

PROPHECY - III.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

Its Importance in the Canon.

The canon of Scripture is incomplete without it. Will sin continue? Will sorrow, pain, death go on? Will Satan perpetuate his evil designs? All of these questions and many others are unanswered apart from the Revelation.

The Meaning of "Revelation".

Revelation - apocalypse, from the verb, apokalupto -- to reveal, make manifest, to unveil. The content of the book is the "revelation of Jesus Christ." "It is not merely a revelation from Him, but rather, and preeminently a revelation of Him as He appears today, the glorified Son of man. It is a revelation of Jesus as He stands related to this earth and all its riches, glory and honor, of which He is the rightful Proprietor; as He stands related to the true church, of which He is the glorified Head and Husband; His relation is further shown to Israel, of which He is the true Messiah, the Anointed One; to all Gentile nations, of which He is King of kings and Lord of lords; and to all persons of every kindred, tribe and tongue, of whom He is the gracious and all-sufficient Saviour, if they will accept Him as such." Milligan.

The Revelation is "not a mere prediction of divine judgments upon the wicked and of the final triumph of the righteous made known by Christ but a book of the revelation of Christ in His own person, offices and future administrations, when He shall be seen coming from heaven as He was once seen going into heaven." -- Seiss.

The Revelation means "Jesus Christ revealed and uncovered to mortal view, not merely Jesus Christ revealing and making known things to be recorded for our learning." -- Seiss. Cf. I Cor. 1:7; I Peter 1:7.

Schools of Interpreters.

There are three, if not four, schools of interpreters of Revelation

1. The Preterists, who claim that all the prophecies of the Revelation have been fulfilled already in the struggles of the Jews and of the early Christians and in the conquests of Greece and Rome.

2. The Historical School, whose advocates insist that the predictions contained in these prophecies are being progressively fulfilled. For the greater part, they believe these prophecies have been fulfilled by certain events of history to which they point as having occurred since the days of the apostles.

NOTE -- If this system is to be followed, no one but the student of Roman, medieval and modern history can be a competent interpreter of the book of Revelation.

3. The Spiritual school. This school believes that Revelation depicts the spiritual conflict between Christ and Satan, good and evil.

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4. Method of Interpretation.

We believe that the book of Revelation is in the main yet to be fulfilled and that only a small portion has run its course.

Symbols of Revelation.

I. Numbers.

1. Three. Trinity.
2. Four. The number of creation, signifies the earth with its four directions, four winds, etc.
 - (1) Four living creatures, 4:6-8
 - (2) Four winds of heaven, 7:1
 - (3) Four corners of the earth, 7:1
 - (4) Four divisions of time, 9:15
3. Six. Represents evil, the devil, Antichrist, the consummation of evil; 666, one short of seven (the number of dispensational fullness), man's number.
4. Seven. Number of dispensational fullness or perfection; completion, consummation.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Seven churches, (2) Seven spirits, (3) Seven golden lampstands, (4) Seven stars, (5) Seven lamps of fire, (6) Seven seals; (7) Seven horns, (8) Seven eyes, (9) Seven angels, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (10) Seven trumpets, (11) Seven thunders; (12) Seven thousand, (13) Seven heads, (14) Seven crowns, (15) Seven last plagues; (16) Seven golden vials, (17) Seven mountains, (18) Seven kings,
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5. Ten. Number of the world's activity (Beast had ten horns and ten crowns.) 13:1.
6. Twelve. Number of final perfection.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Twelve thousand, 7:5. (2) Twelve stars; 12:1 (3) Twelve gates, 21:12 (4) Twelve angels; 21:12 (5) Twelve tribes, 21:12 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (6) Twelve foundations, 21:12. (7) Twelve apostles, 21:14 (8) Twelve pearls; 21:21 (9) Twelve fruits, 22:2
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II. Colors.

1. White. Purity; righteousness, joy, victory. Nineteen times.
2. Red, Bloodshed, war.
3. Purple. Imperial luxury and 'pomp.'
4. Emerald-green. Fruitfulness, rest, refreshing.
5. Black. Calamity, distress.

III. Animate forms.

1. Lamb. Symbol of Christ. Twenty-six times.

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2. Eagle, 4:7; 12:14
3. Horses, 6:2, 4,5,8.
4. Wild beast, chapt. 13 and 17
5. Frogs, 16:13
6. Locusts, 9:3,7
7. Lion, 5:5

(The following outline of Revelation by J. W. Kemp is about as clear a general analysis of the content of the book as can be made. The student should not make any attempt to memorize it at first, but should refer to it from time to time).

Outline of Revelation

Key Verse - Chapt. 1:19

I. CONCERNING CHRIST: or, "Things which thou hast seen." Ch. 1

1. Introduction. 1:1-3

2. The prophet - John

- (1) Mood. - "In the Spirit".
- (2) Time. - "On the Lord's Day" or "In the Lord's Day (the day of the Lord)".
- (3) Place. - Patmos
- (4) Voice. - "Write"

3. The Vision - Christ in relation to His church and its ministry.

- (1) Place. - "In the midst".
- (2) Form. - "Like unto."
- (3) Appearance. - His personal glories.
- (4) Words. "The things".
- (5) Effect - Overwhelming.

II. CONCERNING THE CHURCH: or, "Things which are." Chs. 2 and 3

1. Ephesus. Ch. 2

- (1) Prerogative of Christ. 1
- (2) Commendation. 2,3
- (3) Reproof and admonition. 4,5
- (4) Encouragement. 6
- (5) Admonition and Promise. 7

2. Smyrna

- (1) Prerogative of Christ. 8
- (2) Commendation and encouragement. 9, 10
- (3) Admonition and promise. 11

3. Pergamos.

- (1) Prerogative. 12
- (2) Commendation. 13

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- (3) Reproof and warning. 14:16
- (4) Admonition and promise. 17

4. Thyatira.

- (1) Prerogative. 18
- (2) Commendation. 19
- (3) Reproof and-threat. 20-23.
- (4) Promise. 4-6
- (5) Admonition. 25.
- (6) Promise. 26-29.

5. Sardis. Ch. 3

- (1) Prerogative. 1a
- (2) Admonition. 1b-3
- (3) Commendation. 8
- (4) Promise 4-6

6. Philadelphia

- (1) Prerogative 7
- (2) Commendation. 8
- (3) Assurance and promise. 9-13

7. Laodicea.

- (1) Prerogative. 14
- (2) Judgment, admonition. 15-19
- (3) Promise. 20-22

III. CONCERNING THE KINGDOM or, "Things which shall be."

1. Before the thousand years. chs. 4-18

- (1) The throne. ch. 4
- (2) The lamb. ch. 5
- (3) The visions. chs. 6-18
 - a. Seven seals. chs. 6: 8:1
(Parenthetical) ch. 7
 - b. Seven Trumpets. 8:2 to 11:19
(Parenthetical) 10:1 to 11:14'
 - c. Seven mystic persons. chs. 12, 13
(Parenthetical 14:1-to 15:5
 - d. Seven vials. 15:6-16
 - e. Babylon - mystical and literal. chs. 17, 18

2. The thousand years. 19:1 to 20:6

- (1) The marriage of the Lamb. ch. 19
- (2) The millennium. 20:1-6
 - a. Satan bound. vss. 1-3
 - b. First resurrection. 4-6

3. After the thousand years. . 20:7 to 22:5

- (1) The great white throne. 20:7-15

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(2) The eternal kingdom. 21:1 to 22:5.

IV. EPILOGUE. 22:6-21.

CHAPTER ONE

Prologue. vss 1-3

Given by Jesus Christ to John, "the beloved disciple, "through an angel, i.e., messenger. vs. 1

John recorded the visions communicated. vs. 2

Importance of diligent study of the book. vs. 3. Evidently intended to be read (studied, communicated to others); heard (attended to); kept (made a rule of life and conducts) I John 2:27

Salutation. vs. 4-6

Seven churches (assemblies) of Asia (Minor).

From -- "Him who is, who was, and who is to come." "The Absolute One, who knows no change, no dependence on time or place but to whom the present, the past and the future are one and the same eternal now; who is, and who was, and who is to be, even the infinite, incomprehensible, unapproachable Father of lights, from whom cometh every good gift and every perfect gift, and with whom it neither variableness, nor the least shadow of turning."- Seiss.

From - "The seven Spirits which are before the throne." (4)

"The Holy Ghost, in the full completeness of His office and powers as sent forth for the illumination, comfort and edification of all the subjects of God's redeeming grace. Seven is the number of dispensational fullness and perfection; and as there are seven churches making one church, so there are seven churches making one church, so there are seven Spirits of God making up the completeness of the one gracious administration of the Holy Ghost." Cf. Isa. 11:2,3.

From - Jesus Christ. vss. 5,6

1. The faithful witness (martyr).
2. The first begotten of the dead. First-fruits.
3. Prince of the kings of the earth. - Isa. 55:4; Psa. 89:27,35-37.
4. "Him that loveth us, etc." vss. 5,6

Theme or Focus.

The coming of Christ. vs. 7, cf. Zech. 12:10. His dignity. vs. 8

- a. Seen in the beginning, middle and end of the book.
"Behold He cometh" 1:7. "The kingdom of this world -- "
11:15. "Even so, come." 22:20
- b. The child of God looks not backward, not forward, not even upward, but DOWNWARD. Eph. 2:6
The purpose of Revelation is to get the downward look from the heavenlies.

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- c. Twenty-three of the twenty-seven New Testament books record the second coming.

One fifth of the whole Bible is prophecy.
One third of prophecy relates to the second coming.
The birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, while necessary and thus in the plan of God, are incidental to the end and the consummation of redemption in the second coming.

The Almighty, vs. 8

Alpha and Omega. The beginning and the ending. The A and Z.

Everything has its source and its consummation of perfection in Christ, the ever-present "I am."

John's Patmos Experience 1:9-12.

John - vs. 9

The beloved disciples. An appropriate one to receive such a revelation. Venerable, ripe in Christian character. Walking close to Christ. A co-partner with us in the trials of the Christian life, and in the kingdom, and patient waiting for Christ.

Patmos. vs. 9

A lonely, barren isle off Western Asia Minor, yet a hallowed spot to the apostle because of the glorious presence of His Redeemer. John had been banished here because of his faithful testimony and in the providence of God to be the recipient of this revelation.

In the Spirit on the Lord's Day. vs. 10.

The interpretation of this expression is a debatable question. Some affirm that it designates the first day of the week, others that it is synonymous with the Old Testament expression (three times in the N. T. also) "the day of the Lord." We state both views:

1. That it means the first day of the week.

The expression "the day of the Lord" occurs three times elsewhere in the N. T. (Acts 2:20; I Thess. 5:2; II Peter 3:10). There seems to be no reason for changing the form in this instance in Revelation.

The expression "the Lord's Day" is different in the original from "the day of the Lord," "Lord" is a noun.

The day of the Lord (the time in which He will judge the world) follows Christ's judicial work in the midst of the churches. If John was in the Spirit carried into "the day of the Lord" the vision of Christ in the midst of the golden candlesticks would necessarily form a part of the said coming judgment. If John was transported "on the Lord's Day" then it was on the first day of the week that he saw Christ's present ministry in the churches and the judgments that follows.

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2. That it means that John was transported in Spirit over into the future "Day of the Lord" where he saw in the main events which are to happen in that prophetic epoch. (cf. Isa. 2:10-22; Joel 1:15; 2:1 to 3:9-17).

"As a matter of fact there is no reason whatever to suppose that the Lord's day and Sunday were by any of the inspired writers regarded as synonymous. There is evidence that some of the early Christians called the first day of the week the Lord's day to distinguish it from the Jewish sabbath. There is no evidence that the practice ever became general until more recent times. The book of Revelation is the work of an inspired writer who certainly would not attach an entirely new meaning to a familiar expression (scriptural, O.T.) without so much as a word or a hint to indicate that he had used the expression to convey a thought entirely different from what would ordinarily be understood by it." Milligan.

Instructions to John. vs. 11

The Church Mystical. 1:12-20

The vision of the glorified Christ, not as Priest, but as Lord and Judge of His Church. 12-18.

"The throne is yet in the background, but the royal majesty is manifest. "He is" in the midst of the candlesticks. vs. 20

"'Clothed with a garment' -- long, trailing robe, the symbol of dignity and honor. Christ in a priestly robe is a Priest; in royal dress, He is a King; in judicial attire, He is judge. Perhaps here we have all combined." Seiss

"His head and His hairs white like wool." White hair connects with fatherhood and patriarchal dignity and with the wisdom of ancient days. Christ is all this, "the everlasting Father". (Father of eternity).

"Eyes as a flame of fire." "Here is intelligence -- burning, all-penetrating intelligence . . . power to read secrets, to bring hidden things to light, to warm and search all hearts at a single glance." Seiss.

"Feet like unto fine brass." "I will make the place of My feet glorious" (Isa. 60:13). Brass typifies judgment (cf. brazen serpent). His feet shall tread down His enemies.

"Voice as the sound of many waters." Some mighty Niagara. Cf. Heb. 12:26; Jer. 25:30,31.

"In His right hand seven stars." Upholding and sustaining the ministry of His church. The democratic idea of government either in state or church is false. Gives His ministers authority and upholds them in it, when exercised according to His Word.

"Out of His mouth . . . a sharp two-edged sword." The Word of God. Heb. 4:12. He himself is "the Word." John 1:1.

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"His countenance is as the sun shineth in His strength." He is the source of Light, from which all other lights are derived. He is the Son of Righteousness." Cf. Rev. 21:23; 22:5.

John is reassured by the "Fear not" of Christ after being overwhelmed by the glory of the vision, vs. 17, "Fear not." The true Christian is forever safe even in the presence of the august majesty and glory of Christ."

"I am the first and the last." Cf. Isa. 41:4; 45:6; 48:12; Rev. 22:13 It asserts Christ's proper and eternal Deity -- assigns to Him an existence before creation and after all consummations. " -- Seiss.

He is the Living One, who tasted death for us, and who has explored every realm of the universe, and is the custodian of the keys to all. He opens and none can shut, shuts and none can open. ch. 1:18; 3:7.

The Scope of the Book. Ch. 1:19

"Things which thou hast seen" -- the vision of the glorified Christ. Chapter 1. "

"The things which are" -- the church, as it then existed and as a church would exist. Chapt. 2 and 3."

"The things which shall be hereafter" (after these things) -- the things succeeding the things which are, i.e., the things succeeding the church dispensation. chs. 4-22

In connection with the above outline of the scope of the book as suggested by chapter one, verse nineteen, we quote from Dr. Seiss a few instructions/to how to interpret the book of Revelation:

as

"Some maintain that we are now living under the sixth vial, and that nearly everything up to the eighteenth chapter has been already fulfilled. Nor will I dispute that there is a sense, dim and inchoate, in which this is true. Prophecy, in its fulfillment, is made up of several concentric circles blended in the same picture. It is said that history is continually repeating itself. Much truer is this of prophecy. But each fulfillment is in a higher fullness, till the last sums up all. There is but one proper and ultimate literal fulfillment of any prophecy; but, in the anticipation of that there are typical and precursory fulfillments - preliminary rehearsals in advance of the grand performance. We accordingly trace out in history a very, but not always, distinct correspondence to what is contained in the first 18 chapters of this book. But if this were the true fulfillment, so much learning and acquaintance with history would be necessary in order to track it through the multiplicity and complication of human events that it must needs remain an uncertain and second-hand thing to the great body of the Lord's people." - Seiss.

Explanation of the symbols of the vision. Ch. 1:20

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CHAPTERS TWO AND THREE

The Church Militant.

The seven churches of Asia (Asia Minor) were all located within a small circle in western Asia Minor. They were not the most important assemblies of apostolic days either numerically or otherwise, but were chosen to be addressed because they represented certain spiritual conditions, which the Lord desired to emphasize and which would be object lessons for the church for all time, and which would depict the church dispensationally to the close of the church age.

The letters to the seven churches have a fourfold application:

1. To the churches as they existed at the time John received the revelation.
2. To the church for all time as revealing the spiritual condition of individual churches according to the pictures the Spirit gives in these letters.
3. Dispensationally they seem clearly to define seven periods or phases of church history from apostolic days to the second coming of Christ.
4. To the individual member of the church who may be warned by the failure revealed and encouraged by the promises to the overcomer.

(Let the student note the similarities and the differences in the structure of the letters to the seven churches and jot them down for future reference.)

Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only churches who receive commendation. The last four letters make mention of the Lord's coming (2:25; 3:3; 3:11; 3:20,21). The reason for this is possibly that the spiritual conditions represented by Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea will be present in the last days when the Lord comes.

EPHESUS. Ephesus has been called the Vanity Fair of Asia. A wealthy, cultured, corrupt and idolatrous city, the center of the worship of the goddess Diana. Church founded by Paul (See Acts 18:18-21,24; also chapt. 19 and 20)

The word means -- "Let go, relax," indicative of the slipping away of something vital to their spiritual good.

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Vs. 1. Reminded of the fact of His presence.

Vs. 2 and 3. Commendation for orthodoxy (straight doctrine), good works, arduous labor, patient endurance, intense hatred of evil, judgment of false profession and assumption, suffering, and unweariedness,

Vs. 4. Rebuke. The word "somewhat" (not in the origin) weakens the seriousness of the indictment against Ephesus. "I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love." Faith, hope and love, those abiding graces, are absent from their midst.

The Lord desires fellowship more than works (cf. Mary and Martha. Luke 10:38-42).

He desires real worship more than the most magnificent ritual. The Bridegroom craves the Bride's affection more than anything she can do for Him.

Vs. 5. Warning. Danger of loss of testimony, light waning, effectual witness hindered. Call to repent.

Vs. 6. Nicolaitanes. Church history knows no definite sect of this name so the explanation may be found in the etymology of the word (niko - to conquer; laos - people) i.e., people conquerors. Here was the beginning of the exaltation of men to church headship and lordship, in a love for pre-eminence, not because of spiritual qualifications necessarily, but through importance of local situation, intellect and popular will. The whole system of pope, cardinals, monsignors, archbishops, bishops, etc., is the outgrowth of this doctrine in Ephesus. (cf. Matt. 23:8; I Cor. 12; I Tim. 3:1-13; for the relationship of believers and the qualifications of a bishop or overseer.) Nicolaitanism is illustrated by the spirit which characterized the disciples' dispute as to who should be the greatest.

NOTE: Nicolaitanes. According to the conclusions of scholarly men, who have carefully traced this sect through the writing of the early church fathers, the Nicolaitanes taught subversive, improved, and demoralizing doctrines. Their main teaching was that the gospel of grace did not rule of morals or purity. Hence, the moral law was of no use or obligation, on the ground that faith alone was necessary for salvation. They were later known by the name of Antinomianism. They reached the height of their strength at the close of the third century, but there are still some to this day who believe in these doctrines.

Vs. 7. Call to the individual. See Samuel, in youth and later life (I Sam. 3 ch. and 9:15) an illustration of the anointed ear.

Promise to overcomer. "Tree of life," cf. Ex. 15:23-27; Rev. 22:2
A type of Christ. "He is our life."

Dispensationally Ephesus represents the period of church history of apostolic and post-apostolic days to about 100 A.D. - the era of waning love.

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A BACKSLIDDEN CHURCH.

SYMRNA. This city was originally founded by Alexander the Great. It was the birthplace of Homer, a great commercial center, the place of Polycarp's ministry and martyrdom. There is no account of the founding of this church.

The word "Smyrna" is translated "myrrh" three times in the N.T. Matt. 2:11; Mark 15:23; John 19:39. Myrrh is a bitter gum and costly perfume, which exudes from a certain tree in Arabia and Ethiopia and obtained by incision made in the bark. The word is descriptive of a church persecuted unto death.

Vs. 8. Christ revealed as the Living One to encourage Christians in the martyr spirit.

Vs. 9. Tribulation -- "Tribulation worketh," Tried and tested, but faithful. Poverty-poor in this world's goods, but "poor in spirit, therefore "rich" (cf. Laodicea for the contrast). "Jews" -- cf. Rom. 2:28,29. This church was evidently beset with Judaizing legalists, but Smyrna repudiated their Galatianism. "The synagogue of Satan" suggests a pagan temple and marks the beginning of paganized Christianity, culminating in Roman Catholicism.

Vs. 10. "Fear none . . ." -- "Lo, I am with you always." Behind their earthly enemies was their adversary, the devil. "Ten days" - it is interesting to note that this period of the church (100-312 A. D.) was characterized by ten distinct persecutions, beginning with that of Nero at the close of apostolic times and ending with that of Diocletian.

The exhortation to faithfulness unto death and the promise to the overcomer (vs. 11) are again appropriate to a martyr church.

Dispensationally Smyrna represents the period of church history from the death of John 100 A. D. to the emperor Constantine 312 A.D. A persecuted church.

PERGAMOS. Pergamos founded 1,000 years before the Christian era. Home of wealth and fashion, seat of culture and learning. Had a great library. Site of a great medical school. Here Aesculapius, god of medicine, was worshiped under form of a living serpent. Now in ruins.

First ones who invented parchment - they preserved the Bible in the skins of animals. The etymology of the word is difficult. "Pergamos" means tower. The syllable "gamos" in Greek means a marriage. Both characterized this church as to its worldly greatness - tower, and the union of the church and the world - marriage.

Vs. 12. Christ confronts this church with unsheathed sword as did the angel to Balaam of old. The necessity of severing this unholy union is evident. The pastor was roasted alive inside the bronze ox. (Put inside the bull around it)

Vs. 13. "Satan's seat" - Chaldean priests fleeing before the Persians established their pagan mystic rites in Pergamos. Their

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worship consisted in the deification of the emperor. Attalus III. priest-king of this cult, left his mantle to Rome and Julius Caesar first assumed the title of Pontifex Maximus, later assumed by the popes. "Satan's seat" (throne) means that Pergamos was the center of heathen religion.

Commended for existing orthodoxy. Antipas ("one against call") a faithful pastor, put to death during a tumult led by priests of Aesculapius. Burned in a brazen bull.

E. Scullion
Vs. 14. Balaam -- "destroyer of the people" cf. Num. 3; 15, 16; chs. 23 and 24. The mention of Balaam, the hireling prophet, and Balak indicate that this church had lost its separated, pilgrim character and was settling down amid the corruptions of the world in both literal and spiritual fornication.

Satan changed his tactics after the smyrnean period of terrible persecution. In 313 A.D. Constantine became emperor of Rome. Edicts against the church repealed. Liberty of religion granted. Constantine interested in Christianity, A.D. 324 issued an edict against paganism; declared Christianity the state religion. Pagan temples became Christian churches. Statues of heathen gods named for saints and apostles. Baptism forced on unwilling subjects at the edge of the sword. Whole legions of his soldiers marched into baptismal waters. Priestly robes and vestments consecrated (?) to Christian worship. Church and state united-married. Compromise was made with heathen rites and images. Satan's throne was established in the professing Church.

Vs. 15. Nicolaitanism, repudiated by Ephesus (2:6) now became an established creed.

Vs. 16. Warning to repent. Word slays. cf. Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15.

Vs. 17. "Manna" - Ex. 16:14, 31. Heavenly in origin, white, round, sweet. It was wilderness food; gave sustenance during desert pilgrimage. "Hidden," cf. Psa. 25:14. Hidden law of life for eternity. "White stone" - the token dropped by voter into the urn with the name of the approved candidate thereon. Precious as gift from Him. "White" - purity; "stone" - stability, endurance, approved steadfastness.

"New name" -- a new one befitting our character; the Lord's estimate of us. cf. change of name from Jacob -- "supplanter," to Israel -- "prince of God."

Dispensationally Pergamos represents the period from Constantine, 312 A. D. to Pope Gregory, I. 590 A. D. A licentious, unholy church.

2.18.
THYATIRA. At one time a great commercial city. Industries - dyeing, weaving and pottery. Modern city, Ak Hissar, occupies the site. No account of the founding of the church. Possibly Lydia (cf. Acts 16:14, 15) may have been a witness.

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Vs. 18. Condition at Thyatira so serious that it called for the assumption by Christ of His supreme title, Son of God, whose all-searching eye beheld it and whose feet of brass would tread in judgment upon the iniquity.

Vs. 19. Commendation, but works, rather than essential virtues, predominated.

Vs. 20. "Thou sufferest" - indicates permission, a confirmed condition. Here was a church in which man's leadership was usurped by a woman, possibly a real seductive prophetess, "that woman Jezebel." Whether her name was Jezebel or not; the symbolic reference is to the ancient Jezebel, wife of Ahab, born in Tyre (I Kings 16:31; 21:25), Perverted Israel with heathen religion. Baal priesthood. She is, therefore, "the symbolic priestess of idolatry introduced among the people of God."

Here the beginning of what John sees in Rev. ch. 17, Romanism, which is idolatry. Romanism, turned her devotees from Christ to Mary; substituted sacrifice of mass for the finished work of Christ; bound the Word of God to ecclesiastical interpretation and substituted the tradition of men. This is Jezebelism.

Vss. 21-23. Judgment. Time of repentance almost past. cf. Judgment of the great whore (Rev. 17).

1. Jezebel herself - the false system. *Not just one person.*
2. Those who traffic with her.
3. Her children. Offspring, Protestant in name, but Romish at heart. *Roman Catholic church. - the system*

Vs. 24. Faithful remnant in Thyatira. cf. 7,000 who bowed not to Baal. Within Roman Catholic communion are true believers. Madame Guyon, Fenelon, Savonarola, etc.

Vs. 25. Exhortation to the faithful remnant "to hold fast till I come." This shows that the Thyatira or Roman Catholic condition of the professing church will be existent when Christ comes.

Vs. 26, 27, 28. Promise to "overcomer." I Cor. 4:8; 6:1-3. *one pent before to prepare the way*
 Rulership and authority with Christ in the administration of the Millennial kingdom. "Morning Star" (cf. Rev. 22:16) - harbinger of the day. Symbolically this represents Christ in His coming for His saints prior to His revelation in the fullorbed day as Sun of Righteousness.

Dispensationally Thyatira represents the period of the rise and flourishing of Roman Catholicism from Pope Gregory I, 590 A.D., to the reformation, 1517 A. D. under Martin Luther. The papacy in its vileness. An idolatrous church.

SARDIS. Sardis once a great and important city, situated at the foot of a mountain and on the Pactolus river, rich in its sands, full of gold. Residence of the wealthy king Croesus of Lydia. Today in ruins.

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Nothing known as to the planting of the church. Sardis, from a Hebrew derivation, means "those escaping" and indicates possibly an exodus from Thyatira. A new development began under Luther, the Protestant system, which is prophetically signified by Sardis.

Vs. 1. "Seven Spirits" - the Holy Spirit emphasized, because vital spirituality has gone out -- "A name that thou livest and art dead." Sardis indicated mere outward profession.

It seems a reproach upon the great Reformation to apply these words to it, but they are true. Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon and others were great men and recovered valuable truth from the debris of the Dark Ages but the second century of the Reformation was a deterioration from the first century.

Vss. 2 and 3. Exhortation to watch, strengthen what remained -- dying. Light has been given and received, but not walked in. Possibility of not being ready for His coming. "Thou shalt not know what hour I will arrive over thee." Greek.

The Reformation drifted into formal, ritualistic churches subsidized by the state -- witness the State churches of Germany, Scandinavia, and England, dead, formal, unspiritual. Creeds were substituted for the Word of God. cf. baptismal regeneration, confirmation, celebration of days, Lent, etc. *"How fast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."*

V.4. Faithful remnant again.

V.5 Overcomer "white raiment" of Christ's righteousness. Warning against the possibility of a presumption, which might eventuate in eternal loss.

V.6 Exhortation to the individual. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"*

Dispensationally Sardis represents the period from 1517 A.D. to about 1750 A.D. A dead, formal church.

PHILADELPHIA. Philadelphia was built by a Greek king, Attalus Philadelphia. Conquered by the Romans 133 B.C. Now called "Allah Shehi," The City of God, with about 10,000 population. "One solitary pillar of great age, standing alone, reminds one of the words, 'a pillar in the temple of my God,' as the promise to the overcomer puts it."

Philadelphía means "brotherly love." Implies the presence of the Holy Spirit. This is not the modern conception of the brotherhood of men and the fatherhood of God, but the brotherhood of true Christians having its source in the new birth into one family.

Philadelphia is a favored church which is worthy of complete vindication (3:9) and commendation. Philadelphia dispensationally "represents the movement of the Spirit to recover the true church, lost amid the confusion of Sardis, uniting the members in one, outside the mere profession."

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7:14.

Vs. 7. "He that is holy." Indicates revival of true holiness. "Many shall be made white and tried" -- separated from the defilement of Thyatira and Sardis. (I Cor. 6:7-20; II Cor. 6:14-18). "He that is true" -- (cf. Jno. 14:6). He alone unifies, brings love. "Key of David" -- He has the true authority, not an infallible church or pope. The mention of Christ's kingly authority (David) suggests the approach of the kingdom (II Sam. 7:13, 16; Luke 1:32, 33). He is the porter as well as the door. "All power is given unto Me." "Head over all things to the church." "God hath highly exalted Him."

Vs. 8. "Open door" -- possibly an open door of service (cf. I Cor. 16:9; II Cor. 2:12). This had its application to Philadelphia of John's day; yet dispensationally viewed, modern Philadelphia has an unprecedented opportunity for missionary service. Long-closed countries are now accessible to the Gospel message. Open doors abound. The "open door" here may refer to the one in heaven (4:1), which John representatively entered; in other words, to the assurance to Philadelphia of participation in the rapture. (cf. also 3:10).

"A little strength." Wherein? "Kept My Word." In Thyatira it was Jezebel's word; Sardis had separated from that, but had substituted creed (man's word).

"My Word." The significance of this commendation of Philadelphia is seen in that in the present time, the dispensational period of Philadelphia, that the tide is all against the true word of Christ." It is repudiated entirely, or adulterated or maliciously misinterpreted.

"Not denied My name". The name of a person stands for what that person is. Men today think they are conceding a point, when they make complimentary statements about Christ as the perfect man, the wayshower, the ideal of humanity, etc. His deity, His unique birth, His redemptive work are all denied, but Philadelphia bows the knee and heart to Him as "The Christ, the Son of the Living God." She gives Him true worship.

Vs. 9. cf. 2:9; Rom. 2:28, 29; I Cor. 14:25; Isa. 60:14. "I have loved thee." vs. 10. "Word of My patience." -- "Henceforth expecting . . ." (Heb. 10:12, 13; Psa. 110:1). He is rejected, His name is blasphemed and reproached, but He waits in mercy: He is without the camp. He who keeps the word of Christ's patience bears the reproach of His name and waits with Him for the hour of exaltation and reward.

"The hour of temptation" (testing, proving). We know of no other adequate explanation of this other than that it refers to the great tribulation, which will be universal in its scope. cf. Matt. 24:1; Dan. 12:1; Joel Chs. 2 and 3; Rev. chs. 6-19. The promise to Philadelphia is that she will escape that hour, For the following reasons, we believe that the church (the true church) will not go through the tribulation.

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- (a) There is no mention anywhere in the Scriptures of the Church in connection with the tribulation.
- (b) In the book of Revelation there is no mention of the word "church anywhere after Chapter 4. In Chapter 4, we believe the twenty-four elders encircling the throne, themselves upon thrones, are representative of the raptured church.
- (c) Cf. the promise to Thyatira (Rev. 2:25), "morning star." cf. Rev. 22:16. The morning star precedes the rising of the "Son of righteous" (Mal. 4:1,2), which is a distinct promise to Israel. This latter doubtless refers to Christ coming in the full-orbed day of His glory breaking upon Israel, the former to His coming in the dark hour before dawn for His true church. - *Then the Jews will see the He is the Messiah*
- (d) Cf. the promise to Philadelphia (Rev. 3:10).
- (e) Cf. the character of the tribulation "judgments" the most awful of which are the "vials" (Revelation 16), "wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God" (Rev. 15:1; Rev. 16:1,19). The promise of the believer is that he shall come into judgment (John 5:24). Are we to believe that a second time God will visit wrath on those for whom Jesus has borne wrath? (I Thess. 5:8,9; Rom. 5:9; I Thess. 1:9,10.
- (f) The tribulation, while affecting the whole earth, especially concerns Israel (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1).
- (g) The promise to the Church concerning her gathering unto the Lord is signless and timeless. (cf. I Thess. 1:10; Phil. 3:20; 21

Vs. 11. "I come quickly" -- nearness, imminence of the Lord's return therefore "hold fast" -- "lay hold," take nothing for granted and "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Vs. 12. "Pillar," cf. Eph. 2:19-22, also II Chron. 3:17 -- "He establishes," in Him is strength." A pillar stands for endurance, stability, upholding power, beauty; adornment. The overcomer is to have a place of enduring stability, of responsibility in the economy of God.

"Go no more out" -- eternal life, abiding with Him forever.

"Name of My God" -- Identification with the Almighty, the Ancient of days.

"Name of the city" -- New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:2,10. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." "Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven from whence . . ." Phil. 3:20,21.

"My new Name" -- perhaps some fresh revelation of the already glorious and glorified Christ. (cf. 2:17).

Vs. 13. Exhortation to attention and obedience.

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Laodicea

Dispensationally ~~Philadelphia~~ represents the period from about 1750 A.D. to the coming of the Lord.

LAODICEA. Laodicea was once a city of some size and importance, but is now an utter ruin. One of the church councils was held there between 343 and 381 A.D. Nothing is known of the founding of this church. It is mentioned in Col. 2:1, 13, 15, 16. The etymology of the word "Laodicea," as well as the Spirit's picture thereof, reveals its true character.

The word comes from the root "laos" meaning people; and "dike," meaning manner, custom, right, requirement. It represents, then, the custom of the people, popular right, popular judgment. We are now living in the time when the will of the masses, anarchy, lawlessness, communism prevail. Everything must be subservient to the popular will. It is even so in ecclesiastical circles - popular pastors; large salaries; popular, sensational sermons; political activity in the church cf. II Tim. 4:1-4.

Vs. 14. Indicates a final state. "Amen" -- the church has failed as a witness, now the "faithful and true witness" appears, and, as author of creation, begins his work of reconstruction.

Vs. 15, 16. Neither cold-refreshment; not hot - boiling activity, fervor. A lukewarm, tepid condition. Implies a coolness of ardor and love. Only nauseating to the Lord.

Vs. 17. This represents a condition of pride and self-satisfaction. Plenty of material wealth -- witness the modern church with its magnificent church buildings, with beautiful interior appointment, altars, etc.

But - actually spiritual poverty and death. Witness the formality and ritualism of the modern church, with its "form of godliness" but "denying the power thereof."

Vs. 18. "Gold" -- the true beauty and glory of God, that which is of real value in place of the tinsel of self-righteousness and self-deception.

"White raiment" -- Christ's righteousness, in place of the abounding self-righteousness.

"Eye salve" -- the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the remedy for spiritual blindness.

Vs. 19. "Love" -- true love chastens and disciplines, divine love causes a faithful indictment to be given. Cf. Heb. 12:3-11. Call to repentance.

Vs. 20. This verse pictures Christ outside of His professed body and representatives on earth, where He really belongs, but from which He has been objected. He is now seen seeking entrance into the individual heart, yet responsive, in the midst of the apostasy.

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Vs. 21. The overcomer is promised the place of dignity and rule with his Lord.

Dispensationally Laodicea represents the apostate church of the end of this age - backslidden, indifferent, cold and formal. The breaking of the Roman yoke and tyranny brought the authority of God's word. But if the will of God, as revealed in His Word, is not received, spiritual anarchy results. Popular opinion takes the place of the Word, every man differs from every other; "every man's hand is against his brother."

CHAPTER FOUR

(Read the chapter)

"After this" - - literally "after these things." "After all this" - Syriac and Emphatic Diaglott Versions. What happens here shows clearly a change of viewpoint; John is transported from the earthly to the heavenly sphere. The heavenlies is now the center of activity in contrast with the former display of the church on earth with Christ "in the midst." Chronologically John sees what follows the church period. If the vision of chapters 2 and 3 have a dispensational aspect (and we thoroughly believe that they do) and the Thyatiran Sardian, Philadelphian, and Laodicean conditions endure until the Lord's coming (cf. 2:25; 3:3; 3:11; 3:21), then these chapters close the church period. As G.W.Davis says: "We search in vain in the prophetic perspective to find an officially recognized church on the earth hereafter. True there will be manifested the apostate church, as the vision advances . . . but the church at this stage, has completed her ministry to give way to a new witness - - Israel."

The scenes depicted symbolically in chapters four and five are the exact parallel of Dan. 7:13, 14 and both reveal the inauguration of the "Son of man" into His judicial and kingly prerogatives along with His glorified saints. The "door opened in heaven" and the summons "come up hither," the sound of the "trumpet" along with John's catching up imply the removal of the true body from the earth to heaven, there to view and participate in the vengeance of the Lord upon His and her enemies. What is left of profession and unbelief goes through "the great tribulation." John now views events which must be "hereafter" - literally "after these things," i.e., events now described in the book are subsequent to the church period.

Vs.2. "A throne was set" - stood or had been placed. Throne of the Great King; God the Father, Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:13). Not Jesus (cf. 5:6,7), but the glory, majesty, brilliance, splendor of the divine Person and Presence.

"Emerald rainbow" - - complete circle, green in color. Symbol of the divine promise of grace, refreshing, restoration, preservation, and love.

Vs. 3. Four and twenty encircling thrones (same word as in vs.2) occupied by "elders". The fact that they are designated "elders" signifies that they are human beings, not angels. The fact that they are human beings implies that they must be "redeemed."

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Redeemed beings, exalted to a place in the Divine presence, signifies that they have been glorified. The fact that they are seated on thrones signifies that they are enjoying a place of reward with the accompanying dignity of authority. To sum up these deductions, we believe that they are a representative number, symbolizing the highest rank of the redeemed in their place of co-rulers with Deity, as promised to the overcomer.

The first resurrection company (Rev. 20:6) in its totality would seem to be made up of a number of groups - "Every man in his own order." I Cor. 15:23. (the word "order" means *band*, a military term). There are some who escape the tribulation; some who suffer it and are only taken to heaven out of it (Rev. 7:9-14). A more remote bringing in seems to be implied in those who had not worshipped the beast (15:2,3). However, these elders are those of senior rank.

Vs. 4. "Crowns" -- their exalted position, reigning (cf. 1:6; 3:21; Rom. 8:17, 18; I Cor. 6:2,3). "White raiment" -- purity, righteousness of the saints (19:8).

Vs. 5. "Lightnings, thunderings, voices" -- The first rumblings of the coming storm of divine wrath and judgment about to break on the apostate church and wicked world. "Seven spirits" -- cf. ch.1:4. The presence of the Holy Spirit appears (5:6) with the Father and the Son in the execution of the divine decrees.

Vss. 6-8. "Sea of glass" (cf. II Chron. 4:2-6). In the temple of old the "sea" was for the purification of the priests. "Waters, no longer needed for cleansing, are become a "crystal sea." Purification for the redeemed forever accomplished." Ottman. The sea in Scripture signifies unrest. cf. Isa.17:12,13; 57:20. All unrest, turmoil, strife, caused by sin, is now forever past. The crystal pure sea is here now a memorial. Perfect rest has come for creation. "four beasts" - literally "living ones". The word here is distinct and in contrast with that of cha. 13:1, where it means a "wild beast."

It is a difficult matter to settle finally just who or what these living creatures are. Some say that they are symbolical of the church of the firstborn, but this is not easy to establish. Some say that they are not symbolic, but creatures of a distinct rank, associated with the throne of God in governmental activity. We append the view of Dr. Ottman: Not angels, but distinguished therefrom, cf. 5:11. Not symbolic, but created beings of high rank and intelligence, separate. See Ezekiel, chs. 1 and 10. Intimate connection with the Almighty, especially in His divine presence and government. Cf. 6:1-8. "The cherubim are not only representatives of creation, which is under the complete control of God, but they are also associated with Him as executors of judgment upon it. They are created intelligences, acting in perfect harmony with the general character of God's government and for the accomplishment of His purposes. They are 'living beings', ambassadors extraordinary of God, and not merely symbolic of impersonal form of government. They are clothed with glory and honor and endowed with the highest order of intelligence; they have access to the immediate presence of God; they are attendants of the throne and take part in the administration of the government; they are superhuman, but created,

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beings, holding a most important position and in possession of the most exalted privileges." Ottman.

Figures of the cherubim were embroidered on the veil before the Holy of Holies, and were woven into the ten tricolored curtains of the tabernacle.

Faces:

- Lion - symbolizes power, omnipotence. King of beasts.
- Ox - symbolizes strength for service. King of cattle.
- Man - symbolizes intelligence. Head of all creation.
- Eagle - symbolizes inscrutability. Loftiness of divine wisdom.
- Wings - Rapidity of motion, activity, shelter. Swiftmess of execution of divine decrees.

Eyes - Omniscience, searching inquiry. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro"

Unceasing ascription to God of His holiness, preeminence, omnipotence, eternity, unchangeableness.

Vs. 9-11. Adoration of the elders. They rule in His right, so "cast their crowns before the throne." He alone is worthy.

It might be objected that they are redeemed creatures because they apparently join in the ascription of praise to the Lamb for His redeeming grace (cf. 5:8-10). However, the established Greek texts of verses 9 and 10 read: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed (not 'us') to God by Thy blood (men) out of every . . . and hast made them (not 'us') kings and priests and they shall reign on the earth."

CHAPTER FIVE
(Read the Chapter)

The Book of Redemption. The song of the redeemed and of the whole creation.

Vs. 1. "Right hand" -- Psa. 98:1; Isa. 59:16. Symbol of Divine authority and power -- victory. Yet inactive, until the book is opened.

"Seven-sealed" -- Signifies completeness, highest authority marked with God's stamp of exactness and legal confirmation. Closed, perhaps until this moment. cf. Dan. 12:7-10. God had been previously moving in grace; now His hand is about to be outstretched in judgment for the fulfillment of His covenant with Israel and with all nations through them. (Note -- the cherubim or living creatures are always identified with God's purposes of redemption and especially with Israel, to whom the promises were primarily made and through whom in Christ Jesus, and in the nation itself, the whole world will be redeemed.)

The seven-sealed book clearly contains the purposes and provisions of redemption since, when the seals are opened, divine power is displayed to clear to earth and heavenlies of rebellion and the presence of evil, to bind and judge the usurper, Satan, and those who follow him.

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The book of redemption, involving both judgment and grace to consummate it. Fullness of redemption yet future. Eph. 1:13,14; Rom. 8:19-23; Phil. 3:20, 21; Isa. 65:17-25. The Kinsman Redeemer (Goel). Lev. 25:25; Num. 5:6-8; 35:19. The alienated inheritance. God cannot act without full legal right being established. The usurper (Satan) must have been judged (John 12:3); man (the alienator) must have sought aid; or rejecting it, proved his impotence to recover himself. Church failed - Laodicea. World in the lap of the wicked one (I John 5:19).

Vs. 2. "Who is worthy?" - possessing excellence, merit, high station. Who is the nearest of kin? - Isa. 59:16. *The creator*

Vss. 3,4. "No man." Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:1-12. A moment of great intensity for John. He beheld only the book. Will the plan fail now?

Vss. 5-7. The Worthy One. Phil. 2:19; Col. 1:12-21. His titles relative to Israel now mentioned. He as "Lamb, as it were, slain" (marks of slayer -- wounds in hands, feet and side), but now alive forevermore; has fulfilled His ministry as a sin-offering (John 1:29); now about to be manifested as the Lion of Judah (Gen. 49:9,10); Root of David (Jer. 23:5,6). In His full power and authority (seven horns) and omniscience (seven eyes). Isa. 11:1-3; 61:1-3, etc. The Anointed One, Messiah.

Vss. 8-10. Song of the elders and of the living ones. (See previous paragraph in Ch. 4 on text of verses 9 and 10). Harps -- signifying melody, music. There will surely be wondrous musical harmonies in the glory land. Golden incense vials filled with the prayers of the saints -- all God's purposes are fulfilled in answer to prayer. In some measure mysteriously He seems to have limited Himself to the cooperation of His redeemed people. Co-laborers with Him.

Vss. 11,12. Song of the angels. Observe the contrast. Worship and adoration of the Lamb and ascription to Him of His dignities and power, but no note of redemption, for these angels never fell and the song of redemption would be meaningless to them.

Vss. 13, 14. The chorus of all creation. Like the ripples caused by a stone thrown into the water, this mighty pean of praise begins nearest the throne and swells to the utmost bound of creation. This praise of the divine excellencies is ratified by the living creatures and the four and twenty elders.

CHAPTER SIX

The opening of the first six seals. Beginning of the cataclysmic events ushering the end of the age. Political, economic, social terrestrial, and celestial upheavals. The seven seals cover the whole period from the rapture of the "overcomer" to the overthrow and binding of Satan and the inception of Messiah's reign as King of Kings. Likely a precursive or anticipated fulfillment in the events of the present dispensation. Always have been earthquakes, hailstorms, volcanic eruptions, famine, meteoric showers, etc., but the exhaustive fulfillment waits for the final period of divine judgment. Cf. Joel 2:28-32; Hag. 2:6,7; Heb. 12:26.

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The seventh seal includes the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet includes the seven vials, or last plagues. "It is the judicial proceeding of the Almighty God to rid the purchased possession" of the dynasties of wickedness, to cast out the rulers of darkness, to restore this earth to its proper fertility and peace, and to bring in the empire of righteousness and salvation." Seiss. Rapture has taken place, probably not a large body of mankind or of the professing church. Worldly governments, apostate churches, etc., will continue. Wickedness will ripen to full fruition of daring and blasphemy (2 Thess. 2:7-12). The last seven years of God's prophetic plan for Israel's chastening and cleansing. Daniel's seventieth week. (Dam. 9:24-27).

Vss. 1 and 2. First Seal. The Lamb opens the seals. He is now Avenger and Judge.

"Come" or "go" -- addressed to vision, not to John. Not necessary to address him in thunder tones. The words "and see" are questioned by eminent scholars. Meaning of "horses". cf. Zech: 1:8-11; 6:1-8; 2Kings 6:15-18. "Mere power is an abstract quality, not a subject of sight. It must be put into shape in order to be seen. Mere effects would not do so well, or so clearly display its character and movements. Not literal horsemen, but symbolic figures, in which are shown the doings of the Goers put into action by the Living Ones." Seiss.

Some say that the rider on the white horse is the Antichrist in the beginning of his reign, instituting a peaceful conquest of the world. This interpretation would necessitate the discovery of a fitting rider for each of the other horses, if we are to be consistent. A white horse does not seem to be a fitting symbol for something anti-Christian. *Bro. B - The horse represents the Gospel. The rider - Jesus Christ - He is coming conquering and to conquer.*

This whole vision may represent the judicial conquest of God's Word bow (Hab. 3:8, 9). See Isa. 26:9; Psa. 64:7-9. "We are authorized to expect that when the great transactions of the coming judgment begin, and the Lord lays bare the literal truthfulness of His Word, by the marvelous demonstrations then to be made, there will be a conquering of the hearts of men to the sovereignty of Heaven, such as never has been." Seiss. "White horse" signifies "rightousness, purity, peaceful conquest." "Crown" signifies authority and power.

Vss. 3 and 4. The second seal. Judgment upon the living. cf. 2 Tim. 4:1. "The action under one seal does not cease entirely before the next one comes into play. They are consecutive in their main stress and more marked circumstances, but all are in measure contemporaneous."--Seiss.

Rev. 9:15-16
"Red horse"--the hue of blood. The Great Dragon (Rev. 12:3) is red--a murderer from the beginning. In this seal we see war-bloody times, national war, civil strife, class conflict, murder and violence. Here the angry passions of men are aroused and "peace is taken" from the earth.

"There is bloodshed enough now, but this will excel, for the restraining hand of God will be withheld, the prayers of groups of godly intercessors will have ceased, the devil will have his way, and the world will learn to its cost what it has chosen, in taking the devil's side against God and Christ."--Ritchie.

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Vss. 5 and 6. The third seal. "Black" is the color of dearth, famine, mourning. Here is seen the careful weighing of food-stuffs, indicating a shortage -- famine. The penny (denarius, Matt. 20:2) represented in Bible times the daily wage of the laborer. With a whole day's wages only a measure (choenix, a pint and a half) of grain can be purchased. When peace is taken away, scarcity of food results, then follows pestilence. The luxuries -- oil and wine -- are not touched.

Vss. 7 and 8. *Zeck 14:12.* The fourth seal. "Pale" -- a death green, leprous color. This represents death in all its forms, the great enemy of mankind rampant through pestilence; sword, and the wild beasts stirred up to aggressive preying among men, like the man-eating tiger. Hades -- the region of death, where departed spirits of wicked men await the judgment, is seen as a voracious beast swallowing up the living.

Vss. 9-11. The fifth seal. This vision pictures a company of martyrs who had been slain "for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held." They are seen symbolically "under the altar," the place of sacrificial blood (Lev. 4:7) cf. Heb. 8:1-5 9:21-24. These martyrs are not Christians of the present age of grace, they belong to the time of "things which shall be after these," as shown in their prayer for vengeance, which is not in keeping with a time of grace. They belong to a time when judgment comes openly from heaven upon an incorrigible, apostate generation. No Christian can pray in the language of the imprecatory Psalms (cf. Psa. 94:1-3; 109:20), but in the tribulation time, when the ungodly malignantly blaspheme His name and slay His faithful people, many of them Jews, it is a time for justice to be meted out. *this is after the rapture. Those who will not take the mark of the beast*

They are told that their number is yet incomplete, others will yet be killed and that the consummation of their redemption is not just yet. They are given "the white robe" of God's approval.

Vss. 12-17. Sixth Seal

"By Him all things consist and are a harmonious whole" (Wey, Col. 2:17). When He withdraws His hand, mighty convulsions result in the order of nature--"a great earthquake" -- shaking (seismos) in both celestial and terrestrial regions. Joel 2:10, 30, 31; Hag. 2:6. "Great convulsions--spoken of in Scripture in connection with special manifestations of Deity, especially of a judicial character."--Seiss. Ex. 19:18.--Sinai. Death of Jesus.--Matt. 27:50, 51.

1. Sun darkened. Cf. Crucifixion (Luke 23:44, 45); Judgment on Egypt (Ex. 10:23; Matt. 24:29).

2. Moon red like blood. cf. Matt. 24:29

3. Stars shaken. Probably shooting and falling stars. Probably an extra-ordinary and universal meteoric shower. Not a removal of the Heavenly luminaries. Cf. 8:12. This phenomenon cannot here mean the fall of the great heavenly star bodies, for some of them are so many times larger than the earth, that should even one strike the earth, it would be completely destroyed. On the night of

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November 13, 1833, there was a great meteoric shower, lasting for three hours. Thousands of people were filled with consternation and with the belief that this very scene, here described, was transpiring. Fiery balls, of various sizes and brilliancy, flashing across the sky, with trailing tails, fell upon the earth. People were awakened in terror from their sleep. There is an old lady, Nancy Price, 102 years of age; still living (1928) in Springfield, Mo., who remembers this. Vs. 13, we believe, depicts a similar scene, greatly intensified.

4. Heaven rolled up as a scroll. Probably our immediate sky of heaven. Heavens distinguished in Scripture. Cf. 2Cor. 12:2; 1 Kings 8:27.

5. Violent eruptions and changes in the topography of the land. Effect upon men of all classes. Every man's poise is shaken, his nerve fails. Calls on rocks instead of on the Lord Himself. Realize whence these judgements emanate. Spirit of the present day sees no God, no warning, no judgment, in the catastrophes of these momentous days; e. g., the Japanese earthquake in 1923 and others since almost as severe.

CHAPTER SEVEN

This chapter is one of a series of intercalary visions, inserted as an enlarged portion of a group photograph, to present certain persons, features and events, which the Holy Spirit desired to emphasize and bring out into bold relief. Note that the record of the opening of the seals, the blowing of the trumpets, and the pouring out of the vials, is broken into by the insertion of ch. 7, ch. 10: 1-11, 14; ch. 12; ch. 13; 14:1-15:5; chs. 17, 18. This does not necessarily mean that they are inserted in the record where they chronologically belong. The events represented by these chapters doubtless take place all during the time of the great tribulation, as the seals, trumpets, and vials proceed.

Vs. 1. "Four corners of the earth"--this expression has to do primarily in Scripture with the Jewish dispersion and is significant here, as we shall see. "Four angels"--these may probably be four of the trumpet angels (cf. 8:2). They are special ministers of the Almighty's judgments, but are here restrained until "servants of God are sealed."

Vs. 2. "East"--literally "rising of the sun." In Mal. 4:2, the prophet foretells the coming of the great Messianic Deliverer, the Sun of Righteousness in the full-orbed day of His millennial glory. Israel's deliverance will come from "the rising of the sun" as Ezekiel saw it (Ezek. 43:1-7), whither he viewed the glory of Jehovah departing (Ezek. 10:19; 11:23).

Vs. 3. A lull in the judgment proceedings (cf. Ezekiel ch. 9). "Seal"--a sign of ownership, protection, preservation. See 2 Tim. 2:19; Eph. 1:13; 2 Cor. 1:23.

Vs. 4. Who is this company? Only "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" can fathom it. See Ezek. 14:22; Joel 2:32; Isa. 11:11, 16. They are not the church or even symbolical at all. The language is

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too clear and specific to be misunderstood. The literal sense is the only safe interpretation. "Children of Israel" can be no other than literal sons, descendants, of Jacob. The omission of the tribes of Dan and Ephraim may be explained by Deut. 29:17-21; Gen. 49:17; Hosea 4:17. These tribes were foremost in idolatry. In every time of Israel's national history there has always been a faithful remnant, true to Jehovah, when the mass of the people were apostate. This company of 144,000 are the remnant of Israel faithful during the tribulation days, who form the nucleus of the renewed nation of the millennial ago.

Another Company. Vss. 9-17.

Who are they not?

1. Not the highest rank of the redeemed. cf. 4:5.
2. Not sealed ones. These are largely Gentiles--"all nations, kindreds, etc."
3. Not the church as officially recognized, who are redeemed and glorified before the tribulation and are reigning. These do not reign.

Who are they?

They are ransomed human beings, who lived on the earth during the great tribulation--"came out of the tribulation, the great one." (This is the literal translation of the Greek, which is emphatic in its designation) cf. Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

They are probably unprepared ones, having learned righteousness through judgment and are found worthy to escape the remaining judgments. They are seen in heaven--"before the throne"; clothed in "white robes," signifying their acceptance through the blood; they bear palm branches, symbolizing their victory; they rejoice before God; they serve Him. He dwells with them, having freed them from all curse and sorrow; they are nourished and refreshed by the Lamb.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Vs. 1. Silence in heaven. This silence, as Dr. Seiss says, has made a great deal of noise in the world, especially among commentators. The conflict of opinion is positively amusing. "Some treat it as a prophetic symbol of scenes and experiences in the earthly history of man; some as the suspension of divine wrath in the destruction of Jerusalem; some, as the freedom granted to the church under the reign of Constantine; some as the interval of repose granted the Christians between the persecutions by Diocletian and Galerius in A. D. 311 and the beginning of the civil wars toward the end of the same year," etc. ad infinitum.

When we recognize that the seventh seal completes and fulfills the judgments, because the trumpets and vials are introduced by it and that what follows is the final consummation of the mystery of God we can understand that this silence is one of wonder and interested

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awe, because the events about to happen are so important and portentous. All heaven is hushed in contemplation and awe. *Not actually 1/2 hr. 30 minutes*
But a limited space of time

Vs. 2. Seven presence angels. "Seven angels who are in the presence of God" (Weymouth). These are the mightiest of God's ministering host, of highest rank. Among them was Gabriel (Luke 1:19). In the apocryphal book of Enoch there is reference to Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sarakiel, Gabriel. The place that these angels occupy in the presence of God may be illustrated by the seven Persian princes who "saw" the monarch--the ranking princes (Esther 1:14).

"Seven trumpets." They have definite significance in Scripture. Special directions were given to Israel in regard to their use. Blowing of trumpets signified a time of crisis--solemnity, a time for men to stir themselves to action.

Trumpets:

1. Were connected with war. Num. 10:9
2. Were for the convocation of the people or the moving of the camp. Num. 10:6, 7.
3. Proclaimed the great festivals. Num. 10:10; 2 Chron. 29:27.
4. Were related to the coronation of kings. 2 Kings 9:13.
5. Were associated with the manifestation of the terrible majesty and power of God. Ex. 19:16; Amos 3:6.
6. Were connected with the overthrow of the ungodly. Josh 6:13-16
7. Proclaimed the laying of the foundation of God's temple. Ezra 3:10.

We may look for all these manifestations as the angels proceed with their ministry and the record of Revelation unfolds.

Vss: 3 and 4. "Another angel." Associated with angels as to ministry, but the activities here described imply some Being very different as to nature.

"Censer" connects with the Holy of Holies and the ministry of the High Priest. This seems to be another of the many pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, "who has passed into the heavenlies." He offers the prayers of the saints and renders them acceptable to God. This ministry is assigned to Jesus alone. cf. Eph. 2:18 Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:5. This interpretation is sanctioned by ancient interpreters--Augustine, Bede, etc. cf. ch. 5:8.

The accumulated Spirit-indicted prayers of all saints in all ages come before God as a sweet savor for remembrance and answer. They are made meritorious, sanctified, perfumed, by the High Priest Jesus Christ. Every true prayer, even for individual need, finds its consummation in the Lord's prayer. "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

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This very inauguration of the kingdom is about to happen here. The power of God is about to be displayed to banish the usurper and all his followers and to send back the king. The prayers of the saints are answered for the setting up of the Messianic rule.

Vs. 5. Fire-filled censer cast into the earth.

a. Fire is the great consumer. Héb. 12:29. It speaks of the divine wrath, judgment--punishment. cf. Sodom and Gomorrah, also Ezek. 10:1-7; Mal. 4:1. The ungodly are about to be judged in preparation for the setting up of the kingdom.

b. Fire is the great purifier. Mal. 3:2, 3. Israel is now to be purged of her dross and an end "made of sins," etc. cf. Dan. 9:24. The havoc wrought by the curse and blight of sin and Satan is to be cleansed away.

Note the rumblings of divine wrath. "voices, lightnings, thunderings, earthquake." cf. Ch 4:5 and 11:19. Observe the increase in intensity.

Vs. 6. The activities of the angels begin. On account of the great moment of subsequent events, definite preparations are made. There is orderly arrangement and procedure, deliberateness here. "Angels are ministering spirits;" they are given the divine instructions and exercise their own intelligence.

Vs. 7. The first trumpet. A renewal of the Egyptian miracles. cf. Micah 7:15-17; Jer. 23:7, 8. A literal interpretation is the only safe one, otherwise all kinds of conjecture and vagary result. See Ex. 9:25-28. "blood-red rains and blood-red snows are not unknown to the world. On the 17th of August, 1819, Captain Ross saw the mountains at Baffin's Bay covered for eight miles with blood-red snow; many feet in depth. Saussure found it on Mt. St. Bernard in 1778." Seiss Vol. 2, page, 44

'A modern instance of this occurred November 17, 1920 at Cheh Shae, Yunnan, S. China. The incident is well authenticated by Missionaries and Chinese Christians. We quote from the Literary Digest of September 3, 1921. "When the villagers got up, they found what appeared to be spots of blood, like raindrops, all over the court yards, in the fields and on the stones, etc. The following day was Communion Sunday, but no one said anything at all, being fearful and afraid of ridicule if they mentioned it. Almost a week later the thing leaked out andMrs. Gowman sent schoolboys and Evangelist Yen Teng to investigate the matter. They brought back a number of vegetable leaves on which the spots were still to be seen quite plainly. They appeared dark red as if it had rained just a few drops."

Evangelist Yang reported that "this rain of blood was also seen at Ning Ch'ae village three miles away. There the rain covered the ground completely. A Nosu tribesman, when he got up in the morning found his courtyard all red with what he supposed was blood. He thought, 'Robbers must have been there during the night and killed one of my cows.' But upon counting the animals in the stalls, all were in their usual places."

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A group of Lisu Christians told that this "rain of blood" was also seen in several places over Szechwan about forty miles away at the same time.

Vss. 8 and 9. The second trumpet. "As it were a great mountain" - this is an instance of figurative interpretation, but clear in the text. Probably a burning fiery meteoric mass, the effect of which is to turn the third part of the waters of the sea into blood. cf. Ex. 7:20; Psa. 105:29; Psa. 71:44. Destruction of life in sea and ships. Hosea 4:1-3; Zeph. 1:3; Isa. 2:16.

Vss. 10 and 11. The third trumpet. Star or meteor named Wormwood affects the waters of rivers, streams, and springs. Dr. Seiss relates that Mar. 21, 1823, in one of the Aleutian Islands there was a great volcanic explosion, and as one of the results, the river water assumed the color of beer, and was so extremely bitter as to be unfit for use. cf. Jer. 9:13-15.

Vs. 12. The fourth trumpet. The heavenly luminaries are affected, so that unnatural and intense darkness results. cf. Luke 21:25 Matt. 24:29. Isa. 13:9, 10; Joel 2:10, 30; 3:15; See also the plague of darkness upon Egypt.

through
Vs. 13. The following woe trumpets are given special significance by announcement of a flying "angel". The Alexandrian, Sinaitic Vatican MSS. have "eagle"-actos. Here again the language is clearly symbolic of some divinely commissioned messenger flying, like an angel "through the midst of heaven" pronouncing woe upon the inhabitants of the earth.

CHAPTER NINE

Vs. 1. The fifth trumpet. "A star fallen (Greek perfect tense) from heaven. Not as in ch. 8:10, which was a material agency. This is a spiritual intelligence as the context shows. cf. 12:4. "Key was given to him"--divine permission to unloose infernal agencies on an ungodly world. cf. 2 Thess. 2:11; Rom. 1:28. "Bottomless pit"--this is not an accurate translation of the original here and a bottomless pit is a misnomer, except as figuratively expressing the idea of a very, very deep dungeon hold. "Well pit of the abyss" is a better rendering and refers to a deep dungeon place of confinement in the underworld, the region of death, the place of departed spirits where are confined fallen angels and demons. cf. Jude 6; Luke 8:27-31; 2 Pet. 2:4.

Vs. 2. A terrible exodus of these demon spirits from the pit to torment men. They issue in clouds until "the sun and the air were darkened." Men choose Satan, so God permits them to taste of his power and awful malignity in releasing these usually confined demons.

Vs. 3. They have the form of locusts, but are not literal locusts as seen by the effects they produce (see verse 4). Locusts have no king (Prov. 30:27), but these infernal demon locusts have (see vs. 11). These have power to inflict torture as a scorpion bite affects its victims. There seems to be some analogy between this passage and Joel 2:1-9.

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Vs. 4. Their invasion does not affect vegetation, but "men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads." So these are not incursions of nations, false doctrines, invasions of Mohammedans, Huns, etc., as some would interpret, for they are active during the generation of men then living. The "sealed ones" (ch. 7) are still present.

Vss. 5 and 6. They do not cause death, but awful torture. Men desire death, but it is impossible of realization at this time. The length of the period of their activity "five months."

Vss. 7-10. Description of these locust-spirits. A frightful combination--hybrid, infernal cherubim. The details show that they belong clearly to the Satanic order.

Vs. 11. Their king is one of Satan's archons or angels. The name, Abaddon, as used in the Hebrew of the O. T. refers to this very region of the pit of ruin and destruction; Apollyon is the Greek equivalent for destruction. The use of both terms to define this king indicates that both Jew and Gentile are affected by this judgment.

Vs. 12. Announcement of the two following woes. The sixth trumpet. We will anticipate verses 20 and 21 to discover--

The Condition of Society at this Period.

1. Demon worship. 1 Cor. 10:20, 21 (There is only one devil, the word "devils" in the N. T. is demons) Justin Martyr considered them giants born of the "sons of God" and "the daughters of men" (Gen. 6:1-5). Orthodox Jewish opinion (Josephus) that they are spirits of the wicked dead. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Augustine all considered them the souls of the unsanctified dead. No one can answer satisfactorily who or what they are, but Dr. Seiss's definition is good: "they are invisible spirit-beings, unholy in character, and belonging to the kingdom of evil and having a vicious penchant to interfere in affairs of mankind in the flesh." Communication with them is possible, but forbidden in Scripture (Deut. 18:10-12). Modern spiritualism more properly spiritism, is explainable only in part as magic and illusion, but seems to be, in many instances, the manifestation of demon spirits impersonating the dead, wherever men's hearts and minds are open to and invite them.

2. Idolatry. Two thirds of the world's population today is idolatrous, heathen, pagan. Return to idolatry on the part of those who have apparently abandoned it, is not impossible. "What is to hinder men from becoming philosophic idol worshippers, especially if their spirit guides so dictate and accompany such dictation with the power of working wonders, if men accept Socratic philosophy instead of the Bible?"--Seiss. Note vs. 20 does not say, "cannot speak." cf. Rev. 13:14-16. In these days in many homes and in some of our great co-educational universities. Planchette is a household god. In the University of Wisconsin not long ago, many of the lady students were failing in their work, were nervous, and irritable. It was discovered that groups of them were sitting up late at night, closeted with Ouija boards. Back of these seemingly innocent little toys, there is a Satanic influence.

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3. Terrible moral state. 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Matt. 24:37, 38 Luke 17:28; 29. Revolting crimes are on the increase today. Murders are common, life is held cheaply, justice turned away backward.

"Sorceries"--the word in the original Greek is "pharmakeia," also in Rev. 18:23; and Gal. 5:20. In Rev. 21:8, "sorcerer" is pharmakeus and in 22:15 "sorcerer" is pharmakos. These three words are evidently of one origin:--

- (1) pharmakeia--the administration or use of drugs, poisoning.
- (2) pharmakos--a preparer of drugs, generally that operate by the use of magic charms. *marijuana*
- (3) pharmakeus--one who prepares or administers drugs.

It is seen that these words, with their English derivatives, pharmacy and pharmacist, etc., refer to the use of drugs in some shape with or without an association with magic and superstitious charms. This throws a flood of light on conditions that prevail today, the evil practices with poisonous drugs, tampering with one another's health. Sensuality is promoted by the skilled manipulation of unscrupulous and ungodly physicians in the use of pharmacopoeia: (We would not disparage or discount the value of many honest, godly, and skilled Christian physicians. The world would be badly situated without them).

The traffic in dope in the world and especially in the United States has reached tremendous proportions. There is an organized dope ring, whose tentacles reach out into our schools to ontrap even our little children into taking their first dose of the white powders morphine, cocaine, heroin, etc. One in every hundred persons in the U. S. is a drug user, and many of the fiendish crimes are committed by those under the influence of those drugs. This is what John the Revelator saw as he looked through the years to the end time.

Modern subversive ideas of the sacredness of the marriage relation, the multiplied divorces, free-love, loose morals, the false psychology of behaviorism, self-expression, etc., are fast ripening the present generation for the outpoured judgments of God.

Vs. 13. "Voice from the four horns of the golden altar"--everything has a voice, even inanimate creation speaks. cf. "voice of Abel's blood." "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood and stablisheth a city by iniquity." For the stone shall cry out of the wall and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." Hab. 2:12, 11. The blood on the horns of the altar of old spoke for mercy and pardon, here it cries for judgment, signifying that God's way of atonement and mediation by the blood of Jesus and His High-Priestly ministry is ignored. Heb. 10:28-31.

Vss. 14 and 15. Command to the sixth angel who carries out the diving commission. Four other angels, "who are bound (prisoner) in (Greek-"epi," at, upon, or near) the great river Euphrates." These must be evil angels, for good ones are not bound. cf. 2Pet. 2:4; Jude 6. They are released from their restraint in inflicting torment upon men, to carry it out again.

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The scene of their bondage is the river Euphrates, Mesopotamia, the land of Shinar, where the first attempts of the powers of evil against the human race were made, where oppressive world-powers arose, where great apostasies originated (Babylon).

The chronological reference in verse 15 may indicate either the appointed time when they are released to bring judgment or the duration of the plague, 13 months, 1 day, 1 hour.

Vs. 16-19. They seem to be the leaders of a horde of 200,000,000 infernals cavalry, supernatural horses, hybrid in character - combining different destructive qualities. Those diabolical forces are let loose on the earth to torment men. Lion heads - devouring and fierce; breastplates - fiery, infernal protection; mouths issuing smoke and sulphur; tails like serpents, biting and inflicting torture and death.

One third of mankind then living are killed by them. The rest give not glory to God (20). cf. 27:22; Luke 16:31.

INTERCALARY TO 11:15

CHAPTER TEN

The Entry of Christ in Person as Judge.

Vs. 1. "Another mighty angel." This angel, we believe, may be identified as Jesus Himself -- the Old Testament "Angel of Jehovah," the Angel of the covenant, "the angel of His presence" (literally, "of His face"). The word angel, means messenger. Christ was the pre-eminent messenger of God. Many symbols, figures, and representations are required to portray to man the marvelous personality and character of Him, who is called "Wonderful."

"Clothed with a cloud." cf. Ex. 19:16-18; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:9. This representation indicates the presence of Deity. The "rainbow" (cf. 4:3) identifies this angel with the throne, and his glorious sun-lit countenance and blazing feet suggest the description of the transcendent Christ of ch. 1:15,16.

Vs. 2. "Set His right foot on the sea and His left foot on the earth." This is the signal of occupancy, possession, rightful ownership. The world has long been under the dominion of His enemies, but now, He asserts His right to do it.

Vs. 3. His voice, Mighty as a Lion, authoritative, striking terror to His opposers, powerful, and vengeful. He is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." cf. 5:5; Jer. 25:29-31. Response of the seven thunders. Seven, being the number of fullness and completeness, indicates these as embracing in their utterance judgment in its full and complete manifestation.

Vs. 4. John heard what these thunders uttered, but was forbidden to record it. cf. John 12:29.

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Vss. 2, 8-11. The Little Book. cf. Ch. 5. This book is likely the same as in ch. 5, or a miniature thereof and embodies the Word of God. We would take it as embracing God's plans and purposes of redemption, the title deeds of the kingdom and, as Dr. Seiss says, "all the prophetic, priestly and royal rights of Jesus as Goel (Kinsman-redeemer) compassing the kernel of sacred prophecy, all evangelistic preaching, all true faith, all abiding hope."

The gospel is sweet to a believing soul and precious to a true minister, but it causes pain, hardship, reproach, and travail of soul to the true servant of God. cf. Ezek. 3:1-4. Ezekiel "went in the bitterness and in the heat of his spirit."

Vs. 11 is literally: "Thou must prophesy again upon (concerning) peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings many."

Vss. 5-7. The notable proclamation.

The angel swears by the Eternal God that there shall be "time" no longer. "Time" is an unfortunate rendering here. "Delay" (R.V.) is the sense. There seem to have been many centuries of delay in the consummation of God's great day. Eve, Simeon; John the Baptist, the early Christians, Luther, and many men since, have expected the immediate fulfillment of God's promise; but in grace He has delayed. But "in the days" of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God shall be finished. The moment has arrived.

"The mystery of God." Does this mean "the mystery of iniquity"? Then Antichrist, the embodiment of all Satanic power will be revealed in his true character and his rule brought to a sudden and ignominious end. Does it mean "the mystery of the church"? Then the church will be manifested in glory with her Kingly consort to the nations of the earth. Does it mean the "Mystery of Israel's blindness"? Then the veil will be lifted from their eyes and the saints of Israel will possess the kingdom and the nation will take her place as head of the peoples of the earth, a blessing to all. The kingdom of heaven will be a mystery no more. It will be fully revealed.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Interpreters come into conflict only as they try to interpret this and other chapters in Revelation as referring to the Christian era and not to the "day of the Lord," the day of judgment.

Vss. 1, 2.

Note the connection of vs. 1 with the preceding chapter. John becomes an actor in the scene. He is a representative or type of the prerogatives and activities of the saints. They shall judge the world. I Cor. 6:2; Psa. 149:5-9.

Measuring is an act implying judgment, a sign of appropriation, of entering upon possession. "In the settlement of some new order, as beheld by Ezekiel, a great deal of measuring is done." cf. Ezek. 40-48 where Ezekiel views the new order of the millennial age as it concerns restored Israel.

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What is measured? "Temple, altar-worshippers." cf. I Peter 4:17. The church is not referred to here; she has been caught away. It is not the heavenly temple; there are no such distinctions as Jew and Gentile there; the heavenly temple has already been purified. The language here is distinctly Jewish. "Holy city" - cf. Neh. 11:1,18; Isa. 52:1; Matt. 4:5; 27:52,53. A return of the Jews and the re-establishing of their temple worship is implied. cf. ch. 7; contrast the measuring here with ch. 21:15.

"Rod" - an instrument of chastisement, a symbol of authority and of power. cf. Rom. 11:21-25. God begins to acknowledge the Jew, rejects the Gentile. Luke 21:24.

"Forty and two months" - (same period as 1260 days, verse 3) the last half of Daniel's seventieth week of years (Dan.9:27). The city is trampled by the Gentiles, Antichrist set up "the abomination of desolation," Israel passes through the time of "Jacob's trouble." But the Gentiles also come into judgment (cf. Babylon, ch. 18). This period is comparatively short; God does a quick work now. cf. Matt. 24:22.

The Two Witnesses.

This portion of the chapter is not a vision; but a clear description by the angel (Jesus Himself) of final events, a special view or revelation. The ministry of these witnesses extends over a definite period of 3-1/2 years.

They are two in number. This is Divine order. cf. Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, Zerubbabel and Joshua, Peter and John.

They are clearly seen to be persons. The interpretation that they represent the Old and New Testaments is disproved by the context and involves many difficulties to establish it.

They are individuals, not bodies of Christians.

They are MEN. Their subsequent death and resurrection attests this.

Who are they? Does Scripture give definite revelation concerning their identity? We believe it does. Since "it is appointed unto men once to die" and since Scripture reveals that only one body of persons will never die (I Thess. 4), these must be some preeminent saints of a previous dispensation who have never died. Is it incredible that they should return to earth, suffer, and die? Jesus, in glory from eternity, came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, suffered and died. Paul, after receiving his celestial revelation (2 Cor. 12) did likewise. What Scripture foundation have we for believing that a man previously living on the earth should return, fulfill a further ministry, and die? Mal. 4:5, 6.

The Jews expected Elijah to return. This caused the discussion of the scribes with John (John 1:19-21); and of the disciples with Jesus (Matt. 17:10-12) John in a sense was Elijah (Matt. 11:14; Luke 1:17), but not literally. Christ did not deny that Elijah would come again.

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What other individual fills the scripture requirements? Enoch, the seventh from Adam. Some say Moses, but Moses once experienced death and it would seem incredible that he should twice go through this. Enoch, like Elijah, was preeminently a judgment prophet. cf. Jude 14, 15. In the New Testament apocryphal book of Nicodemus, ch. 20, vs. 2-4, a scene in the underworld is described as follows: - "And two very ancient men met them and were asked by the saints, 'Who are ye who have not yet been with us in Hades and have had your bodies placed in Paradise?' One of them answering said, 'I am Enoch, who was translated by the word of God and this man with me is Elijah the Tishbite, who was translated in a fiery chariot.' 'Here we have hitherto been and have not tasted death but are now about to return at the coming of Antichrist, being armed with divine signs and miracles to engage him in battle and to be slain at Jerusalem and to be taken up alive again into the clouds after three days and a half.'" This is to say the least, interesting. It shows what the belief was in the early days of Christianity.

1. The time of these witnesses.

- a. Not gospel times. They show a different spirit than a minister of God's grace. cf. the attitude of Jesus -- "Father, forgive them --"; James; Stephen, etc. These men deal out vengeance immediately. vs. 5
- b. Very evil times. The beast and the false prophet hold sway. The witnesses wear sackcloth, indicating evil days. Vs. 3
- c. Times of the supernatural and miracle. Satan is then inspiring the beast and the false prophet. cf. image of the beast (ch. 13) fire from heaven, etc. Men are given over to strong delusion (2 Thess. 2). The witnesses have power to shut heaven, destroy with fire, etc. cf. Time of Moses, withstood by Jannes and Jambres.

2. The work of these witnesses.

- a. Prophetic. vs. 3, cf. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and their ministry.
- b. Witnesses for Jesus Christ, now personally manifested as Judge. "My Witnesses" -- their witness is not to Him as the bleeding Lamb, but as the coming Avenger and King. They expose Antichrist and call to repentance as did John the Baptist. Vss. 3,7
- c. Given power to exercise judgment immediately. "Fire issued out of their mouth" -- not gunpowder, as some would interpret. cf. Elijah's former ministry. II Kings 1:1-12. See Old Testament threat against apostasy. Deut. 28: 23,24. In his former ministry Elijah was used to fulfill this scripture. Again his ministry is one of swift judgment.
- d. They are the "two olive trees" of their day. cf. Zech. ch. 4 vs. 4. The olive trees of Zech. 4. The olive trees of Zech. 4 were "a material image of the mysterious

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organism through which the heavenly potencies were coming forth to give success to the completion of the work in which Zerubbabel was engaged" -- Seiss. They represented the operation of the Holy Spirit of God through Zerubbabel and Joshua as His earthly agents. That ancient time was one of restoration of Jerusalem, of the temple, the worship of Jehovah, and the ordinances of God.

Another such period on a far grander scale is promised. Acts 3:19-21. These witnesses are used to bring this about for the context clearly shows that God is dealing directly in behalf of and in judgment of His people Israel, with a view to their reestablishment according to His covenant with Abraham and David.

- c. Elijah's former ministry one of turning Israel from Idolatry. See Mal. 4:5,6. Matt. 17:11.
 - f. Suggestion of a similar ministry of Enoch to the Antediluvians JUDE 14.
 - g. They are sent as a merciful provision from God. Some are saved. Matt. 24:21, 22. cf. Isaiah's remnant.
3. What becomes of them.
- a. Immortal till their work is finished. vss. 5, 6.
 - b. Killed when this is accomplished. v.7
 - c. Dead bodies denied burial. A picture of the awful Satanic malignity of those times.
 - e. Resurrection and recalled to heaven. vss. 11, 12.
 - f. Immediate judgment falls from heaven. vs. 13. Note the marginal reference -- "names of men," indicating that the outstanding opposers, the ring-leaders possibly of the rebellion against God are singled out for judgment. The giving glory to God here is not likely godly sorrow. cf. Pharaoh of Egypt and his magicians, the Philistines and the ark. Second woe past. vs. 14.
 - g. Their rapture to heaven. v. 11-12
Compare Ezek. 37:5-14.
3. The Great Earthquake Effects Mainly Jerusalem. The geological character of Palestine.
- a. An earthquake will make possible the river of Ezek. 47; Zech. 14:4,9,10.
 - b. Remnant of Jews gave glory to God.
4. The summing up of Coming events.
- a. Because Chapter 12 begins a view from a different perspective. Verses 14-19.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

There is complete diversity of opinion among Scripture interpreters as to the import of Chapter 12. One interpretation is that the woman is symbolic of the Christian church, out of which the man-child (the body of true overcomers) is born and raptured into heaven (cf. 2:26, 27 and 12:5). While a comparison of 2:26, 27 with 12:5 might lend weight to this, the whole interpretation is open to question, for Scripture recognizes only one true church of overcomers (I John 5:4,5; Rom. 8:14-17; Rev. 21:7). Only the true church, the overcomers, will reign with Christ. If this be true, the woman cannot represent the true church but only the nominal church, Christendom. A sun-enveloped, star-crowned woman is hardly a fitting symbol of Christendom out of which, according to this interpretation, the overcomers are born. Furthermore, it is the true church which has suffered through the centuries; not the nominal body. Furthermore, the church is a "chaste virgin," espoused to Christ. She is married to the Lamb (ch. 19), and then comes forth with Him from the heavenlies to rule as His queenly consort. This woman is already in the way of motherhood.

While the sign appears to John in heaven, the action takes place on the earth. (cf. 12:13).

The author of this course inclines to the view that the symbol is of Israel and presents to us in one concrete, objective picture her relation to Jehovah and the outstanding events in her history - Messiah's birth, her preservation during the tribulation period, the judgment of her enemies, etc. We outline the following reasons for this view:

1. Chapter 11, verse 19, by common consent belongs to the vision of Chapter 12. The ark - symbol of God's presence, especially to Israel - is revealed here, evidencing that Israel is in the foreground in the present chapters and that He is moving in her behalf.
2. Israel is frequently spoken of in Isaiah and Jeremiah (6:2) as "the daughter of Zion," whose unfaithfulness Jehovah deplores, but whom He will betroth unto Him forever in faithfulness. Hos. 2:19,20. Paul speaks of the spiritual Jerusalem as "the mother of us all."
3. Isaiah refers to Israel as being in travail and bringing forth a "man-child" and "her children." (Isa. 66:7,8.) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Isa. 9:6
4. The reference to the sun, moon, and stars points us in our thinking to the progenitors of Israel. cf. Gen. 37:9,10. There may be reference in this symbolism to the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2), in His power and glory wrapping Himself around Israel in the time of national restoration to favor and blessing in the full-orbed millennial day.

As suggested by Dr. Ottman, the moon, which reflects the light of the sun, may speak of the typical ordinances in Israel, which reflected the glories of Christ, or it may indicate her victorious position - moon, ruler of the night, darkness being under her feet - showing her final conquest of the powers of darkness so long arrayed against her.

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The crown of twelve stars, speaking on the twelve tribal heads, testify here to the restoration of Israel.

5. There is no mention of the church after chapter 4. The church is a "mystery;" there is no time set for the realization of her destiny, no chronological data apply to her. We are to "wait for His Son from heaven." In relation to Israel cf. 1260 days; time, times and half a time of ch. 12:6, 14. Chapter eleven is distinctly Jewish and connects with ch. 12. In ch. 11 the testimony of the two witnesses is for the same period of time.
6. Rev. 12:5 refers primarily to Messiah, the Man-child, and His place of regal authority over the nations (cf. ch. 19:15) and His catching up, in ascension, to the throne of God, after Satan's efforts to destroy Him. (vs. 4). Christ is not born of the church.
7. Ch. 12:7 mentions Michael, who is "the great prince who standeth for the children of thy (Daniel's people," who is seen in fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 12:1) active in behalf of Israel in the time of tribulation.
8. Chapters 11, 12, 13 are clearly Jewish in their setting. In chapter eleven "the beast," Antichrist, is mentioned and again in chapter thirteen, the period of his continuance is 42 months, the same period of time as in chapter 12:6,14.

Woman in the way of motherhood.

"The thought of Israel being in travail is hard to realize, except as we understand what the fulfillment of God's promise as to Christ involved in the way of suffering on the part of the nation. To them, while under the trial of law and with the issue (to man's thought) uncertain, Christ could not be born. The prosperous days of David must go by; the heirs of David must be allowed to show what was in their heart and be carried to Babylon. Humiliation, sorrow, fail to produce result; while the voice of prophecy even lapses with Malachi, the long silence of death is broken by the cry at last, 'To us a child is born.' Here is at least one purpose, as it would seem, of that triple division of the genealogy of the Lord in Matthew, the governmental gospel, in which the first fourteen generations bring one to the culmination of their national prosperity; the second is a period of decline to the captivity; the third a period of resurrection, but which only comes at last, and as in a moment, after the failure of every national hope. Thus in the government of God Israel has her travail-time." - Ottman.

It has been objected that this chapter could not represent Israel and her preservation in the tribulation time and still refer back in 12:3-5 to the birth, preservation, and ascension of Messiah, because of the long time gap between that time and the end time. It may be answered that the symbolism of Dan. 2 in the image takes no account of time gaps either, and in one passage, Micah 5:1-3, we have the birth of Messiah, the rejection of Israel, her travail pain, and restoration in one continuous passage.

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Another Sign - Great Red Dragon.

Vss. 3,4; Isa. 27:1; 34:13. Identified (vs. 9) as "that old serpent," the devil, and Satan.

1. "Tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven." Job. 38:4-7 pictures the "morning stars" as singing over contemplation of God's creative handiwork. In Isa. 14:12 reference seems to be to Satan or "Lucifer" - "star of the morning." The Symbolism points to the angelic hosts. Jude 6 and II Peter 2:4 indicate a calamitous rebellion in heaven and the subsequent debasement of the angels; - - "cast them to the earth." Satan, the leader of rebellion, influenced with him apparently the third of the angelic dignitaries.
2. "Seven heads." These are crowned heads, indicating political ruler-ship. Seven, the earthly complete number of dispensational fullness, implies here that Satan, "the god of this world (age)" controls the earthly governments from beginning to the end, particularly during the times of the Gentiles. The four beasts of Daniel 7, symbolic of the four imperialisms that rule until the coming of Christ, have seven heads in the aggregate.
3. "Ten horns." The horn, the weapon of the animal for the infliction of injury, indicates destructive power. cf. Zech. 1:18-21. Satan has used his power with terrible destruction, since the sovereignty became his.
4. "Red." This color signifies blood, fire, death and symbolically describes Satan's character. John 8:44.

We see in verse four his malignant purpose to destroy the man-child (Christ) at His birth. This was fulfilled in the slaughter of the innocent children by Herod at the birth of Jesus. Satan is opposed to God and all His purposes, having special enmity against Messiah, God's anointed. Satan's designs to destroy Christ were continued all through His life. Witness Nazareth, Gethsamane, Calvary.

Verse five reveals the victory of Christ in the completion of His redemptive work at His ascension to the Father's right hand, where He will soon be endowed with all His kingly prerogatives to "rule the nations with a rod of iron." cf. Psa. 2:9

War in Heaven, Woe upon the Earth, Persecution of the Woman, Her Escape, Her Sustenance, The Dragan's Pursuit, His Defeat, Wrath upon the Remnant who are faithful. 12:7-17.

Literal war. Eph. 6:12; Dan. 10:12-14, 20. Cf. also participation of angel hosts in delivering God's people. II Kings 19:35; 6:17.

The final rejection of Satan from the heavenlies. Prophetic foreview of Jesus (Luke 10:18), here accomplished.

Michael - not Jesus, but an archangel, one of the seven presence-angels. A preeminent heavenly dignitary in God's service, especially as relates to His purposes for Israel. Dan. 12:1. He has his

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angels, just as a general-in-chief has his aides; officers, soldiers, and all, belong to the king.

The occasion of the conflict, Satan's effort to thwart the blessing of the whole earth, primarily in Messiah (man-child), then in Israel (Woman).

Song of triumph at Satan's defeat. vs. 10

Satan's business in heaven. Accuser, adversary, slangerer. cf. Job 1:6-12; Zech. ch. 3, I Kings 22:19-22; Luke 22:31. Verse 10.

The saint's weapon of defense. vs. 11. "The blook of the Lamb" - recognition of the victory of Calvary's cross; "the word of their testimony" - unswerving witness in faith to their full confidence in the sacrificial blood.

Satan's great wrath. A terrible day for the earth's inhabitants. Satan's subsequent liberty short. verse 12.

Special enmity of Satan after being cast out of the heavenlies is against the woman (Israel) through whom the earth (his present seat) is to be blessed in the coming restoration to God's favor in the millennial age. vs. 13. His persecution of the woman through Antichrist is typified by the vile acts of Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria (See notes on Daniel 8th ch).

"Wings of a great eagle" - - symbolize the special help of God. See Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11,12. The flight of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem in 70 A.D., when it was besieged by the Roman armies under Titus and their escape to Pella, are an example of what is symbolically depicted here of the godly Jews in the last days. The time of their preservation is the same as the length of testimony of the two witnesses (ch. 11) and the duration of the rule of Antichrist (ch. 13:5). cf. 1 Maccabees 1:41-50. cf. Matt. 24:15-22.

"Wilderness." Hosea 2:14-22; Hab. 3; I Mac. 2:26-31. There seems to be real warrant, from Isa. 16:1-5 and 63:1-4 for believing that the nation of Israel is preserved by the flight of the remnant to the wilderness of Edom and Moab - the rock-hewn ruins of Petra (see Petra, Peraea and Phoenicia, by Archibald Forder, Marshall Bros., London, for description of this region). Isa. 63:1-4 might indicate that here appears first the sign of the Son of Man to the repentant remnant. They follow His sign to Jerusalem, where His feet press Olivet. He judges Antichrist and the confederate nations, and makes the remnant the nucleus of the renewed nation. (Consult "What shall be done in the dry;" by Dunbar). Moses fled from Pharaoh, Israel from the Egyptians, Elijah from Ahab, Maccabees from Antiochus. "Nourished." 1260 days-time, times and 1/2 time, cf. 11:3; Dan. 9:27. Same as Israel's miraculous feeding in the wilderness, Elijah's sustenance.

"Flood." cf. Jer. 46:7,8 where Pharaoh-Hecho's armies are likened to a flood. cf. also Jer. 47:2,3. The symbolism here seems clearly to mean soldiers, an army. vs. 15.

"Earth opened." cf. the supernatural work of God in delivering Israel in opening up the waters of the Red Sea, Ex. 15:11,12. cf.

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also Num. 16:31-35 where Korah, Dathan and Abiram were literally swallowed up in the earth. The period of the tribulation in view in these verses is a time of miracle, wonders, elementary convulsions, so the earth may open up literally here and swallow en masse the pursuing enemies. vs. 16.

"Remnant of her seed." Satan's turning against the seed of the woman is his final effort to stamp out all Christian testimony wherever found. Since salvation is from Israel, through Christ, any believer anywhere could be called of "her seed."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Antichrist. I John 2:18; II Thess. ch. 2, II John 7

Satan has had his opposite or counterfeit of every doctrine or purpose of God. Compare Cain and Abel; James and Jambres who withstood Moses before Pharaoh; the contrasting cities, Jerusalem, the city of the great King, Babylon, the seat of the first organized rebellion against God; John the Baptist and Herod; Christ came as Deity incarnate in the name of the Father. Antichrist will come glorifying himself, the full representative of what Satan is.

The various prophets saw projected upon the background of events in their own day this final world ruler, persecutor of their own people, Israel, etc., and he is known in Scripture, therefore, under various titles. A few of these follow:

1. The Assyrian (Micah 5:5);
2. King of Babylon (Isa. 14:4);
3. The Little Horn (Dan. 7:8; 8:9);
4. King of Fierce Countenance (Dan. 8:23);
5. The Willful King (Dan. 11:36);
6. The Prince that shall come (Dan. 9:26);
7. The Desolator (Dan. 9:27);
8. The Lawless One (II Thess. 2:8 R.V.)

(1) His origin. "Out of the sea." vs. 1. The Greek reads here, "And he (Satan) stood upon the sand of the sea and I (John) saw a beast rise up out of the sea." cf. 7:2,3. The sea in Scripture represents nations, peoples in their restless surgings. The wind represents strife, commotion, turmoil, the influence of the prince of the power of the air. cf. Rev. 17:15; Isa. 57:20,21. Satan is seen here producing out of the political turmoil of the nations his masterpiece, the incarnation, so to speak, of himself. cf. The "seven heads and ten horns" of vs. 1 with Rev. 12:3.

(2) A picture of world-power, imperial sovereignty. vss. 1, 7, cf. the descriptive items; horns-power, crowns, regal dominion, heads-sovereignty. See also ch. 17:9-17. "Kindreds, tongues, nations" -- world power in its final consummation.

(3) A composite administration. Vs. 2. The beast symbolism is one of both imperialism and the king or head himself. cf. Dan. 7:17, 23. In verse 2 we have the embodiment symbolical of all the elements of the four beasts of Dan. 7 - leopard, lion, bear, the whole being the non-descript, hybrid creature of Dan. 7:7. The seven heads likely represent the final

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combination in one beast (both the imperialism and the great king himself) of all the elements of the seven great world powers of history-Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Rome revived. The wounding of one of the heads (vs.3) may mean the fall of imperial government with Rome, and its healing, the revival of imperialism on the ground of the old Roman dominion, which is one of the singular political phenomena of our day in the ambition of Mussolini, premier of Italy. It may also have reference to the death, possibly by assassination of the last head and his restoration to life, Satanic simulation of the resurrection.

(4). An individual administration embodied in one head, upheld by ten kings of confederate states. cf. ten horns, vs. 1 and Rev. 17:12, 13. His image is worshipped (13:14,15) so the beast represents one individual.

(5) A supernatural personage, cf. 17:8 first clause. He comes up from the underworld, "the son of perdition" (II Thess. 2:3). The superman-cultured, refined, intellectual, militaristic, diplomatic, religious in his own way, the Superman, Satan's consummate effort. cf. Giants- nephilim of Gen. 6:1-5.

(6) A wonderful personage. vss, 3:4,8. "All the world wondered after the beast." "He combines all the qualities of the early kings, the golden majesty and splendor of Babylon; the massive preponderance of power of Medo-Persia; the culture, polish, intellect, philosophy, art, physical grace of Greece; the strenght of law, martial discipline, and idea of justice of Rome." - Seiss.

(7) A Blasphemer, an antagonist of God, usurper of everything divine. vss. 5,6. "Upon his heads the names of blasphemy." vs. 1 cf. 17:3; Dan. 7:25; 8:25; 11:36-38; II Thess. 2:4.

"In all the great empires the deification of the monarch, and the claiming and giving of divine honors to him was a part of the common piety of the state. Such was particularly the case with the Roman emperors. Julius Caesar took divine titles, accepted divine honors while he lived, and temples were erected for his worship after he was dead. Augustus Caesar favored the erection of the temples for the worship of his uncle Julius. At Angora the remains of one of these may still be seen and on it the inscription, 'To the God Augustus.' In the same locality there is an inscription, 'To Marcus Aurelius, unconquered, pious, august, successful, by one most devoted to his godhead.' Nero was styled 'the God' while he lived. Lamps have been found devoted to Domitian as 'our God and Lord.'" - Seiss.

(8) A persecutor, vs. 7. cf. Dan. 7:21,25; Dan. 8:24. The word "saints" has a much wider application than to the saints of the church dispensation alone. The word means, holy ones, sanctified ones, in the root meaning of the word as separated unto God. Here it doubtless refers to all the righteous, Jew and Gentile, of the tribulation days.

Admonition to hear and heed. Non-resistance for God's children His thought and the way of final victory. Vss. 9,10.

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THE FALSE PROPHET. vss. 11-18.

The second beast is a Satanic personage abetting and co-operating with the Beast of 13:1-8. He occupies a place in relation to the first beast that Pharaoh's magicians did to him in upholding his prestige and throne. Cf. Balak and the false prophet Balaam (Num. 22, 23, 24); the tribe of Dan and their hired priest (Judges 18); Jeroboam and the religious administration which he set up at Bethel and Dan (I Kings 12). He is Antichrist's spiritual associate and prophet.

Note in Rev. 17 the Satanic Trinity:

1. The Dragon - Satan as GOD.
2. The Beast - the Satanic incarnation, Antichrist, the counterfeit of Christ.
3. The Two-horned Beast - administrator, revealer, a travesty on the Holy Spirit.

Anti-God, Anti-Christ, Anti-Holy Spirit.

Matthew 24:24 includes this personage who is the consummate false prophet. He is an individual as is the Beast. This can be proven by the end of Both. Rev. 19:20; 20:10.

1. His origin. "Out of the earth." This expression refers to his origin in the underworld of departed spirits. He is likely a Satantically resurrected being. Satan, at least in a limited degree has the power of death (Heb. 2:14) and may simulate a reanimation from the dead.
2. His nature. "Two horns like a lamb, spake as a dragon." These horns do not speak so much of brute force as of the pseudo-lamblike nature - a lamb, bearing the marks of gentleness, domesticity. The imagery is of a man, suave, polite, cultured, and refined but having the nature of Satan. It has been suggested that these horns represent Spiritism and Supernaturalism. It is stated that he will perform signs and wonders.
3. His power and office. He works in perfect harmony and co-operation with the first beast, being delegated with all his power. He directs the attention of all to the Beast Emperor and causes all to worship him. vs. 12.

It might be objected that there could never be such a return to such pagan worship, but humanity has always worshipped something. During the French Revolution churches were closed, altars thrown down and men seemed utterly irreligious, but in a short time the people were hailing a shameless woman borne through the streets on a palanquin, as the Goddess of Reason.

He confirms his proposals and religion with supernatural works. vs. 13. cf. II Thess 2:8-10. cf. also the magicians of Pharaoh and Simon Magus.

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"The test of a miracle is its supernaturalness; the test of its source is the doctrine, end, or interest for which it wrought; if in support of anything contrary to God and His revealed will and law, it is no less a miracle, but in that case it is the work of the devil; for God cannot contradict Himself." Seiss. cf. I John 4:1-3.

4. Revival of idolatry. vs. 14. Here we see the deification of man. It is probable that this image is set up first in the capital city of the beast and that replicas are worshipped in all the great centers of the world. We see how readily the Israelites turned to worship of the golden calf when Moses was absent. When such worship as is described here is accompanied with pomp, splendor and music as was the worship of Nebuchadnezzar's image, the multitude will be beguiled by the glamor of it all. cf. II Thess. 2:3; II Tim. 3:1-6; II Tim. 4:3,4.
5. Martyrdom and persecution. vs. 15. All who refuse homage to the Beast are killed. Thus did Nebuchadnezzar threaten all who would not worship his image in the plain Dura. Thus did the Roman emperors with those who were not loyal to the state religion, which embodied worship of the Emperor.
6. Absolute despotism. No one can buy or sell unless branded by the "mark of the beast." There has been much speculation as to the nature of this mark. Seventh Day Adventists brand all who do not keep the seventh day with the mark of the beast. The literal interpretation is the most simple and natural, that all who do worship will receive some mark, such as a tatoo, in forehead or hand. vs. 16. It may be the specific number 666.
7. Identification of the beast, 666. "Man's number is '6', the number of weakness and incompleteness, since it 'comes short of the perfect number.' Man's two main characteristics are stated in Rom. 3:23, 'sinned and come short.' Man was created on the sixth day and thus from the beginning is associated with that number. His work, moreover, is to be done in six days." - Mauro.

"Six is a bad number and when multiplied by tens and hundreds denotes evil in its intensity and most disastrous manifestation." - Seiss.

"Thus, in the name of Democracy and popular rights, comes absolute Dictatorship and Imperialism; in the name of the Better Reason, which tramples on religion and Revelation, comes a great consolidated system of gross idolatry; in the name of a charitable liberalism, which disdains allegiance to any creed, comes a bloody despotism, which compels man to worship the base image of a baser man, or die. Here is one star in the crown of this world's boasted progress." -- Seiss.

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Chapter Fourteen.

This chapter presents a bright spot through the clouds of awful darkness during the reign of Antichrist. Chapters 12 and 13 have given us the descent of Satan to earth as the scene of his activities, the revelation of "the man of sin," the persecution of Israel, the terrible manifestation of Satanic supernaturalism, but here is a foregleam of the coming blessedness.

Mount Zion is Jerusalem, not the heavenly but the literal earthly city. (Psa. 132:13,14). It was the royal residence of King David, which he conquered from the Jebusites. During the millennium it will be the royal seat of Messiah, David's greater Son. cf. Psa. 2:6; Psa. 48; Psa. 76:1; Psa. 110; Isa. 2:1-4.

The question arises, "Is this company of 144,000 the same as the one in chapter seven?" A careful study will show that these two accounts are complementary and are parallel in their teaching concerning the elect remnant of Israel in the last days.

Reasons for believing that the two companies are identical:-

1. The number agrees and it is certainly unique.
2. They are sealed on their forehead in each record.
3. The sealed ones of Chapter 7 are left unaccounted for as to their destiny without this record.
4. They are called first fruits unto God. If this company is distinct from Chapter 7 and called first fruits, then what is the relation to the harvest of the 144,000 of Chapter 7?
5. Their position on Mt. Zion. Tribal names and Mt. Zion are clearly Jewish in their import.

It is God's judgment and refining time for Israel. These make up the nucleus of redeemed Israelites around which the renewed nation will cling and are pictured as entering upon their reward with the Lamb on Mt. Zion (Jerusalem).

John hears, in this vision, a voice from heaven, showing that his position of vantage is earthly. He hears the heavenly harpers leading the chorus, which is being sung in heaven before the elders and the "living ones." They know the song; the 144,000 evidently learning it. They are spoken of as "redeemed from the earth," which does not necessarily imply a translation from the earth. Weymouth renders this clause: "Who had been redeemed out of the world." cf. I Peter 2:21,22.

"Briefly stated, the sense of the passage is, that Christ separates unto Himself, by virtue of His sovereign grace an elect Israel, who are chosen because redeemed and they are privileged to hear and learn a song while on earth, and no man can learn that song, save this ransomed host. This song is not as exclusive as some think. The 'harpers' are not angels ... This heavenly choral company must be the great multitude caught up in the closing days (15:2). An elect Israel still on earth takes up the heavenly melody." -- Davis.

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The objection of verse 5 where it is stated that they are "without fault before the throne," is only apparent. "Before the throne" is an interpolation. The Revised Version, Weymouth, Moffatt all omit this. Weymouth translate, "And no lie has ever been found upon their lips; they are faultless."

Note again the characteristics of this company:-

1. Sealed with the name of the Father (and follow the Lamb). How in contrast with "the mark of the beast"! In opposition to the mass of unbelieving Jews who reject the Son of God and accept Antichrist and the Beast, who denies both the Father and the Son.
2. "Redeemed from the earth." vs. 3. Separated, during these awful days of impiety, from the whole Antichristian system.
3. "Virgins" - pure, vs. 5, Reference here is not to celibacy, but to complete separation from the harlotry, spiritual and literal, of those times - chaste.
4. Truthful, blameless. vs. 5.
5. Associated with Christ in all His activities. vs. 4.

The whole scene is of the faithful Jewish remnant entering upon their reward during the millennial age.

THREE CELESTIAL WARNINGS. 6-11

God's special warnings in grace and mercy to a rebellious generation. He exhausts every means to bring men to repentance.

1. Angel proclaiming "the everlasting gospel." Literally "A gospel everlasting;" the article is omitted in the Greek text. The meaning doubtless is "everlasting in its consequence of acceptance or rejection." This is clearly not "the gospel of grace" of the present dispensation, for that is committed into the hands of men. This embraces a message of judgment and is a call to "fear God" and turn away from Antichrist, the imposter. vss. 6,7.
2. Preannouncement of Babylon's fall. vs. 8. This doom of Babylon is amplified in chs. 18 and 19. The angel announces that all the magnificent structure, commercial and religious, is about to be demolished.
3. Special warning against Antichrist. vss. 9-11. Hopelessness of all who receive "the mark of the beast." Wrath untempered with mercy awaits the impenitent. It is "forever and ever" -- literally "unto the ages of the ages."

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Message to the Seer, John, vs. 12-13.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth." The time pictured here is the great Tribulation, days of awful pressure, persecution, distress, uncertainty. To come out from the impious system of those days and to stand aloof, will be a costly thing, as much as one's life is worth. The cost of separation is great in any age, but especially so here. "Here is (or herein lies) the patience (endurance) of the saints (i.e., the holy ones of that day)." Death seems preferable, but "rest" will be the portion of the faithful. Cf. with this the "rest not" of vs. 10 and 11.

THE HARVEST AND THE VINTAGE. 14-20.

This section belongs to and unfolds part of the activities of judgment introduced by the seventh trumpet. It pictures under the two symbolisms of harvest and grape gathering the judgment of the nations described in Matt. 25:31. This section constitutes a general summary or foreshadowing of the final judgments that follow in the book, consummated by the battle of Armageddon (ch. 19). The whole final period of the dispensation just preceding the millennium is a time of harvest and separation (tares and wheat), but here is set forth particularly the reaping of the evil crop for destruction. Good grain had been previously gathered in -- elders, the 144,000, the great multitude (ch. 7), but the tares seem to be especially considered in the vision. "Babylon is fallen." cf. Jer. 51:33; Joel 3:9-17.

THE HARVEST.

Vs. 14. "White cloud." "Son of man." See Luke 21:27; Dan. 7:13, 14. No difficulty to identify the actor in the scene here. "Sharp sickle" - judgment symbol, an instrument of vengeance. "Crown" - his regal authority, right to act.

Vs. 15. "Another angel . . . out of the temple." This angel is probably stationed in the area of the earthly temple (see vs. 17 in contrast) to view the abominations of Antichrist, and when the time is ripe he calls for speedy vengeance. The harvest of earth is ripe, the cup of iniquity full.

Vs. 16. "The earth was reaped." The events of ch. 16 seem to represent the actual details of this reaping.

THE VINTAGE.

Vs. 17. "Another angel" - either some preeminent angelic agent of judgment (this is one of the ministries of angels) or as Dr. Seiss says, "Christ again manifest under another figure, for He is the treader of the winepress (Isa. 63).

Vs. 18. "Another angel came out from the altar." The activity of this angel may be in answer to the cry for vengeance of the souls symbolically pictured there in 6:8-10. He has authority over fire -- "our God is a consuming fire." "Vine of the earth" - Antichrist and his minions are symbolized here in contrast with the vine of heaven, Christ and the branches (John 15).

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Vs. 19. "Winepress." The actual location of the events on earth fulfilling the symbolic judgment of the winepress is the Valley of Jehoshaphat (the plains of Esdraelon) north and west of Jerusalem. The battle of Armageddon will fulfill this scripture. cf. Isa. 34:6-8; 63:1-6; Rev. 16:13-16; 19:13-21; Joel 3:9-16; Zech. 14th ch.; Rev. 3:3-16.

Vs. 20. "Winepress was trodden" - as ripe grapes under the feet of the treader, according to the Oriental custom of treading out the juice of the grapes gathered in the press. The nations of the earth under the leadership of the Beast are seduced to rally to this battlefield of doom.

"Without the city (Jerusalem) -- some manifestation of the Son of Man may have already been seen in the city or over it (Matt. 24:30), calling forth the utmost endeavor of Antichrist to destroy Him and his heavenly armies.

The slaughter of this tremendous host cannot be estimated, as described here, by human concepts. The battlefield is 1600 furlongs (about 160 miles) long and "blood" flows up to the horses' bits. 20,000,000 fell in the World War but this will be the final battle of the ages. "When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, so great was the bloodshed that, Josephus says, the whole city ran with blood to such a degree that the fire in many of the houses were quenched by it. When Sylla took Athens, Plutarch says that the blood that was shed in the market places alone covered all the ceramicus as far as Dipylus, and some testify that it ran through the gates and overflowed the suburbs."

CHAPTERS FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN

The seven last plagues. 15:1, 5-8; 16:1-21.

Here we have the elucidation of the symbolic vision of the Harvest and the Vintage, the beginning of the series of climaxes introduced by the blowing of the seventh trumpet (11:15-18).

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Before the series of final judgments breaks John sees a heavenly scene - the ranks of the redeemed made up of the overcomers who refuse the mark of the beast. This company seems to be the last group of "first resurrection" saints before the return of Christ in revelation from heaven to usher in the millenium.

Vs. 2. "Sea of glass" - "waters no longer needed for cleansing, become crystal, stable, typifying a confirmed condition of purity (4:6) - Ottman. The sea is ordinarily a type of unrest (cf. Isa. 57:20), but here is perfect tranquility. "Mingled with fire" - symbolical of the refining fire of tests which they had undergone. I Peter 1:7; 4:12. "Having harps of God" - Music is of heavenly origin. It is a time of rejoicing, melody and praise.

Vs. 3. "Song of Moses and the Lamb." Cf. Exodus 15:1-11. The song of Moses celebrated the deliverance of Israel at the passage of the Red Sea from the clutches of the relentless Pharaoh. The plagues

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about to be inflicted (ch. 16) suggest the plagues of Egypt that brought about Israel's freedom. That was a type of the full redemption set forth in Revelation, when the earth will be cleared of all oppressors. Israel's redemption from Egypt is a typical story of our own (I Cor. 5:7) -- the song of the Lamb.

Vss. 3 and 4. The ascription of praise. cf. Psa. 86:9; Isa.66:18.

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Vs. 1. John sees the seven angel administrators of the final judgments of the Almighty about to enter upon their activities, which will bring to an end the present order of things under the sway of Satan and prepared for the golden age of Christ's reign.

Vss.5,6. Entrance of the seven angels upon their ministrations. They emerge from the Holy of Holies in heaven, the very dwelling place of God Himself. They are ambassadors extraordinary of the throne of God "clothed in pure and white linen," representing the spotless purity of the Almighty. To the pure and holy alone belongs the prerogative of co-operating with God in judgment. "Golden girdles" - "The golden girdles may speak of God's heart affection held in place by the divine righteousness. The vials of wrath are necessary. Divine holiness requires that they shall be poured out. The end in view is full and final deliverance. Thus the heart of God is bound while His strange work of judgment goes on."- Ottman.

Vss: 7,8. Living creatures manifest in connection with divine judgment, cf. chapter 6. "Vials" - bowls or censers as in ch. 8. "Smoke-filled temple" - cf. Ex. 19:18; 40:34,35; I Kings 8:10,11.

THE VIALS.

The voice of the Almighty speaking with highest authority ("great voice") speeds the angels on their mission. Psa. 18:6; 46:6.

The language descriptive of the plagues is strikingly plain and literal. Symbolic language is not employed; the sense is apparent. Romish errors, French infidelity, etc., do not fit here. These judgment plagues are as literal as the plagues visited upon Egypt.

The First Vial. vs. 2. "Upon the earth." A terrible sore breaks out upon Antichrist's worshippers. The same word is used here as to describe Lazarus' sores (Luke 16:20). Cf. Ex. 9:8-12; Deut. 28:15,27,35.

The Second Vial. Vs. 3. "Upon the sea." Waters of the sea are turned to blood and every living creature in the sea perished.

The Third Vial. Vss. 4-7. "Upon the rivers and fountains of waters." Every river, brook, rivulet, and spring is changed into blood. Cf. Ex. 7:17-21; Psa. 105:29; Rev. 8:10,11. God's justice in dealing with those who have shed the blood of God's saints is vindicated and approved by the ministering angel. It is further ratified by another out from the altar. Cf. 6:9.

The Fourth Vial. Vss. 8, 9. "Upon the sun." That great

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perveyor of God's warmth and blessing is turned into an awful instrument of chastisement. Cf. 8:12. The heat of the sun is increased and men are burned. Cf. Deut. 32:24. Only blasphemy results; there is no sign of repentance.

The Fifth Vial. Vss. 10,11. Affects the very center ("seat" - Greek, thronos) of the kingdom of the Beast (Antichrist). Darkness follows. Cf. Isa. 60:2; Joel 2:1; 2:31; Mark 13:24,25; Ex. 10:21-23. These awful agonies bring forth only more blasphemies. Proof is seen in the expression, "pains and sores," that one generation is affected by all these plagues, and much historical interpretation is refuted.

The Sixth Vial. Vss. 12-16. "Upon the river Euphrates." We believe that this is to be taken as literally as the language of the foregoing plagues. The assumption that "the kings of the east" are the so-called ten lost tribes is untenable as well as that the Euphrates here refers to the Turkish Empire.

The Euphrates is an important river in Scripture. First mentioned in Gen. 2:14. The northern boundary of the Promised Land. Gen. 15:18; Josh. 17:4. A literal drying up is meant. Isa. 11:5 prophesies a literal drying up in connection with the regathering of Israel, as from Egypt. See also Zech. 10:8-11. Cf. Red Sea and Jordan for specific examples.

The Euphrates has always been a formidable barrier between the peoples east and west of it. It is 1800 miles long, from 300 to 1200 yards wide, and from ten to thirty feet in depth. God providentially dries up this river to facilitate the passage of the river by the nations and to lead them finally into His snare, when they fight against His chosen people at Jerusalem.

"The kings of the east" - literally "those from the rising of the sun," are in all probability the rulers of China, Japan (the sunrise kingdom) and India. These great populations are gradually awakening from their slumbers and will be heard from in the events of the last days.

The reason for their coming. Vss. 13,14. Demon spirits, flourishing in the moral corruption of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, incite kings and nations to the last great rebellion against God Almighty (Psa. 2; Zech. 14) but to their own destruction. Cf. I Kings 22:19-23; I Tim, 4:1-2.

Armageddon. Vs. 16. The name is supposed to be taken from the name of the hill Megiddo. Armageddon or Harmageddon means "Mount of the gathering together in troops" or "those mown down." It is the great battlefield of the O. T. theocracy. See Judges 5:19; II Chron. 35:22-24. For the final result of this conflict see Rev. 19:11-21.

Verse 15 constitutes a gracious admonition to those who yet remain, who have not been swallowed up by the abominations of Antichrist. Possibly the same company seen in heaven entered upon their reward in 15:2,3. Perhaps the last "band" raptured.

The Seventh Vial. Vss. 17-21. "Into the air," referring probably to the atmosphere surrounding the earth, and producing great

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convulsions in the order of nature. The effects of the seventh vial constitute the final cleansing - renovation - of the world of everything that defiles. See Psa. 102:25,26; Isa. 51:6; Matt. 24:29; Heb. 12:26-28; Isa. 2:19,20.

The outstanding effect is a great earthquake (seismos) unprecedented in its intensity to that hour and which strikes Jerusalem, "the great city," (cf. Rev. 11:2,8) dividing it into three parts and overthrowing the great centers of earth's population, such as New York, London, Paris, Berlin, etc. The destruction and loss of life thus caused are almost unimaginable. Babylon, both mystical and literal and more fully described in chs. 17 and 18, is overthrown.

An earthquake under the sixth seal (6:12-14) displaced every mountain and island. This one is so severe that it changes the configuration of the whole earth, (vs. 20) and brings about a readjustment of the typography world-wide. A suggestion of the changes during the millennium is found in Zech. 14:4-8 which gives Jerusalem access to the Mediterranean Sea by water, raises its elevation (Isa. 2:2-4), and makes a channel for the eastern branch of the river from the sanctuary to the Dead Sea.

A great hail, vs. 21. The weight of the Jewish talent of silver was about 115 lbs., the Egyptian talent was 86 lbs., and the Attic talent was 56 lbs. Taking the last mentioned as the unity of measurement we cannot imagine the resultant destruction of property and loss of life.

Men are absolutely incorrigible, hardened, immovable, blasphemous.

Chapter Seventeen

Chapters seventeen and eighteen are further intercalary or set in chapters, which give a closer detailed view of some truths which the Holy Spirit desires to emphasize. The seventeenth is a chapter most significant to Christians at this present time. (1929). We will not attempt a verse-by-verse analysis but consider the chapter in its entirety as a theme. Babylon presents one of the deep mysteries of prophecy. It refers to a city and a system which had its origin in the "land of Shinar." Chapter seventeen describes the system and chapter eighteen the literal city of the last days.

Babylon's real character and judgment were preannounced (14:8); the judgment fulfilled (16:19); and the full, detailed record of the above is given in chs. 17 and 18. In Babylon, founded by Nimrod, the "great hunter" - rebel (according to the targum of Jonathan) "before the Lord." originated in the first organized rebellion against God. Gen. 10:9,10; 11:1-9. The purpose in building the tower was to make for themselves "a name" - a Shem Sem (Heb.), as Dr. Seiss unfolds "a token, sign, banner, or maker of confederation, fellowship, and organized unity.....that Sem or Sema was to be a mark of consolidated greatness; a loftiness and pride to them, that is, in the language of the time, a Sema-Rama. Thus we have the name of the mythic Semiramis, the dove-goddess . . . Semiramis is said to have been the wife of Nimrod.

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This was the beginning of goddesses, as represented later by Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, and, startling as it may seem, of the Virgin Mary. We are inclined to believe that the symbolism of ch. 17 is primarily of Papal Rome and her daughters, collectively making up the apostate church of the last days. Mystery Babylon is the result of the apostasy of Thyatira (3:18-29), the final manifestation of that which professes to be the bride of Christ, but becomes a harlot and joins with the world.

A woman in Scripture is a symbol of an ecclesiastical system. Paul writes to the Corinthians of their espousal as "a chaste virgin" to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). What Paul writes to Corinth is applicable to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ." 1 Cor 1:2: A woman, then, is a symbol of the church universal. In Rev. 21:9, 10 the church is also symbolized by a city. The bride, the Lamb's wife, must have been the "chaste virgin," the church. The chaste virgin, so espoused and presented, becomes a bride, a wife, therefore the holy city, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is a symbol of the church.

"As the woman is the symbol of the church, and the church is symbolized by a city, then the woman is also a symbol of the city. The woman is a symbol of the city, and the city is a symbol of the woman, and both the woman and the city, symbols of the church; and thus, whether it be a woman or a city, the one identifies the other."
--Haldeman.

It is true, furthermore, that while the woman is exclusively a symbol and not a real woman, the city is both a symbol and an actual city, consisting of the people and the place where they dwell. The church as an organized body, a polity, consists of people and consequently must have a place in which to dwell or be centralized. Just as Springfield signifies the people and the city where they dwell, so the New Jerusalem signifies the church as a polity, a system, and the real and actual city where they dwell.

What is true of the woman, the Lamb's wife, is true of the mystery woman who is called a city (vs. 18). "The woman is exclusively a symbol; she is not a real woman; the city is both symbolic and actual. By the preceding evidence of symbolism this scarlet-clad woman and the city, where of necessity she must be centralized, where she must dwell, and from which she must be manifested in her power, both represent a church. But this woman and this city stand in terrific contrast to the woman and the city which set forth the church of Christ. They contrast and contradict each other."--Haldeman.

Note the contrasts:

The True Church

A chaste virgin.
Espoused to one husband.
The mystery of godliness.
The pillar and ground of the truth
Offers the cup of salvation, stands
for holiness.
The mother of saints.

The False Church

A harlot.
Holds promiscuous commerce with the
kings of the earth.
Mystery Babylon.
Babylon-"confusion" recalling an
unfinished tower.
Offers a golden cup full of abomi-
nations and filthiness.
Mother of harlots.

PROPHECY III.

Test No. 1

1. A. Who gave us the Book of Revelation?
B. Who wrote the Book of Revelation?
2. What is meant by "The seven Spirits which are before the throne?"
Give one reference for a comparative scripture from the O. T.
3. A. How many of the New Testament books record the second coming of Christ?
B. How much of the whole Bible is given to prophecy?
C. How much of prophecy relates to the second coming of Christ?
4. A. Who is the Alpha and Omega of Revelation?
B. Give a scripture reference to prove your answer.
5. What is the scope of the book of Revelation. Give a reference to prove your answer.
6. A. Should we study Revelation as though it had only one fulfillment or does it have a type and anti-type in its fulfillment?
B. What is meant by concentric circles in relation to the fulfillment prophecy?
C. What is meant by precursory fulfillments?
7. Give the fourfold application of the letters to the seven churches.
8. A. What two churches receive commendation?
B. What were the other five churches told to do?
9. What was the general state of the church at Ephesus?
10. What was God's charge against the Ephesian church?