — The Coming Harvest of Sin and Iniquity — The Battle of Armageddon and Its Results — The Antichrist and the False Prophet Will Suffer the Same Doom in the Lake of Fire

WE have progressed in our present study to Revelation the 19th chapter. Our last lesson was based upon Revelation 19:11-16, but in our discussion we only considered verses 11 and 12. Therefore, we shall reread this entire passage again, in order to review what we have stated and to get our lesson clearly before us.

The Second Coming of Christ

The theme of this passage is, the second coming of Christ and in verses 11 to 16, the Apostle John said,

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

A New Conception of Christ

No one can doubt but what, in these words, we have a wonderful prophetic word picture of the second coming of Christ in His Revelation. He is here pictured as a mighty warrior, who in righteousness shall judge and make war.

We repeat again that it is difficult for us to understand such a passage as this, for it is so much in contrast to what we are accustomed to thinking about Christ, Who, when He came in His first advent was meek and lowly in heart, and who, in order to usher in the dispensation of grace gave himself in sacrifice upon the cross. At that time, for the joy that was set before Him, He submitted Himself to His enemies and endured the cross, despising the shame but when He comes again, his enemies will submit themselves to Him, as One in supreme authority, for it shall be even so, as it is written.

Jesus Was a Man in Authority

In our effort to understand these thing’s which are written here about Christ, we should remember that on one occasion, Jesus, when He came into His Father’s house and found there, those who were making it a place of merchandise and a den of thieves, He took a whip of small cords and deliberately drove them out of the temple. Thus, my friends, we see that when the right time comes, He Who is the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world will be well able to act with all authority and to judge and make war in righteousness.

We do not wonder, therefore, that in verse 13 of our lesson text, John said, “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.”

“The Word of God” Was a Proper Name for Christ
First of all, we wish to remind you when it says “His name is called The Word of God” this was a proper name which belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and which in this instance does not have any reference to the Bible as the written Word of God.

We know that Jesus was called the Word of God, for in John 1:1, 2, it says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.”

Thus, my friends, we see that it was just and right for Jesus to be called the Word of God” as a proper name.

He Will Stain His Raiment with Blood

It says of Him, who is called The Word of God, that He “was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.”

This is an interesting, and also a very important statement.

Naturally, our minds go back to the events of the Passion Week when Jesus suffered the reproach of His enemies until His own raiment was no doubt spotted and streaked with blood. And then we think of the blood-stained cross upon which He died, at which time He shed His own blood to make an atonement for your sins and mine and for those of the whole world.

That is a matter of history, but the words we are now studying are a prophecy of the future concerning an event which will take place at the second coming of Christ, when He shall come to execute judgment by making war against His enemies.

The Day of Vengeance

In Isaiah 63:1-6 there is a very interesting passage which is closely related to our subject.

In speaking of the day of vengeance, Isaiah the Prophet said, “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people, there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. “And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.”

There is no question but what these words are a description of none other than the Lord Jesus Christ coming to battle against His enemies, which is indeed a very strong confirmation of the words of our lesson text in Revelation the 19th chapter, and the 13th verse.

When Jesus Comes Others Will Be with Him

In this regard, it is interesting to note that in Revelation 19:14, 15, John said, “And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

Thus, we see that when Jesus comes He will not be alone.

An Historical Example

We are not told anything about these armies which were in heaven, but we must remember that Elisha and Elijah both saw horses of fire round about them in the heavens at the time when they were prophets in Israel. Therefore, when God’s Word plainly makes a statement to this effect, we cannot help but believe that there are armies in heaven which will accompany the Lord Jesus Christ at the time of His second advent, when He comes to fight the battle of Armageddon.

The Prophecy of Enoch

In Jude 14, 15, the Apostle said, “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 deed which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

Therefore, when Jesus comes, followed by the armies of heaven, is it any wonder that in Isaiah 2:10-12, the Prophet cried saying, “Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man
shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.”

Jesus Will Smite the Earth in Judgment

Let us notice again that in the 15th verse of our lesson text, speaking of Christ, John said, “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

No doubt the language used here is somewhat symbolic but its meaning is very apparent. When he says that out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, the meaning, no doubt, is that as Captain of the Lord’s hosts, He will speak with all authority and power, and that by His Word, which will be supported by the armies of heaven, He will smite and subdue the nations and rule them with a rod of iron.

The Sins of the Nations Will Demand Judgment

Certainly, my friends, we cannot doubt that by that time the nations of the earth will need to be smitten because of their sin and their wickedness and their unbelief.

Think of Russia today and of what she has done to the cause of Christ in that great land, and of her continued wickedness and unbelief and blasphemy against God and her persecution of the children of God in every place.

Think of Germany today and of her war against God, which included her persecution of Jews and Christians alike. Think of what happened in Spain, where the horrors of war recently were against the cause of Christ.

The Present Rebellion of the Nations

When we think of these condition which exist throughout the world today we are reminded of what is stated the Second Psalm in verses 1 to 3, where it says, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.”

Certainly, my friends, we see that this spirit has already taken hold of some of the nations of the earth and have reason to believe that it will not be many years until this spirit of rebellion will sweep over the nations of the whole earth. When it does, it will be time for God to send the Lord Jesus Christ with the armies of heaven to smite the nations and to rule them with a rod of iron and to tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

God Will Speak in Wrath

That, my friends, is exactly what will do! This is confirmed also in Second Psalm in verses 4 to 6 and where it says, “He that sitteth in heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. Thou shalt break them with a rod iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

Christ to Be a Mighty King

We do not wonder, therefore, that when John was given this word picture of the second coming of Christ to smite the nations and to rule them with a rod of iron and to tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, that he said of Christ, “He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Now let us read what is written in Revelation 19:17-21, where John said,

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; “That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. “These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were
The Battle of Armageddon to be a Supernatural Conflict

From this reading we are able to see at once that the battle of Armageddon will not be a conflict between the armies of earth fighting against each other, but it will be a supernatural conflict between the armies of heaven under the leadership of the true Christ and the combined armies of the earth under the leadership of the coming Antichrist.

This great battle, which will occur at the very close of the tribulation period, has received its name from what is stated in Revelation 16:13-16, where it says, “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

It is interesting to know that the word “Armageddon” means “Mount of Slaughter.”

The words of the passage just quoted reveal the manner in which the battle will be brought about. In order to gather the armies of the earth to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, the spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and will cause them to believe that by combining their armies together they will be able to defeat Christ and the armies of heaven.

These evil spirits going forth to the earth will cause all of them to assume the attitude suggested in the Second Psalm, verses 2 and 3, where it says, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”

Therefore, united in a spirit of defiance and rebellion, they will gather their armies together for this last great conflict of the tribulation period.

Where the Battle of Armageddon Will Be Fought

The place of the battle is also of interest and importance. We are told that Armageddon is the ancient hill and valley of Megiddo, which is west of the River Jordan including the plain of Jezreel, and it is there that the battle is expected to take place.

The Cause of the Battle

Now let us think together for a few moments concerning the cause or reason for this great battle.

Let us remember that we are now studying concerning the last events of the tribulation period. By this time ecclesiastical Babylon will have been destroyed by the ten kings, which shall rise during the tribulation period. Commercial Babylon will also have been destroyed by the judgments of God, as described in chapter 18 of the Revelation, but it will still remain for political Babylon to be destroyed. The head of political Babylon, of course, will be none other than the coming Antichrist. Since the Antichrist by that time will have become the great world dictator, and will have subdued his enemies. Unless Jesus Christ should come and destroy the Antichrist, evil would remain upon the throne of world dominion, but God has promised that the kingdoms of this world, over which the Antichrist will reign for a short period of time, will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. The battle of Armageddon, therefore, will be a necessity in order that the Word of God may be fulfilled and the purposes of God accomplished.

Vengeance

Another reason why Jesus will come with the armies of heaven to the battle of Armageddon will be to take vengeance upon them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is confirmed in II Thessalonians 1:7-10, where it says, “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.”

The Jews Will Need Deliverance

Jesus will come to the battle of Armageddon for still another reason, and that will be in order to deliver His chosen people, Israel, from the tyranny and deceit and oppression of the Antichrist.

By that time Antichrist will have succeeded in subduing the Gentiles and of bringing them into submission to his will, but he will not
have succeeded in destroying all of the chosen people of God. We know from other scriptures that during the tribulation period, the Jewish people will be driven out of Jerusalem into the wilderness where they will receive special help and protection from the Lord. Since, by that time Antichrist will have defied himself, thus demanding the homage and worship of all men, he will hate, with a undying hatred, which will have no bounds, this remnant of the Jewish people, who will still insist upon worshiping the God of Israel instead of the Antichrist. The purpose of the Antichrist, therefore, will be to destroy and to make away with the remnant of God’s chosen people, who will be living at that time. Therefore, unless Jesus should come with the armies of heaven to deliver them, they would utterly perish under the cruel tyranny of this coming superman of sin. Among the purposes, therefore, for which Jesus will come to the battle of Armageddon will be to deliver the remnant of His people from utter destruction. The only way that political Babylon can be brought to an end will be for Jesus to come in person with the armies of heaven and destroy the Antichrist and those who follow him. That is exactly what He will do, as prophesied in II Thessalonians 2:6-8, where it says, “And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked [or wicked one], be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”

Earth’s Harvest of Sin to Be Gathered

We do not wonder, therefore, that in Revelation 14:18-20, it says, “And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”

Understanding these things, we do not wonder that in Revelation 19:17-18, which is a portion of our lesson text, the angel standing in the sun cried “with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

Preparation for the Battle

After this rather unusual invitation had gone forth, in verse 19 the Apostle said, “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.”

Indeed, my friends, these are very suggestive words, and while the writer has suggested to us the facts in the case, for some reason he did not give to us a word picture of the battle itself. It may be that in mercy to us, God forbade him to describe the awful carnage which will take place at that time.

The Result of the Battle

The divine record, therefore, passes over the event itself and gives to us in verses 20, 21 merely the results of that awful conflict. It says, “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

This, my friends, will be the moment for which the world has long waited. The beast which is referred to here, we understand, of course, will be the Antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, to whom Satan will have given his full seat of power and authority, as confirmed in Revelation 13:2-4. From our previous studies we have learned that all sin will head up in this man of sin. Therefore, before peace can come to a troubled world, this man of sin must be destroyed and put out of the way, and that, my friends, is exactly what will happen.

The False Prophet to Suffer the Same Doom

Not only will the Antichrist be taken, but the false prophet which wrought miracles before him, will also be taken. The false prophet, you will remember was mentioned in the 13th chapter of Revelation, in verses 11 to 14, where John said, “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the
wound by a sword and did live."

It is interesting to note, therefore, that the false prophet, who will be an arch-deceiver will be taken with the Antichrist and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

There Is a Lake of Fire!

I know a lot of people do not like to believe that there is any such thing as a lake of fire, used as a place of punishment for the wicked, but when you stop to think about the Antichrist and the false prophet, who will be totally filled with sin and utterly rebellious against the Lord, where else could God send them, except to some such place? We should rejoice, it seems to me in knowing that God has such a place of punishment and confinement for those who are utterly godless, and who have rejected both the grace and the mercy of God and who have refused to be corrected by the ordinary judgments of God. The penitentiaries of the world; whether we like them or not, are a blessing in disguise to society at large. If God has a penitentiary which He calls the lake of fires for such criminals as the Antichrist and the false prophet, then I say; a great big “AMEN” and God speed the day when they shall be taken alive and cast into the place where they belong!

When this shall have been accomplished, in verse 21 of our lesson text it says, “And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

Jesus Will Triumph

We do not need to wonder at this for we know that Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil and the Word of God plainly teaches His ultimate triumph over all of His enemies.

In Psalm 45:2-5, speaking prophetically of the Christ, it says, Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are, sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.”

Again in Habakkuk 3:12, 13, it says, “Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.”

Again in Psalm 2:8, 9, God spoke prophetically to the Messiah saying, “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

A Word of Advice to Kings

In view of all of these things, which the mighty Christ will do, when He comes to the battle of Armageddon, in Psalm 2:10-12, it says, “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ‘Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”

An Interesting Question

In considering the things which are recorded in our lesson text, Seiss, in his book on “The Apocalypse” says,

“I only add, that our contemplations will fail of their end, if they do not serve to teach us, and to write it indelibly upon our hearts, that rebellion against God is death;—that no weapon formed against Jehovah can prosper;— that those who will not have Christ to rule over them must perish! Though the wicked should wield the power of archangels, they cannot withstand the power of archangels, they cannot withstand the punitive majesty of the Warrior Judge and King who rides upon the white horse. His sword is mightier than Satan, mightier than the Beast deemed invincible, mightier than the command of eternal miracle over nature’s laws, mightier than all the forces of earth and hell combined. And that sword is pledged to drink the life-blood of all who neglect his mercy, despise his laws, stand out against his authority. All may seem well and promising now. People may indulge their unbelief and passions during these days of forbearance and grace, and see no disadvantage growing out of it. They may get angry at our earnestness, and account us croakers and fools when we put before them the demands and threatenings of the Almighty. But “woe to him that striveth with his Maker!” There is a deluge of bottled fury yet to be poured out on them that refuse to know God, and on the families that call not on his name, from which there is no escape, and from whose burning and tempestuous surges there is no deliverance. God help us to be wise, that we come not into that sea of death!”

No Way of Escape
Indeed, my friends, after considering these things, which are recorded in the Word of God and comparing them with the current events of these days in which we live, we leave it to your own judgment as to whether or not the world is heading toward the battle of Armageddon. Frankly, I see no escape from these things. How long it will be before these terrible things recorded in the Book of Revelation come upon an unsuspecting world, we are unable to say, but we know that what God has recorded in His Word for our instruction, will surely come to pass!

LECTURE 57 ON THE REVELATION

The Book of Revelation Helps Us to Understand the Present World Crisis — Antichrist the False Prophet Will Be Cast Into the Lake of Fire — Satan Will Be Put Into the Bottomless Pit — The Different Names Used in the Bible to Denote Satan — The Downward Course Satan — Satan Is a Great Potentate — His Original Beauty and Power — It Was Pride Which Caused Satan to Fall — Satan Tempted Adam and Eve — He Also Tempted Christ, and Likewise Tempts All of Us — Satan Will Be Cast Down to the Earth — This Will be the Chief Cause of the Great Tribulation — The Lake of Fire Will Be Satan’s Final Doom — What We Should Do

The Crisis of Christ’s Second Coming

MANY people do not realize it but the world crisis which is now upon us is nothing more or less than the impending crisis of Christ’s second coming. The Book of Revelation is the one outstanding Book in the Bible which deals with this important subject. This book, as no other book in the Bible, not only tells us that Christ is coming again but it tells us quite in detail of the terrible judgments which will be inflicted upon those who refuse to believe and obey the word of God. God help us, therefore, to give devout and prayerful attention to the things which are written in the Book of Revelation for our instruction and for our comfort.

Our last lesson was based upon Revelation 19:17-21. This passage speaks of the coming battle of Armageddon and of the doom of the beast and the false prophet.

The Doom of the Antichrist and False Prophet

As a result of the battle of Armageddon, in verses 20 and 21 of chapter 19, it says, ‘And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.’

We have already called your attention to the fact that the Battle of Armageddon will be the last great decisive conflict of the tribulation period and that it will be a supernatural conflict between the armies of heaven under the leadership of Christ, and the armies the earth under the leadership of Antichrist.

The Doom of Satan Foretold

Now let us consider what is written in Revelation 20:1-3, where it says, ‘And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.’

These rather unusual words have in them a lot of comfort to those of us who are Christians for they reveal without any uncertainty that the time is coming when Satan, who has been back of all of the world’s sin and rebellion and persecution of the saints of God, will be chained and shut up in prison for a thousand years, during which time he will not be able to trouble the hearts of men and cause them pain and suffering as he has done during the past six thousand years. We should rejoice, therefore, for this prophetic announcement as to how God will yet deal with him who is the cause of all evil.

Only two personalities are brought to our attention in this passage; namely, that of the angel and Satan himself.

The Mighty Angel

There seems to be no way of determining just who the angel is for no name or rank is given in our lesson text. The thought, therefore, is that this angel, whatever his name or rank might be, will be stronger than Satan, which fact will enable him to take Satan and bind him and cast him into the bottomless pit.
At first thought such a thing seems incredible, for as we look into the history of the past and into the Word of God and see what Satan, by his power and influence has been able to do, we marvel that he will become so weak that an angel, perhaps an ordinary angel, will be able to chain him and put him into prison. But that, my friends, is exactly what will happen! Therefore, even though we are sore troubled now, we can rest in hope until this glorious event be accomplished to the glory of God and the good of the people of the whole earth.

The Names of Satan

It is interesting to note that in our lesson text, four different names are used to describe this evil personage whom the angel will bind and cast into the bottomless pit. This is confirmed in the second verse, where it says, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan bound him a thousand years."

The word "dragon" indicates the hideous, murderous character of Satan. The fact that he was called the "serpent" indicates that he is a deceiver. The word "devil" means that he is a slanderer, and we know this is true because elsewhere in the Word he is called the "accuser of the brethren." The word "Satan" indicates that he is the great adversary of God and that he is also opposed to Jesus Christ the Son of God, and that he is the enemy of God’s people.

Thus, in these four words, we have a word picture of Satan, which all of us should look upon with fear and trembling.

The History of Satan

I know of nothing that would be more helpful in our present study than for us to consider the origin and history and final doom of this supernatural being, which is called in our lesson text, "the dragon, the serpent, the Devil, and Satan."

It is my conviction that while we have been zealous to teach men concerning the origin and the nature and person and history and the works and future glories of the true Christ, we have neglected too many times to teach people concerning the origin, nature, person, history and works and final doom of Satan. If the one is necessary, the other is necessary also, for if we would escape from our enemy we must of necessity, know something about him, and about the ways which he uses to deceive and to ensnare and trap men in order to bring them into his power and under his control.

Because many people do not understand the scriptural teaching concerning Satan, they are ready to deny that there is any such thing as a personal Devil. They are wont to look upon the subject as if Satan were only a principle of evil or an evil influence. Our convictions upon this important subject should not be based, however, upon the opinions of men, but rather upon the Word of God.

Not only is he called the dragon, the serpent, the Devil and Satan, but he is known elsewhere in the Word under the names of Lucifer, Beelzebub, Belial, and adversary.

Satan a Great Ruler

That he is a great celestial potentate is confirmed in Ephesians 2:2 where he is spoken of as "the prince of the powers of the air." In Second Corinthians 4:4, he is called "the god of this world," (or age, which means that he is the god of present world systems during the present age). We must not think for one moment that Satan is more powerful than the Lord Himself, for this is not true, and all the power which he has is under the permissive will of God.

We must not forget, however, that Satan is the ruler of the powers of darkness of this world. This is confirmed in Ephesians 6:11, 12, where the Apostle Paul said, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

From the Highest Heaven to the Lowest Hell

If we trace the history of Satan through the scriptures we shall discover that his course is constantly downward, from the highest heaven to the lowest hell, as we shall see.

We do not know a great deal about the origin of Satan, but we have every reason to believe that he was a created being, and that before his fall he was very beautiful, very powerful and highly exalted.

In Ezekiel 28:11-19 we have a very interesting passage wherein the prophet has given to us a foreview of the coming Antichrist under the title of the "king of Tyrus." We know from the scriptures that Satan will incarnate himself in the Antichrist. Incidentally, therefore, the prophet describes to us here Satan’s original glory from which he fell. We know this is true, because there has never been as yet a king of Tyrus such as the one described here.

Satan’s Original Beauty
In Ezekiel 28:11-17 it says, ‘Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and wast perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. “Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. 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.”’

Thus, my friends, we see that in the beginning Satan was the anointed cherub that covereth; that is, that he was the guardian or protector of the throne of God.

Why Satan Fell

The cause of Satan’s fall is clearly taught in Isaiah 14:12-14 where it says, ‘How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

Indeed, my friends, it is not difficult to read between the lines in this passage and see that pride and self-will were the cause of Satan’s fall.

When Satan said, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High,” what was God’s answer to him?

God’s answer is recorded in verses 15 to 17 of this same chapter, where the Lord said, ‘Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?’

Thus, my friends, we see that it was Satan’s pride which caused him to fall and there is no doubt but what his presumptuous act in this regard was the reason why the pre-Adamite world became a chaos and was without form and void as described in the first chapter of Genesis.

Satan in the Garden of Eden

If this be true, it throws much light upon the fact that Satan was present in the Garden of Eden when order had been brought out of chaos and that he was there ready to tempt Adam and Eve by challenging the authority of God.

Satan Tempted Christ Also

You will also remember that in Matthew 4:8, 9, when Jesus was in the wilderness of temptation, Satan assumed an attitude of supremacy over Christ when he offered to Him the kingdoms of this world. In Matthew 4:8, 9, it says: “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

Satan Is Not Bound Yet

Many people have the idea that Satan is now in hell and that he rules there as king over a host of evil spirits, but this is far from being the truth. In Job 2:1, 2, there is a very interesting passage which says, “Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou, And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”

Thus, my friends we see that in Job’s time Satan was not in hell but rather had liberty upon the earth and at the same time had access to God. Even today he is described in Ephesians 2:2 as “the prince of the power of the air”

Satan Will Be Cast Down to the Earth

In Revelation 12:7-12 there is a very interesting passage which reveals that Satan will eventually be cast out of the atmospheric
heavens down to the earth. It says, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the
dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon
was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth,
and his angels were cast out with him. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength,
and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused
them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;
and they loved not their lives unto the death. "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the
inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he
hath but a short time."

The Great Tribulation

When Satan is cast out of the heavens unto the earth, this will be the chief cause for the coming time of tribulation. The personal
presence of Satan upon the earth in the state of anger in which he will be at that time will bring about a time of tribulation, the like of
which the world has never seen. We know that there can be no lasting peace for the earth until the Antichrist and the false prophet
have been cast into the lake of fire, and Satan himself shall have been cast into the bottomless pit. The manner in which Satan will
be cast into the bottomless pit is described in our lesson text in Revelation 20:1-3, where it says, “And I saw an angel come down
from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old
serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut
him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations m more, till the thousand years should b fulfilled: and
after that he must loosed a little season.”

The final doom of Satan is given in Revelation 20:7-10 where it says, “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be
loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nation which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,
to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the
earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and
devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the
false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Thus, my friends, in our message, we have sought to trace for you from the scriptures the origin, the history, downfall and final doom
of Satan, which I trust has been instructive and helpful.

We want to conclude our message therefore, in the language of the Apostle Peter, recorded in First Peter 5:6-11, where it says,
“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon
him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking
whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your
brethren that are in the world. “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after
that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and
ever. Amen.”
beginning down through the ages, and we showed his downward course, first to the earth, and then to the bottomless pit, and finally to the lake of fire, which will be his final doom.

The Martyrs of the Tribulation Period

We are now ready to advance in our study by considering what is written in Revelation 20:4-6, where it says,

“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. “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

A Prophetic Foreview of the Kingdom Age

These words occur in logical order in the Revelation and open to us an important field of thought for our earnest and prayerful consideration. The passage itself is very brief, but the scope it covers is tremendous. Let us remember that we are here studying the things of the consummation, or those things which will occur after the rapture of the church and the tribulation have taken place. In other words, what we have here is a prophetic foreview of those things which will come to pass at the ushering in of the millennial reign of Christ, which is to follow the tribulation period. With Antichrist and the false prophet in the lake of fire, and with Satan in the bottomless pit, it will be time for a new order of things upon the earth.

Before the new order can be ushered in, however, several very important things must come to pass. These things have been mentioned in our previous lessons, but we mention them here merely to refresh your minds concerning what has been said.

The Church Must Be Completed

First of all, before the things suggested in our lesson text can come to pass, the church, which is the body of Christ must be completed. The purpose of all Gospel preaching now, in this age of grace is for that very purpose. When God’s purposes in grace shall have been accomplished and the church is completed, the Lord must descend and catch away the church as stated in I Thessalonians 4:16-18. This event is commonly spoken of as the rapture of the saints.

The Antichrist Must First Come

Following the coming of Christ for His saints, the Antichrist must arise and rule with despotic power over the nations of the earth, as prophesied in Revelation the 13th chapter.

The Jews Must Return to Their Own Land

Another important thing which must occur before the words of our lesson text can be fulfilled is the regathering of the Children of Israel back to the land of Palestine for the children of Israel and the land of Palestine are central in God’s plans and purposes for the future.

Satan Must Be Bound

Last of all, before the words of our lesson text can be fulfilled, Satan himself must be bound and cast into the bottomless pit in the manner described in our last lesson.

When all of these things shall have come to pass, it will be time for Christ to ascend to the throne of His father David and to reign over the house of Jacob forever, and from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Mind you, when He comes to reign, He will indeed be “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

No Need to Doubt Christ’s Kingship

So many people wonder whether or not Christ, when He comes, will institute a righteous government upon the earth. Any who are troubled concerning this point should let the scriptures answer their question. For instance, in Luke 1:30-33, the Angel Gabriel said to Mary the mother of Jesus, “Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever;
and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

**What Daniel Said**

In addition to this important statement, the Prophet Daniel was given a vision of the Christ coming to reign over all nations. This is confirmed in Daniel 7:13, 14, where it says, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

**The Prophecy of Zechariah**

To this great truth the Prophet Zechariah added his testimony saying, in Zechariah 14:9, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."

**Isaiah Testified Also**

In Isaiah 11:1-5, the Prophet Isaiah prophesied of the coming reign of Christ, saying, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord; "And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

**The Testimony of the Second Psalm**

That Christ is coming to reign over the nations is also confirmed in the 2nd Psalm, verses 6 to 9, where the Lord is quoted as saying to the Messiah, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel."

**What Jesus Himself Said**

This same truth is confirmed in the New Testament in Matthew 25:31-34, where it says, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Certainly, my friends, this group of scriptures confirm the fact of Christ’s, coming again and with such abundant evidence as this given in the scriptures, how could anyone doubt that Christ will come for the very purpose of establishing the kingdom of heaven upon the earth.

**The Object of the Kingdom Age**

With this fact established by the scriptures, we may well ask, "What will be the object of the thousand years’ reign of Christ?" So far as God is concerned, it will be the fulfilling of all the promises which were given to Christ and which were promised in the covenants of the Old Testament Scriptures. It will be God’s answer to the prayer which men were taught to pray saying, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

**Christ**

So far as Christ is concerned, it will be the establishment of the kingdom which the Father has promised unto Him, and for which He has long waited. In Hebrews 10:12, 13, it says, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

**The People**

In Matthew 5:5 Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" When that time comes He will be able to confer upon the meek of the earth the inheritance which has been promised to them.

**The Saints**
So far as the saints of God are concerned, who will be upon the earth at that time, it will mean that sin and iniquity will be suppressed and put down so that righteousness will be enthroned.

The Nations

So far as the nations are concerned, it will be a time when they will be ruled over with an iron sceptre. Under the reign of Christ, all unrighteousness will be quickly subdued and evil will not be tolerated for one moment, for Jesus is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, which means that absolute justice will be speedily executed against any who undertake to promote any evil cause.

A Time of Peace

For the nations, the millennium will also be a time of peace, under the mighty reign of the Son of God. That peace will be the result of His reign, is confirmed in Isaiah 9:6, 7, where it says, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

The Natural Creation

From the standpoint of the natural creation, the millennium will be a time of deliverance from the curse. This is confirmed in Romans 8:20-22, where it says, “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

The Church in the Millennium

Now the question comes, “What about the church during the millennium or kingdom age?”

By this time the saints who constitute the church, which is the body of Christ will have been resurrected and raptured away to be with Christ. The scriptures plainly teach, however, that having been caught up to meet Him in the air, they will return with Him at the close of the tribulation period so that they also shall reign with Christ in their glorified bodies and have a part with Him in the glorious kingdom of the millennial period. In I Thessalonians 4:14 it says “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

Again in Jude 14, 15, it says, “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 sinners have spoken against him.”

The Church Will Share

It does not seem inconsistent to believe that the church will have some part in the work of the coming kingdom; for in First Corinthians 6:2, 3, it says, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world, and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters, Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”

We know also that in Luke 22:28-30, Jesus said to His apostles, ‘Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Glorified Bodies

It is understood, of course, that when that time comes, those who belong to the body of Christ will have bodies like unto His own glorious body, which He possessed after His resurrection. After His resurrection, Jesus had power to ascend to heaven and to descend to earth at will. Therefore, if the church saints are to have bodies like unto His glorious body, we may expect that during the millennial or kingdom age, they will serve as the connecting link between the things of earth and the things of heaven with power to ascend or descend at will. If this be true, and we believe it is, it removes all ideas of inconsistency which some people have thought existed in this regard. The church saints, therefore, reigning with Christ will no more interfere with the earthly order of Israel and the ongoing of the nations than the angels interfere with the ongoing of events now during the present dispensation.

A Place for the Church, for Israel, and the Spared Nations

What I want us to see and to understand is that Christ is coming again to rule and reign over the nations of the earth. In the glorious
kingdom, which He will establish, there will be a place for restored and converted Israel. There will also be a place for the spared nations of the Gentiles who will live through the tribulation period. There will also be a place for those who are members of the church which is the body of Christ! When that time comes, it will truly be the kingdom of heaven come to earth.

**Christ and the Saints to Reign for 1,000 Years**

Why have we taken time to speak of all these things? We have done so in order that you might understand the meaning of our lesson text in Revelation 20:4, where John said, “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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

These words should not be difficult of interpretation because they are a clear statement of fact and the truth which they contain is well confirmed in the scriptures. These words merely indicate that Christ is coming to rule and reign and that there will be those who will be associated with Him in the work of ruling over the nations in the glorious kingdom which is yet to come.

**Two Classes of Believers**

In Revelation 20:4, it seems that two classes of believers are mentioned. In the opening portion of the verse, the Apostle merely said, “I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them:—”

The second group are declared to be those who will be martyred during the tribulation period.

**The Rest of the Dead**

Concerning both groups suggested here, in verses 5 and 6, the Apostle said, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. ‘This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.’”

There is no question, but what those referred to in these words who are destined to become kings and priests unto God are the blood-washed children of God, who have been saved through Christ during the church age, and those who will be saved during the tribulation period.

**Kings and Priests Unto God**

In Revelation 1:5, 6, it says, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

Again in First Peter 2:9, in speaking to his fellow believers in Christ, the Apostle said, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

**A Crown of Glory**

Again in I Peter 5:4, the Apostle said, “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Many other scriptures could be used to confirm and enlarge upon this point, but we who are Christians and those who will be martyred during the coming time of tribulation, have reason to rejoice that, unto us, thrones will be given and that judgment will be given unto us according to the Word of God, so that in the coming kingdom we shall be priests of God and of Christ and reign with Him a thousand years!
A Sure Word of Prophecy

HOW glad and how thankful we should be that as the evening shadows of this dying age lengthen and darken into the night of earth’s coming time of tribulation, that we have a sure word of prophecy whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. We do not need to be surprised therefore at anything which might happen suddenly in these days in which we live. Certainly, my friends, we are hastening on towards the end of the times of the Gentiles and to the time of great tribulation and to earth’s darkest night, which God has ordained must come to pass before the return of Christ in His revelation to establish the kingdom of heaven upon the earth, as foreseen and foretold in the Word of God.

We have progressed in our present study to the 20th chapter of Revelation. Our last lesson was based upon Revelation 20:4-6.

In verses 1 to 3 of this chapter it is revealed that the time is coming when Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years and that after that, he must be loosed for a little season.

Lesson Text

Since we did not entirely finish our study of those things which are mentioned in Rev 20:4-6, in our last lesson, we shall read the passage again to refresh our minds concerning what was said and to get the material for our present lesson clearly before us. In verses 4 to 6 of our lesson text, John said,

> “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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

These important words, my friends, imply the fact that Christ Himself is coming again to rule and reign over the nations for a thousand years. They plainly teach also that there will be those who will be associated with Him in His glorious reign of righteousness over the earth. We devoted most of our time in our last lesson to proving from the scriptures that Jesus is coming again for this very purpose. We pointed out that those who suffer with Him shall also reign with Him during the kingdom age.

Resurrection Necessary

It is necessary for us to understand that before Christ can come and establish His kingdom upon earth the first resurrection must take place as one of the major events which must precede the establishment of the kingdom. That is why it is mentioned here in the Revelation.

According to our lesson text those who received thrones and “sat upon them, to whom judgment was given, and those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and 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,” lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

What Is Meant by “The First Resurrection”

Then in the fifth verse of our lesson text it says, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

Frankly, my friends, it has taken me a good many years to understand what is meant in this passage as the first resurrection.

The scriptures make mention of two kinds of resurrection. The first is spoken of as the resurrection of the just which is written in Luke 14:13, 14, where it says, “But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”

The resurrection of the just stands out in contrast to the resurrection of the unjust which is mentioned in John 5:28, 29, where Jesus said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
In this statement Jesus mentioned both resurrections and unless we are careful to study the entire Word of God on this subject, we are in great danger of falling into the error of thinking that there is to be a general resurrection, and a general judgment to take place in one day. But that is not true, for in our lesson text we discover that the first resurrection is not to be accomplished all at once, and that the resurrection of the unjust, which is thought of as the second resurrection will not take place until after the thousand years are finished.

Who the First Resurrection Will Include

According to our lesson text, I am constrained to believe that what is spoken of here as the first resurrection will include the righteous saints of every dispensation including the saints of the Old Testament period, the church saints of the present age of grace, the tribulation saints of the coming tribulation period and the saints of the kingdom age of one thousand years, often spoken of as the millennium, which is yet future. Not until all the righteous saints of every age shall have been resurrected will the first resurrection be completed.

The Great Resurrection Chapter of the New Testament

For further instruction on this important subject, let us turn to the 15th chapter of First Corinthians, which is the great resurrection chapter of the New Testament. It is a rather lengthy chapter but since it touches upon so many points of vital interest concerning our subject, we feel led to read and study the entire chapter!

In this wonderful 15th chapter, in verses 1-11, the Apostle Paul said, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ‘But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.’

The Fact of the Resurrection

Certainly, my friends, these word prove beyond the shadow of a doubt the fact of the resurrection and that Christ, who was the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world after He had been crucified and buried rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

The Resurrection Fundamental to Christian Faith

This is an important truth and on which is fundamental to all Christian teaching. The Apostle Paul believed all of these things concerning Christ with his whole heart and preached the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ and of our subsequent resurrection to all who would bear him.

The Importance of Christ’s Resurrection

In 1Cor 15:12-19 the Apostle Paul reasoned concerning the importance of Christ’s resurrection, saying, Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: ‘And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

This, my friends, is not only interesting but very necessary truth. If you take away the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ then there would be little left in Christian teaching for men to cling to. The resurrection, therefore, is fundamentally a necessary part of Christian faith and hope and practice. Let us not forget that if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins, and how terrible a thing that would be! Certainly, the doctrine of our own immortality and our hope of life beyond the grave is dependent upon the resurrection of Christ.

The Order of the Resurrections Also Important

After speaking of the importance of Christ’s resurrection, the Apostle then proceeded in 1Cor 15:20-26 to speak of the order of the
resurrections, by saying, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under feet. "But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is expected, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. ‘If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.”

Christ the Firstfruits

Some great fundamental truths are also mentioned here in this portion of the chapter. After stating in the 20th verse that Christ had risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept, the Apostle confirmed his argument concerning Christ by saying, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

After declaring that all men would be made alive, he was very careful to state upon this point that every man would be made alive, not all at once, but every man in his own order, "Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming"

Those That Are Christ’s at His Coming

No doubt, those that are Christ’s at His coming will be the church saints who will be resurrected or changed while living, and caught up to meet Christ in the air according to I Thessalonians 4:13-18, which is generally known as the resurrection and rapture of the church saints.

We must remember also that Jesus will come at the close of the tribulation period in His revelation back to the earth, at which time the tribulation saints, along with the saints of the Old Testament period, will be raised from the dead and join with Christ in the blessings of the kingdom age.

The Resurrection of the Wicked Dead at the Close of the Kingdom Age

After the kingdom age is finished, in verses 24 and 25 the Apostle said, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the first resurrection will take place, not all at once, but in the divine order which God has ordained until all the righteous saints of every age have been resurrected.

The Manner of the Resurrection

Having confirmed the fact of Christ’s resurrection and the importance of Christ’s resurrection and the order of the resurrections in 1Cor 15:35-50, the Apostle Paul spoke of the method of resurrection, saying, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.”

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All Unbelievers Without Excuse

Certainly, my friends, in this remarkable passage, the Apostle has disarmed all unbelievers in the resurrection and has left them without excuse for their unbelief. There is much that could be said upon this passage, but our lesson would be incomplete if we did not read what is written in 1Cor 15:51-58, where the Apostle said, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Thus, my friends, in the concluding part of this wonderful chapter on the subject of the resurrection, the Apostle spoke of the rapture of the saints which will take place when Christ comes for His church, as described in I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

In these words, he also gave to us a prophetic foreview of the final victory over death, and he makes this great truth a reason why we should be faithful in Christian service.

Understanding all of these things, we do not wonder that in Revelation 20:6, in our lesson text, the Apostle John said, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Lecture 60 on the Revelation

The Great Purpose of This Book

The whole purpose of the Book, therefore, is to reveal Christ unto us, not merely as the Saviour of men, but as the exalted Son of God, ruling and reigning in justice and judgment over things in heaven, and upon the earth. Jesus has a right to do this, for after His resurrection from the dead and before His ascension into heaven He said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

Understanding this great fundamental truth, the Book of Revelation becomes an intelligent Revelation of divine truth to those who will study it prayerfully and carefully, for it speaks clearly, boldly, and truthfully concerning the Christ of God in His relationship to things in heaven and to things upon earth. If Jesus has all power in heaven and in earth, and we know that He does have, we are not surprised when this last Book of the Bible speaks of tribulation and judgment, which are to be executed with divine justice against the wicked, whether they be fallen angels of heaven of wicked men upon earth or upon the Antichrist and the false prophet or upon Satan himself!

The First Resurrection

Our last message, was based upon Revelation 20:4-6, where John said,

“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. “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”
Without repeating what we have stated concerning these verses, we remind you that they bring to our attention, several important things; i. e. that Christ is coming back again to rule and reign over the nations of the earth.

They reveal that in relation to this event, a glorious resurrection of the righteous dead will take place and that those who are resurrected will live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

Advance Lesson

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 20:7-10, where it says,

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, God and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire come down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

A Look into the Future

Certainly, my friends, these words, although they are very brief contain a lot of suggestive truth and they are like an open vista upon some high mountain through which we look out upon the landscape of the future.

We have been much impressed with the number of times the period of one thousand years is mentioned in this one chapter, and yet in spite of this, there is nothing in the chapter which in any way describes this particular period to us to our own satisfaction. In our lesson text, the fact of the thousand year reign of Christ is stated. If we desire to know more about it we will have to look elsewhere in the Word of God for our answer. In this respect we shall not be disappointed, however, for there is much in the Word of God which reveals to us the blessedness of that period which is here designated as the “thousand years.”

This period is sometimes spoken of as the Millennium,” which means “a thousand years.” The word “Millennium” itself does not appear in the lesson text, but since it means a thousand years it is just another way of expressing the same period of time.

Two Theories About the Kingdom Age

First of all permit me to say that generally speaking there are two different theories concerning the Millennium. Some people have the idea that through the preaching of the Gospel, the whole world will become converted and when this is accomplished, that Jesus will come to rule and reign over the earth. This theory makes the church, which is the body of Christ, which is now being formed through the preaching of the Gospel, responsible for the accomplishment of this superhuman task. Certainly, my friends, this has not been the case during the last two thousand years. At the rate we are going now in the work of evangelizing the world, it would never become a reality, for the facts in the case are that the heathen people of the world are increasing more rapidly by natural propagation than we are reaching them with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In consequence, as time goes on, the world is becoming more pagan and less Christian. The postmillennial theory, therefore, concerning the second coming of Christ breaks down at every point.

The Premillennial Position

The premillennial view of the second coming of Christ and of the reign of Christ for a thousand years takes into account the necessity of judgment upon the wicked before ever there can be a peaceful reign of righteousness over the earth. The premillennial position, therefore, is that conditions upon the earth for the time being will continue to grow worse and worse until Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven for His saints, who will be resurrected or changed while living and raptured away to be with Christ as stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Great Tribulation

It is then expected according to the scriptures that a time of great tribulation will come upon the earth, during which God will execute His wrath and His judgments against or upon the wicked of the whole earth as stated and described in the preceding chapters of the Book of Revelation which we have already studied.

At the close of the tribulation period, it is expected, according to the scriptures that Christ will come again with His saints to rule and reign in righteousness over the nations of the earth who will be spared during the terrible time of tribulation.
The Correct View

It is our conviction that the premillennial view is the correct one, for the scriptures are very plain upon this subject. Both history and the scriptures themselves prove the falsity of the postmillennial position, while history and the Word of God, including the important subject of prophecy, prove the correctness of the premillennial return of Christ before the Millennium can be ushered in. In other words, God does not expect us who are Christians and who belong to the body of Christ to bring in the Millennium by our own efforts and by our own good works. No, indeed. Such a superhuman task requires a work of judgment as well as a work of grace. It requires also the personal presence and the divine authority of Christ Himself, who will be supported in His work at that time by the redeemed saints of every age.

The Kingdom Age a New Dispensation

May God help us, therefore, to get a correct understanding of this important subject. The postmillennial theory, we feel, is merely false optimism based upon the traditions of men rather than upon the Word of God. The premillennial theory, however, is not based upon the traditions of men but upon the word of God.

First of all, let us recognize that the one thousand years is to be, in reality, a new dispensation, which will be much different from the age of grace in which we now live. As a matter of convenience for Bible study, the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation, is divided into seven different dispensations, which are named as follows: - Innocence, which lasted from the creation of man to the fall of man; - Conscience, which lasted from the fall of man to the flood; - Human Government, which lasted from the flood to the dispersion at the tower of Babel; - Promise, which lasted from Abraham to the bondage of the Children of Israel and to their deliverance by the hand of Moses; - Law, which lasted from Moses to the crucifixion of Christ; - Grace, which is the dispensation in which we are now living, which is expected to last from the first coming of Christ to the second coming of Christ in His revelation at the close of the tribulation period; - Then will follow the Kingdom age of one thousand years of peace, which is mentioned suggestively in our lesson text today in Revelation 20:7-9. At the close of the Kingdom age we are told in I Corinthians 15:24, that Jesus will deliver up the kingdom unto God when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for it says that “He must reign until He has put all enemies under his feet.”

The thousand years, therefore, is an entirely new dispensation which cannot and will not come until the church, which is the body of Christ has been completed and caught away to be with Christ and not until the wicked of the earth have been judged and cast away. The Millennium cannot come until Antichrist and the false prophet have been cast into the lake of fire and Satan himself shall have been cast into the bottomless pit. Last of all, the Millennium cannot come until Jesus comes with His saints to rule and to reign.

Great Changes Will Occur

When this new dispensation finally comes, we may expect great and mighty changes to occur. It will certainly be a time of regeneration for the whole earth. Great changes will even take place in the material creation, which will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of; the children of God.

From what we have learned thus far in our studies of the Revelation, we know that just preceding the ushering in of the Millennium, great and mighty changes will take place in the earth until, even the topography of the earth will be changed. There will also be great changes in the atmospheric heavens, all of which will be for the betterment of conditions and which will make the earth more fruitful, thus increasing its possibilities as a habitation for man.

This is confirmed in Isaiah 4:2, where it says, “In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”

The Curse Will Be Lifted

We know from what is stated in Genesis 3:17-19, that when man first sinned, a curse was placed upon the ground for man’s sake, for God said, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.”

During the one thousand years, spoken of as the Millennium, we know the curse will be lifted, so that the earth will no longer bring forth thorns and thistles. This is confirmed in Isaiah 55:12, 13, where it says, “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

There Will Be Peace in the Animal Kingdom

We know also that because of man’s sin, enmity among the animal kingdom resulted, but in Isaiah 11:6-9, we have a wonderful
prophecy that this shall be done away with. It says, “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. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

The Earth Will Bring Forth Her Increase

In addition to these wonderful promises in Isaiah 30:23-26, it also says, “Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.”

Peace Will Come to All Nations

Also in Isaiah 2:1-5, we have a wonderful promise for the last days, it says, “The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the time is coming when the terrible wars which are now raging throughout the earth will cease. What a glorious time that will be!

This is further confirmed in Psalm 46:9, where the Psalmist said, “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.”

Indeed, my friends, what a blessed contemplation to know that peace is coming and that it will be lasting peace, so that the sufferings and the agonies of war will no longer prey upon the hearts, minds and bodies of men, as they are doing today.

Let us realize that such conditions cannot and will not come until He who is the Prince of peace, even the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to rule and to reign.

The True Character of Christ’s Reign

The character of His reign is prophetically foretold in Isaiah 11:1-5, where it says, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”

When we understand these things, we cannot doubt for one moment the words of Isaiah 9:6, 7, where the Prophet said, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be under his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

According to our lesson text, at the close of the one thousand years, Satan must be loosed for a little season.
Face of Opposition — After the Kingdom Age — What Will Happen Then? — The Loosing of Satan from the Bottomless Pit Will Be in Keeping with the Plans and Purposes of God — Why God Will Allow Satan to Be Loosed — The Kingdom Age Will Not Be the Age of Final Perfection — Children Will Be Born and Death Will Continue to Take Its Prey — Because Man Is a Free Moral Agent He Must Have the Right to Choose Between Christ or Satan — Satan's Imprisonment Will Not Change His Character — The Strange Outcome of This Last Rebellion — The Saints Will Rejoice and Be Thankful When Satan Is Cast into the Lake of Fire — The Doom of All Who Follow Satan Openly Declared — Why Will Men Refuse to See This Truth?

God Has Blessed His Word Against All Opposition

WHEN we began these studies, I must confess that few people were interested; others were indifferent and some were openly opposed to any effort on our part to study and the preach the wonderful truths contained in the Book of Revelation. So many had the idea that because some preachers had neglected and avoided preaching from this book that all of us should do the same thing, but we are happy to say that since we began our study of this remarkable book, God has wonderfully blessed His Word to the hearts of multitudes of people who have been listening to these broadcasts day after day over KWTO. Judging from the letters which we receive from our radio friends, in many states, there are multitudes of people now listening in to these messages whose hearts have been profoundly stirred and whose minds have been enlightened concerning many things which they did not understand. For all this we are truly thankful to our heavenly Father.

Not an Easy Task

We assure you it has not been an easy task to preach the stern, uncompromising, fearful truths contained in this last Book of the Bible, to men everywhere in all walks of life, without compromise and without fear or favor, but if God has blessed the preaching of His Word to the edification of the saints and to the warning of sinners and to the salvation of any who were lost, we shall rejoice now and for evermore.

Lesson Text

We have progressed in our present study to Revelation 20:7, where our lesson will begin. In our last lesson, we read verses 7 to 10 of chapter 20, but we did not in any wise exhaust the truth which they contain in our lesson study. Therefore, with your permission, we will read these verses again in order to refresh your minds concerning what was said and then deal with them from a different angle of approach than we did in our last lecture.

In Revelation 20:7-10 it says,

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

What Will Happen after the Kingdom Age?

In our last message, based upon this passage, we spoke chiefly of the one thousand years, during which Christ will reign over the nations of the earth and of the blessings and prosperity which will come to the earth during that glorious period.

We are now ready to take up the question "After the Millennium, What?" In other words, what may we expect to take place after the thousand years have been finished. Concerning this, we do not need to be in doubt, for our lesson text plainly states that "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

In Keeping with God’s Plan and Purpose

This is very suggestive truth, and many of you, no doubt, wonder why God will allow such a thing as this to happen. At first thought and from the human point of view, it would seem as if this would be entirely out of order and would be the complete undoing of all that will have been accomplished during the one thousand years, but this is not true as we shall see.

The loosing of Satan will be in keeping with God’s permissive will and according to His divine purpose. This is confirmed in the fact
that Satan will not escape from the bottomless pit, for such would be impossible without God's permissive will. According to our lesson text, Satan shall be loosed from His prison! In other words, he shall be loosed on purpose and he will be allowed, within the limits of God's permissive will to go out and deceive the nations in four quarters of the earth.

Certainly, my friends, there must be some reason for this which does not appear on the surface and which is not explained in our lesson text.

A Mistaken Idea

Many people have the idea that the millennium or one thousand years, during which Christ is to reign, will be the age of absolute perfection, but such is not the case. The time of final and complete perfection will not come until the close of the millennium, at which time, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to the Father when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power, for He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet, as stated in I Corinthians 15:24, 25.

We must understand, therefore, that while the thousand year reign of Christ will bring many wonderful blessings to the earth, it will not be the time of absolute perfection or of final blessing as taught in the Book of Revelation. It won't be very long now until we will by studying about the new heaven and the new earth and about the New Jerusalem and the new temple and the new light, and the new Paradise of God, which of course are yet future.

The Human Family Will Increase

There is no question but what during the one thousand years, when Satan is in the bottomless pit and Christ is upon the throne of His father, David, ruling over the nations of the earth, children will still be born to the human family the same as they are now and that death also will still exist and come to those who are disobedient.

That there will be children born during the millennium is confirmed in Isaiah 11:6-8, where it says, “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. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.”

Notice it says, “a little child shall lead them,” and again “the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den.”

This is positive proof that during the millennium children will be born to the human family, only under much more favorable conditions than today.

Death Will Still Continue

That men will also die during this period is confirmed in Isaiah 65:20, where it says, “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.”

Thus, my friends, we see that even though life will be wonderfully prolonged during the millennium, yet death will still exist and will not be destroyed until after the thousand years shall have been finished, for “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” as stated in First Corinthians 15:26.

Man a Free Moral Agent

In studying conditions which will exist during the millennium we must not forget that man has been constituted as a free moral agent with the right of choice and with the power to choose between good and evil. All men in every age must be given opportunity to choose between Christ or Satan. Therefore, even though men will live under favorable conditions during the one thousand years, it does not mean that they will all love or obey Christ from the heart. We know that during the one thousand years, with Satan in the bottomless pit and Christ on the throne, Christ will rule the nations with a rod of iron. In other words, He will insist upon absolute obedience to His divine authority, and He will immediately suppress and punish anyone who dares to disobey Him. It stands to reason, therefore, that multitudes of people during that period will render only feigned obedience to Christ. In other words, they will not obey Him because they love Him but because they fear Him.

Thus, at the close of the one thousand years, in order to test the spiritual state of those who shall have lived under such favorable conditions, without anyone to tempt them, it will be necessary for Satan to be loosed for a little season! Without this, those who will live during the millennium would have no right of choice to choose between Christ and Satan.

Satan Will Still Be Satanic in Character
The loosing of Satan will also prove to God and man that Satan’s imprisonment in the bottomless pit for one thousand years will not have changed his nature or his character in the least, for immediately upon his release, we are told he “Shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth.”

Thus when this event takes place, it will prove that Satan is still Satan, and that many men upon the earth will still be unregenerate in heart in spite of the unusual blessings and privileges of the millennial period. Therefore, when Satan is released it will not take him very long to deceive the nations and to gather a great army to battle, the number of whom will be as the sand of the sea.

The Final Outcome of the Last Rebellion

It is very interesting to note, however, the outcome of this final rebellion. In verse 9 of our lesson text it says, And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Such devouring fire from heaven is not new in sacred history. This is confirmed in II Kings 1:10, where it says, And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

The disciples on one occasion remembered this miracle and when the Samaritans would not receive Jesus into their village, they were angry at them. In Luke 9:54 it says, And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

So, my friends, we see that God has power to destroy those who rebel against Him with fire, and that He has reserved the use of this fire until the time when Satan shall be loosed for a season out of the bottomless pit and shall gather an army at the close of the millennial period against the city of Jerusalem.

Then God will send fire from heaven to destroy them. Thus no battle will be fought at that time, for the wrath of men and the swords of men will be useless under such a powerful judgment from the God of heaven.

The Final Doom of Satan

When all of this shall have been accomplished, in verse 10 of our lesson text, it says, And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

What Jesus Said

Thus, my friends, we discover exactly how and when Satan will come to his eternal doom. When Jesus was upon earth, in speaking of the final judgment of the nations in Matthew 25:41, He said, Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

In our lesson text, we have discovered that these were not idle words, but that Jesus meant exactly what He said.

Something for the Saints to Rejoice About

To those who love and trust God, these words concerning Satan are a wonderful prophetic announcement. It is something for all the saints of God to look forward to and to rejoice about, because when Satan reaches the lake of fire, he will no longer be allowed to tempt and persuade men to sin against the God of heaven or against each other, as they are doing now.

Thus will come to an end the downward course of Satan who in the beginning was the anointed cherub that covereth as stated in Ezekiel 28:14, 15.

We know that from that high and exalted position, Satan fell through pride, according to Isaiah 14:14, where he said, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most High.

We know also that the time is coming, according to Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:7-12 that Satan will be cast out of the atmospheric heavens which he now occupies as the prince of the powers of the air, as stated in Ephesians 2:2, and will be cast down to the earth during the coming time of tribulation.

At the close of the tribulation, he will be taken and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years.

Then according to our lesson text, at the close of the thousand years, he will be loosed for a little season, after which he will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.
Those Who Follow Satan Will Suffer His Doom

Indeed, my friends, we do not need to wonder at all this downward course of Satan, for the pathway of unbelief and rebellion against God has ever been and will always be a downward course. This will be true of the Antichrist and False Prophet and it will be true of Satan himself, and sad to say, it will be true also of all men who dare to walk in the dangerous path of unbelief. When man turns his back on heaven, he is headed toward hell. When a man turns his face away from the light, he is headed towards darkness. When a man rejects the offered mercy and the grace of God, he is headed toward the wrath, and the judgments of God, which will bring him at last to the lake of fire, which was prepared in the beginning for the devil and his angels.

How very sad that men in every age have yielded to the power of Satan and have walked in the pride of life and in the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, and have said "No" to the overtures of mercy which God has provided for them and offered to them through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and thereby have deliberately made themselves fit subjects of Satan and will surely someday share his final doom.

When?

When will men awaken to the error of their ways and to the foolishness of following Satan and to the danger there is, when living in sin.

This is an age of grace, and grace means, "unmerited favor, unbought love, and undeserved mercy." That is what God offers to all those who will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and who will accept Him as God's Son, and as the Messiah of Israel and as the Saviour of the world. Sad to say, however, that multitudes of people in these days are turning a deaf ear to the Gospel of God's grace and are rejecting God's Son as their own personal Saviour. In consequence they are headed for death and for judgment as we shall see in our next lesson!

LECTURE 62 ON THE REVELATION

Satan's Last Rebellion — The Last Great Work of Judgment Will Be the Judgment of the Great White Throne — Men Need to Be Instructed Concerning God's Work of Judgment Whether They Want to Hear It or Not — God's Work of Judgment Has Been and Still Is Progressive in Character — The Seven Phases of Judgment Are Revealed in God's Word — None of the Wicked Will Escape the Judgments of God — If Men Only Knew What Awaits Them

Satan Shall Be Loosed for a Little Season

OUR last lesson was based upon Revelation 20:7-10, where it says,

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

The Great White Throne Judgment

Now let us advance in our study by reading and considering what is written in Revelation 20:11-15, where John said,

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
The Doom of the Unbelieving Dead

These rather unusual words introduce to us the last judgment, which will be the judgment of the great white throne and they reveal to us the doom of the unbelieving dead.

I must confess that the theme of judgment is not a very pleasant one, nevertheless it is very necessary that men everywhere should hear and understand these things, which God has recorded in His Word for our instruction.

Before we can understand the full significance of the judgment of the great white throne, it will be necessary for us to give to you somewhat of an outline of the work of judgment as given in the entire Bible.

A Mistaken Idea

Some people have the idea that the Millennium is to be ushered in by the preaching of the Gospel and that after the Millennium, Christ will return, at which time there will be a general resurrection of all the dead. They have the idea that such a general resurrection will be followed by a general judgment, but a careful examination of the scriptures will reveal that this is not the truth as presented in the Word of God. It is very unfortunate that such a doctrine has ever been taught. It goes without saying that the idea of a single resurrection and a general judgment is at once confronted with many mental and scriptural objections.

The Work of Judgment Is Progressive

As we approach the subject of judgment, we discover in the scriptures that the judgments of God are progressive and are in perfect harmony with the unfolding of the dispensational plan of redemption. In our study of the scriptures, we usually speak of seven dispensations; namely, innocence, conscience, human-government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom age.

We haven’t time to make a study of each of these seven dispensations in our lesson, but we have named them so that when we mention the seven judgments, which are brought to our attention in the scriptures, you will see that there is a reason for doing so.

The Seven Judgments

The seven aspects of God’s great work of judgment, as revealed in the scriptures are usually mentioned as follows:

(1) The judgment of the believer’s sin
(2) The judgment of the believer self, or self-judgment.
(3) The judgment of the believer works.
(4) The judgment of the nations.
(5) The judgment of Israel.
(6) The judgment of fallen angels
(7) The judgment of the wicked dead Understanding these things, it is not difficult to see that the scriptures themselves refute the idea of a general resurrection and a general judgment.

The Judgment of the Believer’s Sin

Now let us speak briefly concerning the judgment of the believer’s sin.

The judgment of the believer’s sin was accomplished for us by Christ when He suffered and died upon the cross. It therefore belongs to the past. We know this is true because in I Peter 2:24 the Apostle, in speaking of Christ, said “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.”

That our sins were actually judged; that is, have gone before us unto judgment, even the judgment of the cross, is confirmed in Romans 8:1, 2, where the Apostle said, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

In John 5:24, Jesus also said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation (or judgment) but is passed from death unto life.”

Therefore, the work of Christ upon the cross was not only a sacrifice, for sin, but it was also a work of judgment.
A believer’s sins, therefore, are gone on before him into judgment—even the judgment of the cross—and being judged by the work of Christ upon the cross, they are atoned for, forgiven, cancelled, blotted out, and forgotten, and the believer is saved and free from present condemnation and free also from fear of any future judgment at the great white throne after death.

The Believer’s Self Judgment

We next make mention of the judgment of the believer’s self, or self-judgment. This judgment is now in progress. What a man thinks of himself is of far greater importance, if he only knew it, than what others may think of him. In Romans 12:3, Paul said, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

In the plan of redemption, two things are of vital importance; namely, what a man thinks of himself and what he thinks of Jesus Christ. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican well illustrates this point. From this parable, which is familiar to all of us, we learn that the more a man thinks of himself the less he thinks of Christ. The more a man thinks of Christ, the less he will think of himself.

In order that men might judge themselves, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. In First Corinthians 11:26-28, He said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Also in verse 31 of this chapter it says, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

Indeed, my friends, there is need for self-judgment and if we desire to escape the future judgments of God, we must judge our own selves here and now and confess our sins so that they may be forgiven.

The Judgment of the Believer’s Works

We must mention also the judgment of the believer’s works. In II Corinthians 5:9, 10, the Apostle Paul said, "Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 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."

Thus judgment of the believer’s works is yet future and will not take place until after the resurrection and rapture of the church. It will not be a judgment unto condemnation but will be solely to determine the rewards which shall be meted out to those who are saved.

As a matter of reward, the scriptures mention a crown of life, a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory, an incorruptible crown, and a crown of rejoicing.

The Judgment of the Nations

There is another aspect in the great work of judgment, which we sometimes fail to take into consideration; namely, the judgment of the nations.

The history of the nations is very interesting when considered from the Bible point of view. A study of this point will reveal that nations as well as individuals, are responsible to God for the way in which they accept or reject the plans and purposes of God, as set forth in His Word.

The time and place and the manner in which God will judge the nations is set forth in Matthew 25:31-34. It says, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, (that is, after the tribulation period) and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Please notice this passage refers to the judgment of the nations rather than to individuals.

The passage is very clear. The time for the judgment of the Gentile nations will be at the revelation of Jesus Christ which will occur at the close of the tribulation period. The Judge will be the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, spoken of in this passage as "The Son of Man."

The Judgment of Israel

We next make mention of the judgment of Israel. This seems to be necessary because the children of Israel are under covenant relationship with God as no other race or nation of people have ever been.
No one can doubt but what God has a controversy with the children of Israel because of their unbelief and their disobedience.

That Israel is hastening on to a time of impending judgment is confirmed in Jeremiah 30:7, where it says, “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble but he shall be saved out of it.”

There is much that could be said concerning the impending judgment at God upon Israel, but space will not allow it in our present discussion.

The Judgment of Fallen Angels

We next mention very briefly this judgment of fallen angels.

That special judgment will be meted out to fallen angels, is confirmed in II Peter 2:4, where it says, “For God spared not the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”

Also in Jude, the sixth verse, it says: “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

Therefore, the judgment of the fallen angels is just as sure as the judgment of fallen men and women. Judgment in either case will be the result and consequence of sin.

The Judgment of the Wicked Dead

We now come to the last of the seven aspects of judgment; namely, to the judgment of the wicked dead, which is the subject and burden of our lesson text in Revelation 20:11-15. In Revelation 20:11 it says, “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.”

There is no question but what the throne will be set for the judgment of the wicked dead. It is a fearful scene for us to meditate upon, because the judgment of this throne is final, for all those who will be judged at that time.

Before this judgment can take place, however, a resurrection of the unrighteous dead must occur, for in verse 12, it says, “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.”

Please remember that the righteous dead will have been raised one thousand years before this judgment occurs. We learned this in our recent study of the first resurrection.

The Dead Will Be Resurrected

It is a scriptural fact, however, that the wicked dead will also be resurrected to a resurrection of damnation and that is the event which we have set before us in our lesson text, even the wicked dead will be raised and brought before the judgment of the great white throne, at which time we are told the books will be opened. From that book men will be judged upon a basis of their works. It is reasonable to believe this, because many people today, instead of trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, are trusting in their good works to save them. Having rejected the blood of Christ, and having trampled the mercy of God under their feet and having died in their sins, how terrible it will be when these people are raised from the dead and are judged according to their works. Then it will be discovered by each and every one of them that salvation is not of works left any man should boast. Paul says, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

They will discover this, but it will be too late, for the record of their lives will already have been written, and when they are brought before the judgment of the great white throne, they will merely be receiving the judgment written. Because their works will condemn them before God, they will then be rejected and cast into the lake of fire.

None of the Wicked Dead Will Escape

That none of the wicked dead will escape this judgment is confirmed in the 13th verse, where it says, “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.”

We must not fail to speak of the Book of life, which is mentioned in this same passage.

Since this is to be primarily a judgment of the wicked dead, there is only one reason I can see why the book of life should be opened, and that would be, to convince and to show every man who is judged that his name is not written there and that he, therefore, has no right to eternal life, along with those who have been saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
The 14th verse of our lesson text says, “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

Without taking time to enlarge upon these words, they certainly indicate that the judgment of the great white throne is a final transaction, and that it will be the end of God’s work of judgment so far as man is concerned.

In the 15th verse of our lesson text it says, “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

An Interesting Quotation

In his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says, “Yes, O man! O woman! whoever you may be, your biography is written. An unerring hand has recorded every item, with every secret thing.

“There is not an ill thought, a mean act, a scene of wrong in all your history, a dirty transaction, a filthiness of speech, or a base feeling that ever found entertainment in your heart, but is there described in bold hand, by its true name, and set down to your account, to be then brought forth for final settlement, if not clean blotted out through faith in Christ’s blood before this present life of yours is ended. “And if no other books are to be thought of, the book of your own conscience, and the book of God’s remembrance, will then and there attest your every misdeed and ill-desert. Think, ye that fear not God, and make nothing of trampling His laws, how your case will stand when those books are opened!”

LECTURE 63 ON THE REVELATION

The Last Judgment Will he the Judgment of the Great White Throne — The New Heaven am the New Earth — The Original Earth and the First Heaven Perished — God Then Brought Order Out of Chaos and Made the Earth Habitable for Man — Man Was Then Created and Placed upon the Earth and Was to Have Dominion — The Present Earth Is Reserved Unto Fire and Will Be Renovated by Fire — The Lord Is Not Slack Concerning His Promise — The Present Earth Will Not Be Annihilated But Renovated by Fire and Preserved and Prepared As the Future Home of the Redeemed

The Great White Throne Judgment

OUR last message was based upon Revelation 20:11-15, where the Apostle John said,

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Lesson Text

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading what is written in Revelation 21:1, where John further said, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”

The Seven New Things

For a long time now, we have been studying in the Book of Revelation concerning the darker side of the picture, which is presented to us in this marvelous Book. Of necessity and for our instruction the Lord has revealed to us in this book the terrible judgments which will come upon an unsuspecting world as a consequence of sin. The terrible judgments which are to be meted out under the seven seals and the seven trumpets and the seven vials of the wrath of God are indeed very terrible and are not at all pleasant to think about. And if that were all that is recorded in the Book of Revelation, it would be a very dismal and gloomy book to study, I am sure. But, in His love and grace, God has been pleased to tell us also of the seven new things which will come to pass after the tribulation period is over and the terrible judgments of God have been accomplished, and the 1,000 years have ended.

Thus, in our present lesson, we are beginning a study of those things which will come to pass after the Millennium or Kingdom age
has been fulfilled; i.e., the new heaven, the new earth, the new city, the new nations, the new river, the new tree of life, and the new throne.

Certainly, my friends, such lofty subjects as these are worthy of study and should claim the attention of all those who are interested in the final outcome of conditions upon the earth. By the time we have finished our study of these things, we will have a better understanding of the plans and purposes of God, and we shall see how God will, in the end, fully vindicate His own Name and reveal the wisdom of all that He has done in bringing about the redemption of the race.

The New Heaven

First among the seven new things to be mentioned is the new heaven and the new earth. In the first verse of our lesson text John said, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”

These words present a real problem to our thinking and before we can hope to understand them, we must take into account the fact of the original creation and of the changes which have already happened to the earth in times past.

Which Heaven Is Meant

First of all, let me call your attention to the fact that the word “heaven” as it is used here and in Genesis 1:1 is singular. It applies, therefore, to this earth and to the atmospheric heaven which surrounds it, and does not include the starry heavens above or the highest heaven where God’s throne is. What John had a vision of, therefore, was a change in the earth and in the atmospheric heaven surrounding the earth. If we will limit our thinking to this interpretation, the passage will more quickly clarify itself in our minds.

Historic Judgment Upon the First Earth

According to Genesis 1:1 the first earth and the first heaven about the earth apparently were created in the dateless past. Most Bible expositors agree that there is a vast unnamed period of time between the first verse of Genesis and the second verse. Genesis 1:2 says, “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

These words in themselves indicate that after the original earth was created, it was visited with a terrible judgment, which apparently was a judgment of water, wherein the earth was submerged, for when the time came for God to bring order out of chaos, and to reconstruct the earth and make it habitable for man, it says, that “Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Mind you, these words do not refer to the flood which came in the days of Noah, for these were the conditions upon the earth before man was created.

How God Brought Order out of Chaos

It is interesting to note that in Genesis 1:3-27, where we have a record of the work of God during the six days of reconstruction of the earth, no mention of any creative act by the Lord is mentioned until verse 21, which describes the work of God during the fifth day.

Our thought is this: In the third verse it does not say that God created light, He merely said Let there be light, and there was light.”

On the second day, God merely divided the waters from the waters. In other words, He provided the clouds to hold the moisture of the atmosphere above the earth, but no mention was made of any new creative act in bringing this about.

The same thing applies to the work of the third day when God caused the waters to be gathered together and the dry land to appear, but this apparently did not require any special act of creation.

The same thing applies also to the work of the fourth day, during which time the sun, the moon, and the stars became visible, but it does not say that any new act of creation was accomplished in order to bring this about!

Not until we come to the work of the fifth day, do we find mention made of any creative work of God in connection with the reconstruction of the earth, after it had been submerged in water by a previous judgment before man was created.

Man Was to Have Dominion

As a part of the work of the sixth day, after God had brought order out of chaos, in Genesis 1:26 it tells how God created man in His
own image and gave him dominion over the earth.

An Important Prophecy

With these things in mind we can better understand the words of the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 3:3-7, where he said, *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”*

The Lord Is Not Slack Concerning His Promise

Having mentioned the original earth which was overflowed with water, and the heavens and earth which are now, the Apostle continued his argument by saying in 2 Peter 3:8-14, *Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”*

Certainly, my friends, this is a wonderful passage and he who studies what is stated here carefully will discover that in these few words the Apostle has given to us, as it were, a bird’s-eye view of the changes which have come, and will yet come to the material earth and the atmospheric heavens surrounding it.

The Original Earth Perished by Water

In the sixth verse of II Peter, the third chapter, when the Apostle said, *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:* he was not referring to the Noahic flood but to the original earth, mentioned in Genesis 1:1, which was visited with judgment and was overflowed with water as the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis fully explains. It was therefore the original earth that perished and became without form and void so that darkness was upon the face of the deep. Before the earth could be reconstructed, it was necessary for the spirit of God to move upon the waters in which it was submerged.

It is needless to say, therefore, that these words of the Apostle do not refer to the Noahic flood, which lasted only for forty days and forty nights and was a judgment upon man rather than upon the material creation.

In the seventh verse of II Peter, the third chapter, the Apostle spoke of the heavens and the earth which now *By the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”*

The Present Earth to Be Renovated by Fire

Thus, my friends, we see that because of a former judgment the earth has had its baptism of water, and that at a future time it is to be renovated by fire. In between these two major events, the Bible makes mention of two minor events, which greatly affect the structure of the earth. The first of these was the flood, which happened in the days of Noah. As we know, the earth was not destroyed by the flood, but there were great changes effected by it, so that the climatic conditions of the earth became changed to such an extent that the length of life was reduced from 900 years to what it is today, namely, to about threescore years and ten.

We are told also that when Jesus comes again in His revelation at the close of the tribulation period, to the Mount of Olives that great physical changes shall take place in Palestine, which will greatly affect the geography and the climatic conditions in the world during the reign of Christ. To confirm this, read Zechariah the 14th chapter.

Life Will Be Prolonged

A very interesting comment concerning the conditions upon the earth at that time is found in Ezekiel 47:1-12. Also in Isaiah 65:20, the prophet tells how longevity of life shall be restored to men during the Millennial period, or kingdom age.

After the Millennial period is over, the Apostle Peter tells us that, *“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”*
No one can question but what this will be a major event in the history of the earth, and surely God will have a great purpose in bringing this about.

**The Earth Will Not Be Annihilated**

It is sad, however, that so many people have gotten an idea from a superficial reading of this passage that this event will mean the complete annihilation of the earth, but a careful study of the passage will reveal that, in no sense is the earth to be annihilated but that its surface is to be changed or renovated by fire, so that its exterior surface will be completely changed and purified and made free forever from the destructive agencies which now cause disease and decay.

When the original earth was destroyed by water, the framework of the earth was preserved, so that during the six days of deconstruction, God brought order out of chaos and made the earth habitable for man. Therefore, when Peter said the original earth perished by water, he merely meant that it was changed or renovated by water.

So, when the time comes for the earth to be renovated by fire, it will not be annihilated but will merely be changed. This is confirmed by the fact that the expression “pass away” as used in our English version, in the Greek, does not mean annihilation but means “To pass from one condition of existence to another.”

Another argument for the continuation of the earth after it has been cleansed by fire, is given in Ecclesiastes 1:4, where it says, One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.”

The argument, therefore, is sustained by the scriptures that the earth will be changed by fire but that it will not be annihilated.

Therefore, when the Apostle John said in our lesson text in Revelation 21:1, I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea,” we can understand just a bit better what he meant by such a statement.

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**LECTURE 64 ON THE REVELATION**

At the Close of the One Thousand Year's Reign of Christ the Earth Will Be Renovated by Fire — The New Jerusalem Will Then Descend Upon the Renovated Earth — Creation Itself, Will Be Delivered from the Curse into the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God — The Earth Will Be Renovated, Not Annihilated -- When the New Jerusalem Descends Upon the New Earth the Tabernacle of God Will Be with Men — By Faith Abraham Looked for Such a City — Jesus Promised That He Would Prepare a Place for Us — In Spite of Conditions As They Are Today There Is Hope for the Future — Some of the Blessings of the New Earth

ALTHOUGH the book of Revelation has been a much neglected book in Bible study by most Christians, those of us who are studying, it at this time, are finding it to be full of light and truth and blessing even for those of us who are living in this age of grace.

It is for the most part a book of prophecy which reveals to us the future judgments of God upon the wicked and the ultimate and final blessings of God which are to come upon the righteous in the end of God’s plan of redemption.

We have progressed in our study to Revelation the 21st chapter.

Our last lesson was based upon Revelation 21:1 where the Apostle John said, I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea,”

**The Earth Will Be Renovated by Fire**

In our preceding lesson based upon this verse, we pointed out from the scriptures the three different stages through which the earth and the atmospheric heavens about the earth have passed or will pass during the ages allotted in the scriptures to the plan of redemption. We learned that the first or original earth mentioned in Genesis 1:1 perished by water and that the earth in its present condition is being kept in store reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men The renovation of the earth by fire, however, will not take place until after the close of the millennial period. We do not need to worry therefore, about the renovation of the earth by fire until both the tribulation period and the millennium have come to pass. When Jesus shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father then the earth will be renovated by fire in preparation for the perfect age, which is to follow this event, and which is spoken of as the “Ages of Ages.”

**The New Jerusalem Will Descend**

Let us now advance in our study by considering what is written in Revelation 21:2-8, where it says,
And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. "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. "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Nothing Is Ever Destroyed

In our last message we made mention of the fact that the renovation of the earth by fire does not mean that the earth will be annihilated and come to nothing as if it had never existed. The very nature of things and the Word of God itself are both contrary to such an idea as this. When we understand the workings of nature we discover that nothing is ever destroyed, in the sense of annihilation. Things may become chemically changed, but even when something is burned the material merely changes form, but is not destroyed. There is no way of proving that a single atom of material of any kind was ever destroyed.

We have every reason to believe, therefore, that when the Apostle Peter speaks of the renovation of the earth by fire, In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and that the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up, he was not arguing that the present earth will be annihilated but that it will be changed and be made habitable once again on a new basis for those who are to live upon the earth, in its new form following its renovation by fire.

Creation to Be Delivered from Corruption

This position seems to be substantiated in Romans 8:19-22 in where the Apostle said, For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

From these words we discover that because of man’s sin the material creation also has been cursed and is in bondage, and travaileth in pain until now. It is therefore, waiting to be delivered from its present bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Certainly, my friends, the annihilation of the earth would not mean deliverance but destruction, which is contrary to the teachings of scripture on this point.

A Well Known Author’s Statement

In his book on the Revelation, Clarence Larkin, a well-known authority says on this point,

‘The ‘Dissolving’ (of the earth) of which Peter speaks in Second Peter 3:11, is the same word Jesus used when He said of the colt—‘Loose’ him and let him go.’ The teaching of the Scriptures is, that ‘creation’ is at present in a ‘State of Captivity,’ waiting to be loosed from the bondage that sin has caused.

‘As to the ‘Departing as a Scroll’ of the heavens, and the ‘Flying Away’ of the earth and heavens, of which John speaks in Revelation 6:14 and 20:11, a total disappearance of all the material worlds is not at all the idea, for he tells us that afterwards, he saw—the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, and nations living and walking in the Light of it on the earth, and the kings of the earth bringing their Glory and Honor into it.”

Our conclusion, therefore, is that the earth is to be cleansed and purified by fire and be made fit for the home of those redeemed people and nations that are to occupy it after it has been cleansed and renovated by fire. The renovation of the earth by fire, therefore, does not mean the end of time or the annihilation of the earth or the destruction of the human family.

Jesus Himself plainly taught that the meek shall inherit the earth. The scriptures also teach that the Children of Israel shall dwell in the earth forever. This is confirmed in Isaiah 66:22, where it says, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.”
The Tabernacle of God Will Be with Men

There is much other arguments that might be presented from the scriptures to show that after the earth has been renovated by fire it will continue in a new form which will be much better than its present state, but let us now give our attention more especially to our lesson text. In Revelation 21:2, 3 it says, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

Abraham Looked for Such a City

The idea of a holy city is not new in the scriptures. Seemingly Abraham understood that such a city was being prepared as the future home of the righteous. This is confirmed in Hebrews 11:8-10, where it says, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

What Jesus Said

The idea that a place is being prepared for the righteous is also confirmed in John 14:1-3, where Jesus said to His own disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

The wonderful thing about our lesson text is, that John, in his vision, “saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” These very words substantiate our argument, that following the renovation of the earth by fire the earth in its new form is to continue.

There Is Hope for the Future

As John saw the holy city descending from God out of heaven, he heard a wonderful prophetic announcement, concerning the future, which is recorded in the third verse of our lesson text, where it says, “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

Certainly, my friends, these words mean much for the future. When we read them, we are reminded of the fact that in the days of Moses there was a tabernacle of God upon earth in which he tabernacled among men, even among the midst of His chosen people, Israel. In that tabernacle, besides the outer court and the holy place, there was the holy of holies in which God manifested Himself in His Shekinah glory between the cherubim above the mercy seat.

The tabernacle in which God dwelt among His people at that time however, was merely a tent, which as we know, was later replaced by the temple which Solomon built in Jerusalem. When Solomon’s temple was built, God also manifested His presence on the day that it was dedicated, for it says, “The priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord, had filled the house of God.”

Present Day Conditions

For nearly two thousand years, however, there has been no temple of God in Jerusalem in which He might manifest Himself in His Shekinah glory, as He did in days gone by.

True it is that in the world today the Jews have their synagogues and the Christians, both Protestant and Catholic, have their churches, but God does not manifest Himself in these earthly tabernacles now, after the same manner that He did in the tabernacle in the wilderness and in the temple in Jerusalem. I do not mean to say that God’s presence is not felt in the earthly sanctuaries of today, for He does manifest Himself by the Holy Spirit in the churches where men meet to pray and to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Even so, there is a difference between the way He manifests Himself now and the way He manifested Himself then.

According to our lesson text, however, we have every reason to believe that in the new order of things, following the millennium and the renovation of the earth by fire, the holy city, which is the New Jerusalem will descend from God out of heaven and that God Himself will once again tabernacle with men and dwell with them in their midst. When that time comes, they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

Blessings of the New Earth
Now let us notice some of the blessed conditions which will exist upon the earth in its renewed form when all of these things shall come to pass.

**No More Tears**

In the fourth verse of our lesson text John said, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

No one can deny but what the world of today is literally filled with broken hearts, which cause many tears to flow freely and there seems to be so little we can do about it. Is there anyone who is not acquainted with grief in some way or another? Is there anyone who does not have occasion to weep, either over their own sins or the sins of others? Even though we succeed in drying up someone’s tears, there is little we can do toward binding up the wound of a broken heart. Yea, when our own hearts are broken and bowed down with grief, it takes more than human kindness and human sympathy to comfort us so that tears no longer flow. There are many reasons why men grieve and shed tears. For instance when we are bereaved through the death of some loved one, we groan within ourselves and weep over the ties of love and affection which have been broken. We do not need to be ashamed of this and consider it a sign of weakness, for such is not the case. Even Jesus Himself wept at the grave of Lazarus, because He loved him, and we have reason to believe that He wept over Jerusalem because of its sins. We know there are also tears which are caused by persecution and by injustice and discrimination against those who are innocent. We all know what it is to shed tears of disappointment. Some of us also know what it is to shed tears of penitence for the sins which we have committed against God and against our fellowmen.

Yes, indeed, my friends, there are many reasons why men weep and shed tears in a world like this, which is filled with sin and sorrow and heartache and disappointment. What a happy thought, therefore, that the time is coming when all of these things which cause us to weep now will be removed, and that God Himself shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of those who will be privileged to inhabit the new earth.

**No More Death**

Not only will all tears be wiped away, but we are told also that, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things will have passed away."

Death, my friend, has reigned upon the earth as master of all men, bringing each one into the grave regardless of his earthly wealth, his fame or his power. Death is still present with us today. We know, however, that the last enemy to be destroyed is death, which fact is stated in First Corinthians 15:36.

Present conditions upon the earth are well described in this little verse which says,

There is no flock, however watched and tended,

But one dead lamb is there! There is no fireside, howsoever defended, But hath one vacant chair.

As we travel along the highways up and down the land, we pass by the silent cities of the dead and each time we do, it is a silent reminder that we too, someday, shall take our place beside those who are buried there. There is only one hope of escaping the tomb, and that is, providing the Lord should come in our day and time while we are yet alive, for we are told in First Thessalonians 4:16, 17 that, “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Unless this event occurs while we are still living, each and every one of us will as surely die, as those who have lived and died before us.

Imagine, my friends, if you can, what it will be like for those who live in the new earth where there shall be no more death. What a blessed existence that will be for those who will live then. When death has been destroyed, we do not wonder that there shall be “Neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things” will have passed away.

We do not need to be in doubt as to the certainty of these things, for in verse 5 of our lesson text it says, And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

Indeed, my friends, when God has pledged His Word to us in this fashion, we dare not doubt the final fulfillment of these things. To do so would be wicked unbelief on our part and would rob our own hearts of much comfort for the present and of hope for the future.

We shall conclude our lesson by reading verses 6, 7, and 8 of our lesson text! In these verses it says, And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of
life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shaft have their part in the lake which burnetii with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

LECTURE 65 ON THE REVELATION

In the Future There Will Be a New Heaven, a New Earth, and a New City — None of the Wicked Will Share the Blessings of the Future When These Things Come to Pass — The Lake of Fire Will Be the Final Doom of These Who Are Unsaved — The New Jerusalem Revealed by Divine Revelation to John — The New Jerusalem Will Be New in Every Sense of the Word and Will Belong to the New Earth — It Will Be a Literal City and Will Be the One Which Jesus Said He Would Prepare — If Abraham Believed That Such a City Would Come and by Faith Looked for It. Why Should We Not Have Faith to Do the Same Thing? — The Size and Appearance of the City — The Presence and Glory of God Will Be There — God Has Manifested His Love Toward Us Through the Gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ Who Loved Us and Gave Himself for Us — No Evil Will Enter the New Jerusalem

OUR last two lessons have been based upon the Revelation 21:1-8, where John said

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

A New Heaven, a New Earth, and a New City

From this reading we discover that there is to be a new heaven and a new earth. There is also to be a new city, which is the New Jerusalem. We notice also that the tabernacle of God is to be with men, and that the new earth is to be inhabited by a sinless race of people among whom there will be no death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. It is also promised that he that overcometh shall inherit all things.

The Doom of the Wicked

The passage also reveals the destiny of those who are fearful, unbelieving and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers and idolaters, and liars, and announces that all such persons will eventually have their part in the lake of fire which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

Mind you, my friends, the second death does not mean annihilation. The second death and the lake of fire mean one and the same thing. It is called the second death because those who are sent to this place will be those who lived once in the flesh and died and then were resurrected and judged and cast into the lake of fire. That the second death does not mean annihilation is proved by comparing Revelation 19:20 with Revelation 20:10. These passages reveal that the beast and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire alive and that they were still there a thousand years afterward. We must think, therefore, of the lake of fire, which is the second death, as representing eternal separation from God in sins.

Jesus seemed to imply this in John 8:23, 24, when He said to the Pharisees, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”

What a terrible thing it will be, therefore, for anyone to die in their sins and to be cast into the lake of fire, but that, my friends, is exactly what is going to happen to those who refuse to believe and to obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Advance Lesson, The New Jerusalem
“And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: “On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. “And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof “And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. “And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. “The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. “And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

In this scripture reading, many things are brought to us for our study and meditation.

**The New Jerusalem Will Belong to the New Earth**

Please remember we are now studying about the seven new things which will be brought to pass after the close of the millennial period and the earth has been renovated by fire. The New Jerusalem, therefore, which we are studying about in our lesson has nothing to do with the Jerusalem of today or even the city of Jerusalem as it will be during the one thousand years’ reign of Christ. The city of Jerusalem and the temple of God as they will be during the millennial reign of Christ are described in Ezekiel, chapters 40 to 48. It would be wonderful if we had time to go back and make a careful study of these passages, but that is out of the question for lack of space in our present lesson.

We know that between the close of the millennium and the ushering in of the seven new things about which we are studying at this time, the earth is to be renovated by fire. Therefore, the New Jerusalem, which is the subject of our study, belongs not to the millennial period but to the new heaven and the new earth which will not come until after the earth has been renovated by fire. The words of our lesson text, therefore, are a prophecy of the New Jerusalem which will come down from God out of heaven and settle down upon the new earth, upon which people will then be living without death and without sorrow or pain, because the former things will have passed away.

**A Literal City**

The first thing we want to notice about the New Jerusalem is that it will be a literal city.

There is a school of spiritual thought which tries to spiritualize everything in the Word of God, and would make heaven merely the home of disembodied spirits moving about in the mists and shadows of another world. This line of thought, however, does not satisfy the heart hunger of the average person, who is seeking for reality in religion as well as in other things.

Concerning this point, Seiss in his book on the *Apocalypse*, says,

“A spiritualized earthiness is simply a whitewashed sepulchre; and an incorporeal and immaterial eternity for man, is equally aside from the teachings of God’s Word. No wonder that professors believers of our day are anxious to put off getting into the heaven they believe in as long as the doctor’s skill can keep them out of it, and finally agree to go, only as a last despairing resort. It has no substance, no reality, for the soul to take hold on.”
It is comforting, therefore, to know from our lesson text that the New Jerusalem, is to be the future home of the saints, and that it will be a literal city.

A City Not Made with Hands

The next thing we note about the New Jerusalem is that it will be of divine origin. In other words, it will descend out of heaven from God.

We do not need to be surprised at this, for we are told that even the Patriarch Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." It was Jesus Himself who said, in John 14:13, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

In the face of such evidence as this, why is it that men insist upon believing that after death we shall become only spirit beings in a spiritual world without material foundations or boundaries or material realities of any sort. May God deliver us from such an idea as this, for the Word of God plainly teaches us that the future home of the saints is to be a literal and material city, which will be beautiful beyond comparison with anything which we know now and which will be perfectly adapted to the residence of those, who by that time will have received their resurrected and glorified bodies.

The Size of the City

The next thing we want to notice is the vast dimensions of the New Jerusalem which John saw descending out of heaven from God.

In verses 15 to 18 of our lesson text it says, "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."

We are told in the marginal reading of our Bible that a furlong is 582 feet. Twelve thousand furlongs, therefore, would make a total of 1500 miles! In other words, the New Jerusalem will be 1500 miles square, and 1500 miles high. It is hard for us to realize the magnitude of such a city, which in land area alone would reach from Maine to Florida and from the Atlantic seacoast to about six hundred miles west of the Mississippi River. In other words, it will cover an area more than one-half of the entire United States. Imagine, if you can, a city so large as this which will also be 1500 miles high.

Concerning this point, we wish to quote from Clarence Larkin in his book on the Revelation, where he says,

"We are told that the length and breadth and the height of it are equal. This does not necessarily imply that it is a cube, for there is another geometrical figure that has equal dimensions, and that is a pyramid. This is its probable form, for a wall 144 cubits, or 215 feet thick, could not support a wall 1500 miles high, and a wall that high would hide the pyramid part of the city from view.

"The 144 cubits then must refer to the 'height' of the wall. In this wall are 12 gates, 3 on each side, each gate of one pearl and these gates are never closed.

"The wall itself is of jasper, and the foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones. The foundations contain the names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb, and over the gates are the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

"What a magnificent spectacle such a city must present from a distance with its pyramidal top, surmounted by the light of the glory of God. 'For the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.' Revelation 21:23.

"And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there' Revelation 21:25.

"This refers to the city only, and not to the outlying parts of the New Earth, for there will be day and night wherever the light of the City does not reach.

"The Pyramidal part of the City will doubtless be in the center of the City, and probably not occupy over one-half of the surface area, leaving the remainder to be divided up into boulevards and broad avenues, with numerous parks and residential sections. "We are told that the City itself is of pure gold, like unto clear glass. If this refers to the houses and homes of the inhabitants, then the redeemed are to live in palaces of transparent gold, and the streets are to be of the same material. We cannot imagine a city with such dwellings and streets to be unclean or lack beauty."
The Shekinah Glory of God Will Be There

It is indeed interesting to know that such a large city arranged in such a glorious manner will have no need of artificial lights such as we have now in this present dispensation. Imagine, if you can, the very Shekinah glory of God shining at the top of the pyramid of this great city, with such brightness and glory that all the city will be lighted by it, so that there will be no need for any other kind of light whatsoever. Thus, my friends, we see that the presence of God and the Lamb will make that city bright with their glory, so that it will be a beautiful and a glorious place for the saints of God to dwell in.

In verses 24 to 26 of our lesson text it says, “And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all, by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.”

Certainly, my friends, this passage confirms the idea that the new heavens and the new earth are to continue, and that the New Jerusalem will be the capital city of the new earth.

God’s Promise and Purpose to Dwell with Man

After all, my friends, from the Word of God we learn that His eternal purpose was to be with men and to dwell with them. When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, before they fell by transgression, apparently God came and met with them so that they had fellowship with their Creator, but after the fall of man God withdrew His presence from them and now we think of His dwelling with the angels and with the cherubim and the seraphim of another world; but, my friends, the desire of God and the purpose of God is to dwell with men, for they are the objects of His love and the work of His creation.

How We Know God Loves Us

God proved His love for man and His desire to dwell with man when He took upon Himself the form of human flesh and dwelt among men in the person of His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. This is confirmed in I Timothy 3:16, where it says, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

It is interesting, therefore, to know that when Jesus arose from the dead He did not take unto Himself the form of an angel, but He arose from the dead in a glorified body, in which He still lives, and in which He will ever live in the form of a man. In other words, in Christ God joined the human family forever, and it is the avowed purpose of God in Christ to bring many sons unto glory, that they may be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Understanding these things, we do not wonder at the information which is given to us in our lesson text, concerning the New Jerusalem, which is to be the capital city of the new earth, in which God will dwell with the redeemed forever and ever.

We should rejoice, therefore, that, “There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Lecture 66 on the Revelation

What the New Jerusalem Will Be Like — An Interior View of the City — The River of Life Will Be There— Even During the Millennial Period There Will Be a Wonderful River in the City of Jerusalem As It Will Be at That Time — David Prophesied of the River of Life in the New Jerusalem — One of the Blessings and Privileges of the New Jerusalem Will Be Access to the Tree of Life — During the Millennial Period There Will Be Trees on Each Side of the River Whose Leaves Will Be Used for Medicine — Even So, the Leaves of the Tree of Life in the New Jerusalem Will Be for the Healing of the Nations — Besides the River of Life and the Tree of Life the Throne of God and the Lamb Will Be in the New Jerusalem — There Will Be No Night There

OUR last, lesson was based upon Revelation 21:9-27, which gave to us a wonderful description of the New Jerusalem which will come down from God out of heaven upon the new earth and which will be the future home of the saints of God.

Concerning the New Jerusalem, in Rev 21:22-27 the Apostle John said,

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations
of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

The New Jerusalem, The Tree of Life

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading and considering what is written in Revelation 22:1-5, where John further said,

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb "In 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. “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for of the saints of God.”

An Inside View of the City

We wish to say, in the very beginning, that in these words the Apostle was only continuing his description of the New Jerusalem. The material was divided into chapters at this point merely as a convenience for Bible study. There is, however, no separation between chapter 21 and chapter 22 so far as the subject matter is concerned. In our last lesson, the Apostle John gave us a word picture of the New Jerusalem, as it were, from without. He gave us, therefore, the appearance of this city, viewed from a distance, but in our present lesson, he has given us a view of the city as it will be within. How precious, therefore, this lesson should be to all of us who are hoping some day to enter through the gates into the city. We do not mean to say that he has given to us all of the details of the divine economy, which will be carried on within the city, for there is no question but what he has left many things untold in this respect, but we are glad and thankful that he has given us to at least some idea as to what the inside of the New Jerusalem will be like.

Let us remember that the Book of Genesis is the Book of Beginnings, and that the Book of Revelation is the Book of the Consummation. In other words, the Book of Revelation tells us what is to be the end of those things which are recorded as having had their beginning in the Book of Genesis. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find mention made in this portion of God’s Word of some of those things which were mentioned in the Book of Genesis.

A Wonderful River Will Be There

For instance in Revelation 22:1 it says, “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

We need not be surprised that mention is made here of a “pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,” for mention is made of a river which went out of the Garden of Eden in the early paradise, which existed when man was first created upon the earth.

This is confirmed in Genesis 2:8-14, where it says, “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and become into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.”

Thus, my friends, we see that water was a necessary part of that early paradise and that even the Garden of Eden would have been imperfect without it. From the words which we have just read, it is evident that the river which had its source in the Garden of Eden flowed out to water other portions of the earth.

We cannot imagine a city whether past, present or future without a source of water supply.

The River of the Millennial Period
In Ezekiel 47:1 the prophet said, “Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.”

The Prophet was here speaking of conditions as they will be in Jerusalem during the Millennial period, when Jesus will rule and reign in Jerusalem as King over the whole earth.

Ezekiel’s prophecy is confirmed in Zechariah 14:8, where it says, “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.”

We wish to remind you that this language does not refer to the New Jerusalem, which will come down from God out of heaven, but to the Jerusalem of the millennial period, and we have mentioned these things here merely to show you that conditions as they existed in the Garden of Eden and as they will be in Jerusalem during the millennial reign of Christ will find their ultimate consummation in the New Jerusalem which belongs to the new earth, which is yet future and which is mentioned in our present text in the 22nd chapter of Revelation.

Just as the waters proceeded out of Eden to water the garden and bless the earth and as they will flow out from beneath the millennial sanctuary, which Ezekiel saw in prophetic vision, a pure river of water of life, pure as crystal, will proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the New Jerusalem.

Many, in their study of this portion of God’s Word, have tried to spiritualize the meaning of this river, the same as they do with other portions of God’s Word, and in doing so, they have merely gotten themselves and those who follow their teachings, into a state of confusion to where the language of the Bible means very little to them. Personally, I feel that when John speaks of a “pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,” he means a literal river and I accept the scriptures and believe them to mean exactly what they say upon this point.

What the Psalmist David Said

Did not David say, in Psalm 46:4, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High.” Indeed he did, and this was not mere fancy.

Thus, my friends, we see that even the New Jerusalem would be incomplete without the pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

The Tree of Life Will Be There

In the second verse of our lesson text the Apostle John said, “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 healing of the nations.”

Here again we see a similarity between the early paradise in the Garden of Eden and those conditions which will exist in the New Jerusalem.

Indeed, what is more beautiful than the wonderful trees with which God has decorated the whole earth. The Garden of Eden, you know, was full of beautiful trees, and there is no question but what the landscape of the Garden would have been imperfect without them. In Genesis 2:9 it says, “And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

Concerning the tree of life, which was in the Garden of Eden, in his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says,

“The first Eden had its glad and glorious trees, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden” It was not one individual tree, but a particular tree as to its kind, as we speak of ‘the apple’ or ‘the oak,’ denoting a species of which there are many specimens. It has the name of the Tree of Life, because man in innocence was to keep and preserve his life by eating of its fruits. It was the symbol and support of eternal life, both for body and of soul. And it is one of the special joys and provisions of the New Jerusalem that it is supplied with this same tree, in the same multitudinous sense, fulfilling something of the same offices.”

We need not be surprised that these conditions will exist in the New Jerusalem, because even in the earthly Jerusalem of the millennial period, conditions which at least typify these things will exist.

We have already called your attention to the prophecy of Ezekiel, who has told us that a river of water will issue out from under the threshold of the house, and that the waters will come down from the right side of the house at the south side of the altar, which will then be in Jerusalem. The first few verses of the 47th chapter of Ezekiel reveal how this river will increase in volume, and size and
flow out of Jerusalem until it reaches the sea.

The Healing Trees of the Millennial Period

In Ezekiel 47:12, the Prophet said, “And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the river of the sanctuary of millennial period will be in many respects like the river of the New Jerusalem, which, of course, belongs to the new earth, as it will be after the thousand years have been finished. The river of the New Jerusalem, however, will not flow from the sanctuary but from the throne of God.

It is interesting to note that during the millennial period, there will be on either bank of the river trees whose leaves shall not fade. We are told that these trees will bring forth fruit which will be for meat and that the leaves thereof shall be for medicine. Thus, my friends, we see what a blessing and healing influence these trees upon the banks of the river will have upon those people, who will be living upon the earth during that time. Even conditions then will not be as perfect as they will be in the New Jerusalem, for in this new and last and final paradise of God will be the original tree of life itself, which we are told will bear twelve manner of fruits and yield her fruit every month. We have reason to believe, therefore that those who inhabit the New Jerusalem will partake of these fruits and will live forever.

Those who eventually secure access to the tree of life may count themselves very fortunate indeed. In Revelation 2:7 in the message to the church at Ephesus the Lord gave a promise saying, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

For the Healing of the Nations

There is another interesting fact mentioned about the tree of life in our lesson text, and that is that “The leaves of the tree,” John said, “were for the healing of the nations.” These words seem to suggest that outside of the walls of the New Jerusalem, there will still be nations of people dwelling upon the earth. This is confirmed in Revelation 22:23-26, where it says, “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.”

The inference is that these nations living outside the walls of the New Jerusalem will not have access to the tree of life, for only those within the city can partake of the fruits thereof, but the nations that are without will be benefitted in some way by the leaves of the tree of life, which will be growing within the city in the midst of the paradise of God. It is suggested, however, that the healing spoken of in this passage refers rather to the preserving of the health of the people rather than to the matter of curing them from a state of ill health, for by that time, as we know, the curse will have been removed from off the earth and sickness and death will no more exist, for the former things will have passed away. The idea, therefore, which the passage is intended to convey is that those who partake of the leaves of the tree of life will be preserved in health and strength much the same as Adam and Eve would have been if they had never sinned.

The Throne of God to Be in the New Jerusalem

In verse three of our lesson text it says, “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”

Here again we do not need to be surprised that the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the New Jerusalem, for in Revelation 21:3 the Apostle John said, “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

Also in Revelation 3:21, the Lord promised, saying, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

In the third and fourth verses of our lesson text, it also says, “His servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.”

Thus, my friends, we see that the New Jerusalem will not be a place of idleness, but will be a place of activity, wherein the servants of God and the Lamb will find pleasure in doing the bidding of their Lord and Master. To identify them, His name will be in their foreheads. Thus, every servant of God will know his place and his standing with the Lord and will labor joyfully at whatever task may
No Night There

Verse 5 of our lesson text says, “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

Let us conclude our message with these few lines of verse which we quote as follows:

“Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace; Rise from transitory things
Toward heaven, thy native place.
Sun, and moon, and stars decay, Time shall soon this earth remove;
Rise, my soul, and haste away To seats prepared above!”

LECTURE 67 ON THE REVELATION


OUR lesson in the preceding chapter was based upon Revelation 22:1-5, where the Apostle John said,

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In 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. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

Those Who Have Access to the Tree of Life Will Live Forever

In our last lesson, we learned that these words were a description of things and conditions as they will be within the walls and the city of the New Jerusalem. Is it not interesting to note that the history of man began with the Garden of Eden, in which there was the tree of life, and that the prophetic history of man closes with a description of the New Jerusalem in which there will also be the tree of life, to which man in his redeemed condition will have access and live forever?

The Second Coming of Christ Prophetically Announced

We are now ready to advance in our study by reading and considering what is written in Revelation 22:6-12, where the Apostle John further said,

And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. “And I John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God! “And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust
still: and he which is filthy, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

The End of the Revelation in View

From the language of our lesson text just read, we are impressed with the fact that we are nearing the end of our study of this wonderful last Book of the Bible. The burden of these words, therefore, is to impress upon us the certainty of all these things which we have studied in the entire book, beginning with chapter one to the close of the Revelation. In order to impress us with this fact, the angelic messenger said to John, “These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.”

Jesus Always Spoke with Authority

These words were spoken prophetically in defense of the wonderful teachings of this Book.

It is amazing with what straightforwardness the scriptures speak to us with uncompromising authority concerning all subjects with which it has to do. This was particularly true of Jesus at the time of His first advent. It was said of Him that He spake not as the scribes and Pharisees but as a Man having authority. Jesus could speak with authority because He was the Son of God and because He understood the truth, whether it pertained to the past, present or future.

The Certainty of These Things

We need not be surprised, therefore, that all of the sayings in the Book of Revelation are declared to be faithful and true. The Lord must have known the terrible opposition which would arise against this Book, from every quarter, during the closing days of present dispensation. Three different times in the book, it is affirmed that these things are faithful and true. For instance in Revelation 19:9 it says, “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.”

Again in chapter 21 verse 5 it says, “And he that sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

In our lesson text, the angel said, “These sayings are faithful and true.”

As if to give further assurance, Jesus added His own personal testimony in Revelation 22:16 where He said, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.”

How Can People Deny the Truth

With such evidence as this, how could anyone deny that the things written in this book are true. Yet, my friends, that is exactly what many people are doing, either by the words they speak or the attitude of indifference which they assume, they are saying to God and to man, that they have no interest whatever in the momentous sayings of this book, the words of which God has thrice declared are true and faithful. While some openly deny the truth of this book, others purposely refuse to study it and seek to excuse themselves from all responsibility concerning the truth which the Book contains by saying they cannot understand it. Let us remember this: The Word of God is true in one part of the Bible as in another, and all the truth in the Bible was placed there for us to study and to understand. The truth which God has caused to be written for our instruction and for our comfort in this last book of the Bible will remain true in spite of the unbelief of men and the opposition of those who oppose it. We are ready, therefore, to affirm in the language of the angel who revealed these things to John, saying, “These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.”

An Outline of the Book

In light of the words which we have just quoted from the sixth verse of our lesson text concerning the things which must shortly be done, we wish to call your attention to the fact that the entire Book of Revelation was a book of prophecy at the time it was given, and that its fulfillment began very shortly after the revelation was given to John on the Isle of Patmos.

The first three chapters of the Revelation, as we know, were a prophetic outline of conditions as they would be during the present age of grace, or church age. Chapters 4 to 19 were a prophetic outline of things that will come to pass during the tribulation period, which will be ushered in immediately following the resurrection and rapture of the church. Chapter 20 has to do with conditions as they will be following the tribulation period, during the kingdom age. Chapter 21, as we know, has to do with the seven new things which will come to pass during the new earth period after the present earth has been renovated by fire. Chapter 22, which we are now studying, brings to us the last message of the Bible and points out to us the eternal state of the redeemed.
We must acknowledge, therefore, that the angel was justified in saying to John, that these things \textit{must shortly be done}, for their fulfillment began immediately following the revelation and have been in process of fulfillment from then until now and will continue to be fulfilled until all things written in this book shall have been accomplished.

\textbf{Jesus Said, “Behold I Come Quickly”}

We do not wonder, therefore, that in verse 7 of our lesson text the Lord said, \textit{“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”}

Some have had difficulty in understanding these words, \textit{“Behold, I come quickly,”} but there should be no difficulty here, for when the Lord does come He will come quickly! This applies to the rapture of the church, when He will come in the clouds of heaven and we shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, as confirmed in I Thessalonians 4:16, 17, where it says, \textit{“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”}

The suddenness of this event is also suggested in I Corinthians 15:51, 52, where the Apostle Paul said, \textit{“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”}

\textbf{The Manner of Christ’s Coming Prophetically Foretold}

The coming of our Lord in His revelation, which will be after the tribulation period, will also be very sudden! This is confirmed in Matthew 24:27-30, where Jesus Himself said, \textit{“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. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 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: 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.”}

Indeed, my friends, in the light of such truth as this, the words of our Lord, When He said, \textit{“Behold, I come quickly,”} should be the watchword of every true believing child of God. We say, therefore, in the language of Matthew 24:42, \textit{“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”}

\textbf{The Coming of Christ a Comfort and Blessing to Some}

Let us note also in verse 7 it says, \textit{“Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book”}

These words are very comforting indeed and they re-affirm the words of Revelation 1:3 where it says, \textit{“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.”}

In the very beginning of our study and exposition of the Book of Revelation, we took our firm stand upon these words and were willing to trust God to fulfill them to our own heart and to the hearts of others, as these messages should go out over the air. That, my friends, is exactly what He has done. I can give personal testimony to the fact in the study and exposition of those things are written in this book, I have received untold blessing upon my own heart. My heart has also been made to rejoice in knowing that hundreds and thousands of people who have heard these messages on the Book of Revelation have been blessed and helped by them.

\textbf{Sorry for Those Who Oppose This Truth}

On the other hand, we know that from the very beginning there were many even among professing Christians, who not only disapproved but openly opposed our study and exposition of these truths. Isn’t it strange that opposition to such glorious truth as that which is contained in this last Book of the Bible should come from church leaders and from professing Christian people. Surely, my friends, something is wrong with anyone who opposes the truth of God’s Word. Such people are either ignorant of the Word of God, or they are blind to its message, or their hearts are filled with willful unbelief.

Such people are well described in the language which Jesus used against those who rejected Him at the time of His first advent In Matthew 14:15-16 He said, \textit{“And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for}
they see: and your ears, for they hear.”

Therefore, we are ready to affirm once again that ‘Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book’

Christian friends, let all of us stand upon that promise no matter what others may think or say about us. Let us remember also that in Revelation the 2nd and 3rd chapters, the Lord has spoken seven different times, saying, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Some professing Christians Will Be Embarrassed

But what about those who refuse to hear the words of this book, even though they are professing Christians? Concerning this point, in his book on the Apocalypse, Seiss says:

“How will some of these pious scorners, whom Christ has set and ordained to feed his sheep and give them meat in due season, feel and fare, when from the judgment seat he shall say: ‘Sirs, I gave you the complete chart of my promised Apocalypse or Revelation; I caused it to be made as plain as words and visions can make anything of the sort; I told you over and over of the momentous importance of studying,treasuring, and making known to the churches what I thus sent my angel and my beloved disciple to show you; And yet you have held it to be a crazy Book, one which either finds or leaves crazy those who study it, and have not believed it, and have not believed my word, nor taught it to my people, nor allowed it to speak in the appointed Lectionaires, and have only sought to explain away its momentous import into a little dim foreshowing of a few ages of ordinary earthly history! ‘Was this the way for good servants of their Lord to act? Was this being faithful stewards of the mysteries of God? Was this the way to treat what I have been at such pains to give, and pointed you to, with so much solemnity, and promised to reward your study of it with such special benedictions?’ Alas, alas, what answer will they make?”

How John Was Affected by These Things

Let us notice briefly the effect that these wonderful things, recorded in the Revelation, had upon the Apostle John to whom they were revealed by the angel. In verses 8 and 9 of our lesson text it says, “And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”

There is no way of telling who this ministering angel was, who revealed these things to the aged Apostle. The lesson text would indicate that John himself knew who he was. It was hard for John to tell whether the messenger was an angel of the Lord or whether it was the Lord Himself who had appeared to him in the form of an angel. There was no idolatry in John’s heart—none whatever. If the messenger had been Jesus Himself, John would have been justified in worshipping Him, but since he was merely an angel of the Lord, whom He had sent to reveal these things to the Apostle John, John was forbidden to worship him with the simple admonition, “I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God!”

Revelation Not a Sealed Book

Let us conclude our lesson this morning by reading what is written in verses 10 to 12 of our lesson text, where it says, ‘And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 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, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

LECTURE 68 ON THE REVELATION

A Word of Personal Testimony — The Blessing Which Was Promised in the Beginning of Chapter One Reaffirmed at the Close of the Book by the Lord Himself— The Last Words of the Bible Should Impress Us Deeply — The Words of This Book Have Been Indeed a Revelation of Jesus Christ to All of Our Hearts — The Testimony of Christ Concerning His Eternal Character — Those Who Keep His Commandments Will Enter in Through the Gates into the City — There Will Be No Evil or Evil Person in the New Jerusalem — The Book of Revelation Divinely Given by the Ministration of an Angel — Jesus Is the Root of David and the Bright and Morning Star — The Last Invitation of the Bible — The Last Warning in the Bible — Closing Remarks and Exhortation

IN this chapter we shall conclude our study of this last Book of the Bible, which is declared to be, in the very first verses of the Book, ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God and of the
testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

My Own Faith Has Been Increased

I must confess that there is a feeling of sadness in my heart in bringing these studies in this wonderful book to a close. Including this lesson I have given in all, exactly 68 messages in our study and exposition of the Revelation, and I must confess that during the preparation and giving out of these messages, I have felt oftentimes as if I were on holy ground. I do not know what reaction these messages may have had in your hearts but speaking for myself, I know that my own faith has been increased and that my own heart has been strengthened and encouraged. I feel that all of us have gained a clearer conception and a better understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the atoning work which He wrought for us upon the cross and the abundant grace which He is now bestowing upon us and of His future purposes in judging the wicked and the establishment of the kingdom over which He will come to rule and reign! Certainly our understanding of Christ would be incomplete without a knowledge of these things which are written concerning Him in this last Book of the Bible.

Therefore, with a feeling of sadness on the one hand, and of rejoicing on the other, let us proceed to our study of the last few verses of the last chapter in the Bible.

A Blessing for Those Who Keep the Sayings of This Book

Our preceding lesson was based upon Revelation 22:6-12, where it says,

“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

The Last Words of the Bible

Let us now conclude our study by considering what is written in Rev 22:13-21, where it says,

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have send mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

The Purposes of the Book Accomplished

No one can doubt but what these words of our Lord form an appropriate conclusion to this marvelous book. The whole purpose of the book is to reveal to us, both the person and the works of Christ as related to things past, present, and future. The Book also reveals His relationship to things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth.

Christ Is Alpha and Omega

It is natural, therefore, that in the 13th verse of our lesson text He should say, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”
It is interesting to note that this is the third time in the Revelation that Jesus used these words concerning Himself. In Revelation 1:11 the voice which spoke to John said, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.”

Again in Revelation 21:5, 6, it says, “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

Then, as if to impress John and all who should read the book of Revelation, in the 13th verse of our lesson text, He said, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.”

The words Alpha and Omega are the names for the first and last letters of the Greek Alphabet. It is easy to see, therefore, that they stand for the beginning and the end, the first and the last. This is the equivalent to saying in our own language, “I am the A and Z of the alphabet.” Apply this truth in His relation to all things of the entire universe and you have the true significance of this title which Jesus claimed for Himself. In a broader sense, therefore, Alpha means everlasting past and Omega means to the everlasting future. In other words, when Jesus said, “I am Alpha and Omega” that was just another way of revealing to John and all of us the fact of His divine nature and His everlasting character and His relation to all things. No one but the Son of God, Who is co-existent and co-equal with the Father, has the right to assume and claim for Himself any such far-reaching title as this. Thus, in this expression Jesus revealed the fact of His deity and of His Sonship to God and His relationship to all things past, present and future.

The Reward of the Righteous

Upon the strength of this title and the authority which it represents, Jesus had the right to say in verse 14, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

Since He is the Son of God, it is right that we should obey Him and keep His commandments. As a reward for doing so, He promises that we shall have right to the tree of life and that we may enter in through the gates into the city.

In the 21st chapter of the Revelation, we studied about the New Jerusalem which John saw descending out of heaven from God. We learned that within the walls of this glorious city which is to be the future home of the saints of God, there is to be also the tree of life to which the redeemed of the Lord will have access and of which they may eat and live for ever. The privilege, therefore, of entering through the gates into the city and of having access to the tree of life are set forth here as incentives to obedience. They are set forth as reasons why we should do His commandments. We should be zealous, therefore, and very careful to do the commandments of our Lord even now, while here upon the earth.

In I John 5:2, 3, it says, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” If the commandments of the Lord are not grievous, how much better it would be to keep them so that we may enter through the gates into the city.

No Evil Person Will Enter There

In the 15th verse of our lesson text it says, “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

From these words we conclude that the New Jerusalem will be a place of purity, so that when we have passed through the gates of the city, we shall be saved not only from the consequence of sin but from the presence of sin. Indeed, how much we who are Christians have to look forward to.

How This Wonderful Book Was Given

The 16th verse of our lesson text is very interesting where our Lord said, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of Davdi, and the bright and morning star.”

He spoke here in the first person as if to impress us with the importance of the message contained in the entire twenty-two chapters of the Revelation. Notice please, that He sent His angel to testify concerning these things in the churches. If this be true, and we know it is, then, tell me why so many churches of these days and times will have nothing to do with the Book of Revelation? Many ministers of the Gospel will not study the book for themselves nor will they teach its wonderful truths to the people. We can readily see, therefore why it was that in the messages to the seven churches, Jesus concluded each one by saying, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Indeed, my friends, if the churches of today would hear and heed the truths which are revealed and recorded in the Book of
Revelation, how much better prepared they would be for the fulfillment of those things which are recorded in the Revelation.

**Two Important Divine Titles of Our Lord**

Notice please, in the same verse Jesus said, “I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

It would be easy to write a whole sermon on this one statement but space will not allow in our message. Suffice it to say, however, that these words reveal the true character of Christ. Because He is divine, and eternal, He is the root of David. In other words, it was He who gave David life and being in the world. He was, therefore, David’s Lord. On the other hand, He was the offspring of David because, in His humanity, He was born of the house and lineage of David. Therefore in Matthew 1:1 it says, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

**Two Great Covenants**

Thus we see that Jesus, from the very beginning of His earthly career, was connected with the Abrahamic covenant of blessing, and the Davidic covenant concerning the throne of Israel. Because of this, He may rightfully be called, also, “The bright and morning star.”

We need not be surprised at this for the Prophet Balaam prophesied an Numbers 24:17-19 of a Star that would come out of Jacob and that a Sceptre would rise out of Israel, and that out of Jacob one should come who would have dominion. Jesus therefore had as much right to say that He was the bright and morning Star as He did that He was the root and offspring of David.

**A Divine Invitation**

In verse 17 of our lesson text it says, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

**The Spirit Says, “Come”**

You will remember that when Jesus had ascended from Mount Olivet into heaven, the Holy Spirit of God hath descended upon the disciples in the upper room. For nearly two thousand years since then, it has been the work of the Holy Spirit to convict men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment and to take the things of Christ and reveal them unto us. It is natural, therefore that the Holy Spirit who knows the eternal plans and purposes of God would say to the risen and ascended Christ, “Come.”

**The Bride Also Says, “Come”**

It is just as natural to believe that the bride, which is the true church of Christ made up of all truly born again Christians, would say, “Come,” to her absent Lord. That, my friends, is exactly what the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is saying today.

I truly believe that all Christians who are prepared to meet their Lord, when they see the terrible conditions that are coming upon the earth would be glad if He should come very very soon. Although the believing remnant of God’s children are scattered here and there in lonely and hard places, they are united in heart, saying, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

**Let Him That Heareth, Say “Come”**

Not only do the Spirit and the bride say “Come,” but in the same verse, those who hear the glorious message of the gospel of God’s redeeming grace and the wonderful truths of this Revelation, are invited to join with them in saying, “Come” to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

And then as if to give everybody a chance to join in bringing back the King, in the same verse it also says, “And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

This is a general invitation to all men everywhere to come and have part in those things which are so freely offered in this glorious Revelation. The water of life, referred to in this passage, remember, is that which is to flow forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the New Jerusalem, as described in the 22nd chapter of the Revelation. Therefore, according to our lesson text, all men, “Whosoever will” are invited to come and take of the water of life freely. But mind you, they cannot have access to the water of life or to the tree of life or enter in through the gates into the city unless they believe and accept the Lord Jesus Christ Who is God’s Son, as their own personal Saviour, for it is He who has provided these things for us and who offers them so freely to all who will believe.

**A Divine Warning**

The 18th and 19th verses of our lesson text are a warning to those who refuse to hear, and believe and obey the things which are written in the Revelation. In these verses it says, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this
book. If any man add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

Indeed, my friends, this is one of the most solemn warnings in the Word of God. These words absolutely forbid anyone to tamper with the Words of God which are written in this Book. The reason for this is that they are words of prophecy. They are therefore very important in revealing God’s plans and purposes for the future. Therefore, the Lord has warned all men saying, “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.”

All we can say is, God pity those men who would for any reason add to or take from the things which are written in this book, either to defend themselves in their own unbelief, or to mislead others and to withhold from them the glorious truths which this book contains.

Have Tried to Preach the Truth

These words have impressed us also with a deep sense of our own responsibility. In our effort to study and give out the truths of the Revelation which God has given in this book, we have tried continually to preach and teach only those things which were confirmed in the Word of God itself. We have prayerfully and continually sought the help of God’s Holy Spirit to help us into an understanding of the Word of God, so that we might rightly divide it without fear or favor to Jews, Gentiles and Christians alike. If we have failed in any respect in doing this, it has been an error of the mind and not of the heart, and we can only pray that God will forgive us for any lack of wisdom and understanding on our part.

On the other hand, if these things which we have spoken throughout this entire series of messages have been true to the Word of God, we pray that God will add His blessing to those which have been spoken, which certainly have been intended for His glory and the edification of the saints of God and for the salvation of those who are lost.

The Last Words of the Bible

The last two verses of our lesson text read as follows: ‘He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

Yes, indeed, my friends, when the Lord comes, whether it be at the rapture when He shall descend in the clouds of heaven to receive His waiting bride, or whether at the Revelation when He shall descend with power and great glory back to the earth to establish His kingdom, it will be quickly accomplished. Therefore, it behooves every believing child of God to be ready and waiting for His appearing, and it behooves every unsaved person to prepare themselves for these impending events by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. May the Holy Spirit help you to do this right now as you conclude your study of this book.

In closing our study of this wonderful book, we repeat again the words of the last verse where it says, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

“I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 15:3).

PERHAPS TODAY

“Though I know not the time or the season,
Yet faith’s beaming lamp I will trim. There is joy in the fond expectation
Of patiently watching for Him. Reconciled by His Blood and forgiven,
I trust in His Spirit-breathed Word, I know my Beloved is coming,
My Saviour, my God, and my Lord.
Precious hope, how it comforts in sorrow!
Blest hope, how it eases all pain! Precious hope, how it strengthens trial!
Blest hope, giving courage again, Precious hope, still the pilgrim sustaining
Blest hope of all solace the sum! know my Beloved is coming; Lord Jesus, delay not, but come!”
—Anna Hoppe.

THE GREAT GALILEAN

Tune—“The Great Speckled Bird.” (Jeremiah 12:9)

I am thinking today of my Saviour
Who stilled both the storm and the sea, When the wild waves of sin rolled and revealed
He spoke to that tempest for me. “Whoso drinks of the water I give him
Through his life he shall thirst nevermore,” Unto him I will grant “grace sufficient”,
Till his long pilgrim journey is o’er.

(2)
I can see as He speaks from the mountain—
“Blessed are those who mourn,” sad and lone, “If a child shall ask bread of his father
Will he mock him and give him a stone?” And by night as He walked in the Garden—
“Not my will, Father, thine shall be done,” They said, when He cried, “it is finished!”
“God surely has sent us his son.”

(3)
He has gone to prepare many mansions, For His children, for you and for me,
If we work, watch, and wait till
His coming His glory the faithful shall see. The wild winds may rage in their fury,
The Great Tribulation may come,
But those who have named and proclaimed Him Will be safe in their heavenly home.

(4)
I am pleading with all who may hear me, Who are treading the pathways of sin,
And neglecting salvation and pardon
The world’s praise and pleasures to win,
If thy right hand or eye shall offend thee, And assist sin in taking its toll,
It is better by far that they perish Than to suffer the loss of your soul.

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