THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY

An exposition

Supplemented with diagrams and charts

By John Doble

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INTRODUCTION

The title, "REVELATION," is derived from the Latin verb "revelo" but in the Greek we would read "Apokalypto" from which the alternative title "APOCALYPSE" may be adopted. Both have the common meaning: "the unveiling of something hidden." Both titles will be used alternatively throughout this work, the second mostly in adjective form.

The "ALL AUTHORITY" of Jesus Christ

The foundation author of the Revelation is the exalted Jesus Christ. This in large measure accounts for its uniqueness among the books of the Bible. The idea of parable, so characteristic of his gospel teaching, is seen in the copious use of symbol ingeniously woven into the whole fabric of the prophecy.

The Revelation is part of the grand plan of God, handed over to His Christ for execution and presentation to His servants. The angel was present with John to show him the visions, but seldom spoke and remained unobtrusive throughout the proceedings. Mainly John's task was to write down what he saw and heard. The Lord himself is the chief speaker, especially at the beginning and end of the book. Each of his letters to the churches of Asia is prefaced by some facet of his symbolic majesty as first seen by John. His are "the words of" the star-holder walking among the lampstands, who has the sharp sword of the Son of God, with eyes like fire and with feet of bronze. They are "the words of" him who has the seven spirits of God, the holy one, the true one, who has the keys of David to open and shut irrevocably. Finally they are "the words of" the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

The omnipotent power of God, vested in the Son of His love, is the vibrating theme of the Revelation. The book is called, not "The Revelation of God to Jesus Christ" but "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him." It is as much a revelation about Jesus Christ as to him. The full title of the book carries the significance that all Jesus says about himself and what he will do to reward and glorify his saints, is part of the "all authority" given him of God.

While a suffering servant, Jesus claimed Sonship of God and prospective authority to judge the deeds and attitudes of men and nations. He claimed divine authority not only to forgive sins, but to raise men from the dead and to make them live for eternity. He wrought miracles of healing on sinners to prove his power to forgive them and raised people from the dead as a token of his authority to immortalize them. The Revelation confirms the placing of unlimited power in the hands of one man, which is awesome to contemplate. But "*When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on men like the morning light, like the sun shining forth upon a cloudless morning, like the rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth" (2 Sam. 23:3,4).*

A Wholly Inspired Bible

We may only approach the task of unravelling the Revelation by recognizing the divine inspiration of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, *"No prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God"* (2 Peter 1:21). Since Peter could speak only of the Old Testament, how much more should we revere a book which opens with the sublime words: "***The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him…".*** Accepting this vital foundation our purpose should best be served by the use of approved modern translations of Scripture. Among these the "Revised" and the "Revised Standard" Versions (R.V. and R.S.V.) appear to be the most authentic. While no translation may be regarded as perfect, one should not have to grapple with hundreds of English words in the 360-year-old King James Version (A.V.), which have either lost or modified their meanings. Bible quotations throughout this work are from the Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

Guide Lines for Interpretation

Since there are so many illogical and fantastic interpretations of the Revelation extant, the following guide lines for sound exegesis have been adopted:

- The meanings of Hebrew and Greek words and names in the original tongues must be considered in the light of modern research and scholarship.
- Since an appeal to profane history must be made for the interpretation of Bible prophecy, reference should be made to authenticated histories and tradition avoided.
- There should be a strict observance of the immediate context in applying any verse of Scripture to a prophetical interpretation. Also its context in the broad stream of prophecy must be considered.
- The broad stream of Bible prophecy has a progressive fulfilment in all ages. It is marked by intermittent crises of divine fulfilment, but always moving toward the grand climax of "*the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.*
- The grand panorama of Divine purpose is comprehended firstly in the promises made by God to Abraham and to king David of Israel. Secondly, it is seen in the events portrayed in Daniel's interpretation of king Nebuchadnezzar's dream image and the stone which smote it (Dan. Chap. 2).
- Israel—the Jew as we know him today—is still God's chosen nation and people, due to His eternal purpose for future national vindication and individual redemption. Further, salvation is of the Jews and Jerusalem the divinely avowed venue for Messianic universal dominion.
- The Bible regards all religion which is not based on divine revelation as false. The New Testament also teaches that there is a false Christianity which wages warfare, both spiritual and carnal, on true Christianity throughout the Christian era.
- The prophecies of the Revelation refer basically to this warfare. The contest is between the exalted Christ in heaven with his downtrodden saints on earth and the Roman Antichrist. The saints, finally exalted on Mount Zion with the Lamb, sit in judgment to consume and destroy Antichrist and to take over the fourth world dominion of the Gentiles.
- The foundation of God's Revelation to Jesus was laid in His revelation to Daniel, the Hebrew prophet. The destruction of Jerusalem and Solomon's temple by Babylon in 587 B.C., introduced a new era into the divine time-table. Jesus called it "*the times of the Gentiles."* The fourth world dominion of Gentile supremacy, foretold by Daniel, materialized with the Roman Empire about five centuries later. It was revealed to Daniel that this power would become the persecutor and destroyer of "the saints of the Most High." This treading down was to extend over a long period, until the Son of man came in glory and the saints possessed the kingdom. The vision, sealed to Daniel was opened by the Lord to show to his saints in detail, what was hidden from Daniel.
- It is generally conceded, even by those who confess not to understand the Revelation, that it foretells events future to John's day. Anything else would be a contradiction to its title, which reads: *"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show to his servants what must soon take place." (Rev. 1:1)*

The Two Israels

Two distinct roads of prophecy emerge from the first-advent Jerusalem. Saints in Christ, who comprise "Spiritual Israel," have traversed a thorny and rock strewn road in the wilderness of Christian apostasy. National Israel, cast out of her heritage by Rome, has wondered the road of divine retribution in a wilderness of Gentile persecution. Both roads lead to the Land of Promise and the New Jerusalem. While saints wait for the appearing of Jesus Christ, there is being enacted a striking programme of events as foretold in the Old Testament. Israel's dry bones have come to national life as the two roads converge on Mount Zion. These present happenings are purposed to prepare Israel and integrate her into the Kingdom of God. These dramatic prophecies belong to the Old Testament.

The Revelation is confined to "Spiritual Israel" – the body corporate of Christ – inclusive of both Jew and Gentile. This is why the Revelator draws on the literal tabernacle worship of ancient Israel, as symbolic of Spiritual-Israel's worship in her probationary "wilderness." Likewise the literal temple worship, promised to National Israel in future glory, is carried forward in symbol from Ezekiel's prophecy to the Revelation. There it is used in figure to demonstrate the priestly role of redeemed saints in the spiritual NEW JERUSALEM. They will be priests with Christ after the order of Melchizedek. Israel's national and spiritual redemption by Messiah is abundantly foretold in the Old Testament, and her exultation over Gentile dominion which persecuted her is clearly defined. The material and spiritual blessings to Gentile peoples by reason of Israel's ascendency is part of her vindication under Messiah's reign.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silence ...until her vindication goes forth as brightness ...The nations shall see your vindication, and all kings your glory" (Isa. 62:1,2)

FOREWORD

The future literal coming of Jesus Christ to the vacant throne of David and a thousand years in Jerusalem, was a doctrine fundamental to early Christianity. This teaching persisted for three centuries, despite declension and schism within the church. When Emperor Constantine, in the early fourth century, elevated the Church to the Roman throne, it ceased to be enthused with such a hope. The prestige, power and authority which came to it by an emperor's patronage, were to be preferred to the ignominy and persecution attendant on a belief of a long deferred second advent. Today the second coming has little or no place in orthodox Christian teaching. To Christendom, the Revelation is prophetically a sealed book.

This conclusion is attested by the following quotation from the "New Bible Dictionary" (1962) – (The Inter-varsity Fellowship) p1093:

> "The last book of the Bible is, for most Christians, one of the least used and the most difficult. A few passages from it are well known and well loved, but for the most part modern readers find the book unintelligible. This is largely because the book abounds in symbolism of a type we do not use and to which we no longer possess the key."

To confine the book to ideological or moral teaching, is incompatible with the momentous acts of divine judgments which cram its pages. Even in these days of Bible-doubting Christendom, there are many sincere hearts who sense the utmost importance of the book beneath its symbolism. To them it is a matter of frustration and spiritual void, that some logical explanation of its apocalyptic mysteries is not forthcoming.

The existence of the Revelation as a book has been attested, both in the writings of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus in the 2nd century A.D. They both attribute its authorship to the Apostle John. Many names have since appeared over commentaries and expositions of the Revelation. The rise of Protestantism inspired another group of expositors from the 17th century onwards and a century has now passed since the last serious exposition appeared on apocalyptic prophecy, based on personal historical and biblical research.

The tremendous happenings of this past century demand a "new look" at former interpretations of the 6th bowl (or vial) of Rev.16:12. This author is satisfied that the 6th bowl fulfilment is still future and is associated with events contemporary with the presence of Christ in Jerusalem. The generally accepted view by previous writers, that the pouring of this bowl was accomplished in the drying up of the Turkish Empire, is by now too outdated to explain the dramatic events symbolized as following in its wake. In this year 1971 we occupy an interlude between the 5th and 6th bowls, during which the Lord's actual coming may be expected. The recognition of the 6th bowl as future, will clear the way to a much better understanding of the momentous programme of events now imminent.

The world today is experiencing a crescendo of troublous times that could hardly have been envisaged several decades ago, despite two devastating world wars. Rebellion, sedition, lawlessness, immorality, strife, violence and godlessness are setting the world aflame. Rulers are confounded as the social structure threatens to disintegrate. Today there is an awareness by many sincere people that our troubled world shows distinct signs of the Lord's coming. Mostly they are unable to relate these happenings to any divinely rational programme of fulfilment.

Our endeavour is to present truth to those who desire it and are prepared to meet its challenge. However the effluxion of time may deal with this interpretation, the grand truth of the Lord's appearing, judgment and Kingdom still stands sure. But conviction does not come with a bald statement of this kind. Evidence must be adduced and weighed and history appealed to. It is the impressions of reasoned proof that bring lasting conviction and faith. We trust that such proof will convey to the reader a clearly focused picture of the sublime eschatological consummation of the ages. If this work succeeds in arousing a new respect and interest for the Revelation of Jesus Christ, that alone would amply reward the writer's humble effort.

JOHN DOBLE, Sydney, 1972

Forward by June Errington 29th May 2016

Update from 1978 to 2016 by John Doble's immediate family.

"There shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation….at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book.

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt...But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.". . ."Go your way, Daniel…till the end; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days." (Daniel 12:1-5, 13)

Since the author's death in 1978, many have run to and fro, and knowledge has increased to such an extent, that computers, mobile phones, wrist watches and satellite can give instant locations anywhere in the world. There's something new, or something happening, every day!

As a result of the Six-Day War Israel gained considerable territory including control of the Suez Canal. Territory promised by Abraham was retained and the rest given back to the original owners. Their main purpose in that war was to gain control of the whole of Jerusalem, portion of which was denied them in the Arab war in 1948.

The writer in his book, was concerned with Communism. Overnight the Berlin Wall, built as a buffer to prevent Communist citizens from 'escaping' to the West was completely destroyed by 'people power'. This line of demarcation extended to half of Europe! With its destruction the USSR countries became autonomous caused by a 'softening' of the members of the Kremlin.

Locked behind this barrier was the largest Jewish population in the world. They had suffered throughout history with pogroms, persecutions, no fixed place to bury their roots, shifted from one area to another with just hours' notice, for no reason, except to enforce Russian control and to use the fertile brains of many scientists and academics amongst their number.

Anyone familiar with the story of "Fiddler on the Roof" based on the Russian stories of the Shalom Aleichem can understand their lack of any permanency and their longing for a home in "Jerusalem."

Their long awaited journey to Israel has swelled the population to 8.5 million but despite the overcrowding, no Jew is refused entry. Jews number 74.8%, Arabs 20.8% and others 4.4%.

Another sign which will affect the historic world stage was a meeting in February 2016 of the Pope and the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church. It received very little media coverage, not 'news worthy' to the outside world, but of significance to prophecy. It could herald the eastern leg and foot of Nebuchadnezzar's image being restored to the complete the image of the Holy Roman Empire in the latter days. The eastern section, split at the time of Emperor Constantine, when he established his throne in Constantinople, whilst the western segment controlled by the Papacy remained and ruled in Rome. The eastern section has been absorbed into history. With little media coverage, they exchanged signatures and were involved in congenial discussion. This connection could well contribute to the gathering of forces at Armageddon against the unnamed 'Antichrist' established in Israel causing 'chaos' to their church properties built over every Biblical incident in Israel.

Islamic fundamentalism is a further development affecting many Western nations. Terror has struck in divers places, aimed at the western 'infidels' in France, Brussels and in the New York '9/11'. This movement of evil intent, arose in Syria by murdering thousands of their fellow Muslims, It has spread to Iran and Iraq and many other Middle Eastern countries and into the west where native youth are being radicalized to join their cause aimed at Christians, Jews and anyone including their own, not following their Sharia law or Shiite system.

This is causing a massive move of displaced Muslims fleeing terrorism on flimsy boats across the Mediterranean, walking through unsympathetic countries, heading north towards those that will provide generous welfare and a comfortable future for them. Massive numbers are crippling finances and the patience of the citizens creating unrest and resentment in local communities. There is no hope of screening these people to establish whether they are genuine refugees, those seeking a better life or hidden in their ranks, those having no intent of integration, rather than undermining their hosts with planned terrorism.

Arab Israeli citizens since the establishment of Israel have never let up attacking Israeli communities. Their preferred weapons have been thousands of rockets, causing the Israeli citizens close to the Arab borders to almost live underground in shelters. The Israelis have been successful in intercepting many of these rockets over time. Their continued hatred and resentment of the Jewish people has not abated in the 68 years of occupation. The Arab citizens of Israel, 20.8% of the population, have enjoyed the privilege and security of a democratic western nation. They have had work and plenty of fresh food, have raised their families, (with a much higher birthrate than the Israelis), availing themselves of the benefits of a democratic western country. Yet still, the resentment and multi forms of terrorism constantly keep the Jewish people on alert as to when or where an attack will come.

The Arab populations, including from surrounding nations, are descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael and judging by many prophecies from Scripture, they will eventually be blessed.. The writer has suggested this may be solved by the Arabs themselves, realizing their Abrahamic roots and turn their backs on Islam. An interesting development!

The awakening of the Jews to Christ's identity will be traumatic, so will be the Arab realization when it occurs. To the outside world His identity will be hidden by clouds that accompany him. Clouds in Scriptural language often mean being 'hidden,' as the Children of Israel were hid from the Egyptian army chasing them towards the Red Sea, so His identity at His immediate return will be hidden from the world at large. Only His people, the 'saints' and his 'brethren' and the accompanying angels, will know his identity. To the world, he will be an unknown "upstart" in Israel, supporting the Jewish, after destroying their invading enemies, who were determined to solve the Jewish question once and for all. No wonder the hierarchy see Him as a threat to their coveted system recognizing him as their expected "Antichrist."

Judging by the world's lack of any form of discussion concerning religion, nor any adherence to its teaching, they are unaware of any information the Bible could give them. The Identity of Christ and His presence will not affect the world at large, life will still go on. Christ's instructions to His Immortal Saints will be to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Many will take heed but many will ignore the warning given to Daniel that there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation. We hope and pray all will make that choice NOW!

Instructions to the Saints - WATCH! Followers of the Lord are referred to in the Revelation as Immortal Saints or the 144,000! To be accepted as "Saints of Christ," there is a need to watch for the first signs that will come from ISRAEL. *"When these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."* (Luke 21:28)

Instruction to Daniel: *"Go your way, Daniel…till the end; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days."* (Daniel 12:13)

Instruction to John by the Lord Jesus Christ "I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star… Surely I am coming soon. Amen. Come Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:17, 20)

I: PROPHETICAL OUTLINES AND KINGDOM VISIONS

CHAPTER 1 - SYMBOLIC STRUCTURE OF THE REVELATION

Christ to the Seven Churches

What John first saw was a vision of the glorified Christ. His description of the Lord's majestic person is basically symbolic and figurative. He is seen walking among lampstands, which stood for the seven contemporary churches of Asia Minor.

"The seven stars which you saw in my right hand . . . are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches" (Rev.1:20). "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches" (Rev.1:11).

Each of the Lord's seven letters is addressed to *"the angel of the church."* Does this mean that the angels stand for the elders of the churches?

The English word 'church' is derived from the Greek *Kyriakos* meaning a Christian place of worship. The word *church* in the New Testament is translated from the Greek word *ekklesia,* referring specifically to a meeting or assembly; not to a building. The Greeks applied it to an assembly of citizens duly appointed, which meaning was narrowed by the N.T. writers to an elect assembly of God, called saints. The word *ecclesia* will therefore be mostly used (except when quoting Scripture) in preference to *church,* to denote the assembly of the saints. When referring to that Christendom, which is found in history and the Revelation as opposed to the "ecclesia" of saints in Christ, the word "church" will be retained.

It may be assumed that the seven contemporary ecclesias of Asia Minor symbolized, in their totality, the Christian Church in subsequent generations. The Lord's walking among his ecclesias has never ceased. His closing messages to them show that each has yielded its quota of saints, whose names will be found in the LAMB'S book of life. There is clearly prefigured in the sixth and seventh churches, Philadelphia (brotherly love) and Laodicea, the ultimate dichotomy in the Christian Church of post-Constantinian history. To the fugitive "Philadelphia" Ecclesia, sustained by God as a woman in the wilderness of the Roman Empire, there would come the Lord's comforting message:

"Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown" (Rev.3:11). To Laodicea he wrote, "Because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" (3:16). This proved to be the actual fate of the apostate church which Constantine set up on the throne of Rome.

The judgments poured out on the Roman Empire were evoked by the prayers of persecuted saints (Rev.11:5, 8:3-5). Some association evidently exists between the seven angels who blew the trumpets and poured the bowls (vials AV), and the angels of the seven churches. *"And before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God" (Rev.4:5).* These seven spirits of God are later seen on the Lamb as seven eyes. Since grace and peace proceed from these seven spirits (1:4), they can be identified as the power of the Holy Spirit, sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation. The number seven in all cases signifies divine completeness and finality.

Introducing John's Vision (Rev. Chapter 4)

A door was opened *in heaven* through which John was invited to *Come up hither.* John was not looking at Jesus sitting at the right hand of God in heaven, nor at God on His heavenly throne. What he saw belonged to the future. John had been introduced into the millennial heaven—the "new heaven" that Peter looked for, when the "heavens" of Gentile dominion will have passed away with a loud noise (2 Peter 3: 10-12). The immortal Christ is seen there in future glory seated on his throne in Jerusalem. This is the throne of David,

which has now been vacant for more than twenty-five centuries. The evidence that it is Christ whom John sees, will be presented later.

Christ's Present Work on Earth

Jesus said to his disciples: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me"* (Matt. 28:18). This claim of the risen Christ is fully substantiated by the amazing visions which John was invited to see. The exalted Lord has not been idle for over nineteen centuries, while seated at the right hand of God. The Apocalypse indicates the tremendous scope of the work he has been engaged in concerning this earth. *"And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also"* (John 14:3). This work of preparation is essentially earth-wise. In this background vision to all that was to follow, John saw Jesus having "come again" that "where I am," John and all the redeemed would "be also". But of course Jesus was there on his throne in vision only and John was present in the spirit.

From the right hand of his Father in heaven, the Son of God was about to initiate a programme of successive judgments on the godless and ruthless Roman Empire. Its emperor had accomplished the Lord's own crucifixion and was now persecuting his beloved saints. John was projected into the Kingdom age, to show all generations of persecuted saints the "great power and glory" of their King. This mode of divine presentation must have made a tremendous impact on the mind of true believers in all ages since. Tormented and driven underground they saw their king in vision enthroned in Jerusalem, albeit in prospect. From there it would seem to them, he was judging, subduing, interposing and checkmating the powers-that-be, while succouring and encouraging his beleaguered household. When persecution became intolerable, fiery judgments were poured on the heads of the adversary; foreign powers invaded, Roman emperors, kings and popes were removed. The "earth" also helped the "woman" by force of arms or edicts of tolerance.

A Consolation for Saints (Rev. Chapter 5)

The LAMB is introduced into the vision as the *worthy one,* to open a scroll of judgments on Rome. The close ties of affection and loyalty of saints would be toward the "Son of man," revealed to them in the Gospels. In the apocalyptic visions they would see the LAMB of God, in whose past sufferings they had a fellowship which sustained them in their own. He was there in glory as they too hoped to be. They beheld him in prospect praised by men and angels, the living and powerful avenger of his household.

The dispensation of holy spirit power and inspired apostles had gone, Jerusalem was desolated, and defenceless Christianity was confronted by the might of pagan Rome. The Revelation came to John at the time Jesus knew his saints would sorely need it. Had not Jesus said to Peter concerning John, *"If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" (*John 21:22). The Lord, in due course, came to John the aged apostle to show him his existent and future glory; also the ultimate triumph of the Christian white horse rider who went out to conquer (Rev. 6:2).

Persecution and execution terrorized the Christian world under pagan emperors, Diocletian and Galerius. Those who *read aloud the words of the prophecy* and *those who hear* (1:3), would avidly read the fifth and sixth chapters. Under the sixth seal they would read of the swift judgments that would break the power of their persecutors. There were sufficient Bibles to read, despite Diocletian's decree that they be yielded up and burned in public. Historian Gibbon remarks:

"The copies as well as the versions of Scriptures were so multiplied, in the empire, that the most severe inquisition could no longer be attended with any fatal consequences (to the Bible)."

The saints would read of their pagan persecutors crying out: "*hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne* (Constantine) *and from the wrath of the Lamb"* (Rev. 6:16) According to Gibbon, superstitious

pagans suffering from Constantine's invincible sword, uttered words much akin to those quoted here. With the cross his emblem, Constantine's amazing victories convinced the pagans that his "god" was wrathful with them.

Repeated Visions of Kingdom Glory

To enable the reader to obtain a clearer comprehension of the layout of the Revelation, a chart, entitled THE REVELATION AT A GLANCE, has been included (Fig. 4). The chart indicates three prominent visions of the Lord, enthroned in future glory. These visions would become reality at a time future to their setting in the apocalyptic programme of events and indeed still await fulfilment.

The first such vision of chapter 4 reveals the brilliantly symbolized 'SON OF MAN' (Rev.1:12-16) seated on a throne. He is surrounded by twenty-four elders on thrones and four living creatures, representing the camp of the saints in pre-millennial judgments. The significance of all this must be treated under separate headings. The fire, lightning and thunder seen issuing from the throne show it set for judgment. The seven torches of fire and seven spirits of God portray the priestly function of the existent Christ.

The vision of chapter 4 is extended into chapter 5; but in addition a LAMB and a SCROLL, hitherto concealed, became evident to John. From profane history it is know that the symbolic visions, seen and heard by John at the opening of each seal, were divine judgments (some imminent) that were to pave the way for the final overthrow of pagan Rome. The one on the throne held the scroll, but a strong angel well knowing who was worthy to unloose it, posed the question, *Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?* There is a touch of drama here, as there is abundantly throughout the whole book. Then an elder, who symbolized redeemed saints, supplied the answer: *"The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals"* (Rev. 5:2-5).

Then John "*saw a* LAMB *standing as though it had been slain, with seven horns and seven eyes"* (5:6). The Lamb, who stands among the elders close to the throne, took the scroll from him who sat on it. Some have found genuine difficulty in understanding how Christ, symbolized as a Lamb, could take a scroll from the hand of Christ seated on his millennial throne. The anomaly is apparent, not real, as will be seen later.

Of the three visions of Kingdom glory (see chart), the most important is that displayed in chapters 4 and 5. It concludes by showing the realization of the vision on the eve of Christ's millennial reign, with every creature in "heaven and earth" extolling him. The existent Lamb in person opens the seven seals of judgment. A special feature of the seventh seal was the seven "trumpets" of judgment revealed at its opening. It was later divulged that the seventh trumpet contained seven "bowls" of wrath; only to be released when that trumpet sounded.

A glance at the chart will show that the second vision of Kingdom glory (Rev. 7:11-17) precedes the opening of the 7th seal. Then immediately the 7th seal is broken, the reader is presented with the final judgment of the 7th bowl (Rev. 8:5). We are thus carried in time, yet future, to those events which place the Lord on his Jerusalem throne. The chart shows the first of three great "earthquakes" of the Apocalypse, resulting from the Lamb opening the 6th seal. This seal was the conquest of Constantine over pagan Rome and the elevation of false Christianity to the throne.

The chart indicates the third vision of Kingdom glory (Rev. 11:15-18), immediately after the blowing of the 7th trumpet. This is because this last trumpet heralded the pouring of the bowls; the last of which would take the Lord into his millennial Kingdom in triumph. Just as the opening of the 7th seal brought the reader to the judgments of the 7th bowl and its final earthquake (8:5), so the 7th trumpet sounding, again transports the reader of the Revelation forward to the same 7th bowl judgments (11:19). These references are not to "earthquakes" additional to the three corresponding to the 6th seal, 6th trumpet and the final 7th bowl, as some

have surmised. They refer to the tremendous final one of Rev. 16:17,18. Just as the 6th seal introduced the great Constantinian "earthquake," so the 6th trumpet announces the second great earthquake. This is easily recognized in history as the French Revolution (Rev.11:13,14).

Three Epochs of Roman History

The considerable complexity of the apocalyptic prophecy is only matched by the involved history of the Roman Empire, which it so remarkably foretells. But this statement falls far short of the divine purpose disclosed in the Revelation. It was not a matter of God foreseeing how the Roman Empire would conduct its affairs; but rather a programme of events mapped out by Almighty God, which the Roman Empire with its emperors, subject tribes, its generals and finally its bishops, could not evade fulfilling. This proved, as it did to ancient Babylon's Nebuchadnezzar, *"that the most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will"* (Dan. 4:17).

Here is an ordered schedule, prophesied in three successive sequences, under symbolic seals, trumpets and bowls. Stretching over nineteen centuries or more, each phase has its climatic culmination and the first and second lay dramatic stress on the third culmination still future.

The following three observations considered together, constitute the magnificent challenge of the book of the Revelation to a doubting world:

1. The existence of the book is historically testified back to the second century AD.
2. The book contains the ordered prophetical schedule of events as outlined above and hereafter expounded.
3. There is found in the profane history of the Christian era, in all those regions where Christianity grew, spread and made its great national impact on world history, a set of outstanding events, matching with incredible clarity the prophetical visions of the Revelation. This applies so far to all the "seals" and "trumpets" and to the first five "bowls."

Events were to take a distinctive pattern according to the divine time-table placed in the hands of the LORD'S Christ. Three epochs of Roman history were to emerge:

1. The six internal "seal" judgments which broke the power of pagan Rome due to the spread of Christianity.
2. The six "trumpet" invasions of Rome from without, which divided and spread the Roman "Empire" into independent nations, who gave their spiritual loyalties to a central ecclesiastical head rather than to an emperor. These "trumpet" fulfilments ensured great power and authority to the papacy; except for the sixth which brought the French Revolution.
3. The pouring out of the first five bowls, following the French Revolution, denuded the papacy of temporal power and authority. It converted the papal "beast" into a "woman" of fallen fortune. The 6th and 7th bowls are yet reserved for pouring, after the return of Messiah from heaven to earth. These will elevate the Roman beast from the "abyss" of 1870 to great power in Europe, and the WOMAN to short-lived fame and fortune upon the back of the BEAST. Confrontation between this dual combination and the returned Lord, with his saints in Jerusalem, ends with the whole Roman system – Beast, Woman and False Prophet – in total extinction.

The time span of the first six trumpets was approximately fourteen centuries, ending with the French Revolution. The splitting up of the Roman Empire saw the development, growth, zenith and wane of papal power. The "man of sin" and destiny exploited the "trumpet" invasions and triumphed in the process; until the great earthquake of the 6th trumpet. The French Revolution shook the papal kingdom to its foundations.

The Great Seventh Trumpet

Immense importance is attached by the Revelator to events heralded by the 7th trumpet. "In the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled" (Rev. 10:7). "Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15). The trumpet is a call to war and the 7th trumpet is an announcement of God's special war of avengement against the great papal system, in which is found the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. The 7th trumpet will not stop sounding until the seven plagues of divine wrath have been poured out to the utter destruction of ecclesiastical Rome.

So important was the 7th trumpet and the bowls of wrath it contained, that a mighty Christ-angel descended from heaven, introducing its programme to John on a little open scroll (Rev. 10:2-8). It was "open" because its wars of judgment would start immediately. It was "little" because of its comparatively short time span of operation. Reference to the chart (Fig. 4) shows the pouring of the first five bowls completed over a period of 80 years. It would appear that the seven thunders (10:3-4) will have intervened between the fulfilled 5th and the unfulfilled 6th bowls, as indicated on the chart. The yet future 6th and 7th bowls will be expounded at length and the chart shows a summary of the stupendous judgments contained in them and the untold blessings which follow in their wake.

A special feature of the 7th trumpet programme is its overlapping with the presence of Christ on earth. It will be shown that the LAMB will be setting up his kingdom in Jerusalem, during the pouring out of the 6th and 7th bowls.

Symbolic Presentations of Jesus

The LAMB throughout the Revelation is the active agent, since he is the existent one at the right hand of God. Seen by John as "*one seated on a throne"* (chaps. 4 and 5), the Lord is there in static symbol of his future glory. It is against this background that the existent LAMB opens the seals of God's purposeful judgments on the Roman Empire. After the Lamb opened the seals he is not seen in action as such, until he stands on Mount Zion with his saints (14:1). This assumes that the mention of the Lamb in the 7th chapter applies to events following his standing on Mount Zion. During this apparently long interval of inactivity, the active Christ is seen by John as an angel of special appearance and attributes, as befitting his specific mission. He makes his symbolic appearance on the following occasions:

Rev. 8:3-5 The Lord is seen in symbolic form, officiating as High Priest over his distressed household. Papal sponsored persecution was rife during most of the period covered by the trumpets. The accumulated prayers of the saints were figuratively stored in heaven and came back from God as *fire in a censer.* Their High Priest (the angel), took the coals of their affliction from off their altar of sacrifice, casting them into the earth as fire of judgment. This promotes the earth-shaking events leading to the consummation of the 7th bowl which is stored up in the 7th seal. The voice of the same Christ-angel is heard from the throne of the golden altar before God (9:13).

Rev. 10:1, 20:1 The mighty "rainbow" angel of Rev. 10:1 and the dragon-binding angel of 20:1 seem to refer, in both cases, to the Lord's bodily descent from God's heaven to earth at his second coming. The divergence of appearance to John in the two visions and the actions involved, display the divine divergence of motive in either case.

Rev,14:18 The Lord is revealed after his return to earth, as an angel having power over fire, coming out from the altar. The fire of judgment is identified with that of Rev. 8:5 referred to above. The events prompted by the fire are identical in both references. They refer to the 7th bowl judgments.

Rev,14:16 Jesus is shown seated on a white cloud *like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.* The first reaping of the millennial saint-harvest is seen to be made, prior to the treading of the winepress of God's wrath under the 7th bowl.

Rev. 19:11 This showing of the Lord is a momentous occasion. The "Jerusalem heaven" is opened to initiate the pouring out of the 7th bowl. This means war (vv. 12-14). The LAMB becomes the arm of the Lord's vengeance against the papal sponsored beast and his armies. The Lord is seen as a man of war astride the symbolic white charger of righteousness. *"Faithful and True"* and *"The Word of God"* are titles *by which he is called.* They were well known names among his saints. His new title is *"King of kings and Lord of lords"* and a sharp sword protrudes from his mouth. The Armageddon conflict is to be further considered.

Rev. 18:1. The Lord is seen again as an angel coming down from heaven. The time is near the end of the final and terrible 7th bowl. He is initiating and announcing the last *Great Earthquake,* the like of which had never been. It is to engulf Great Babylon. At the same time he is making himself known to the world as the returned Christ, no longer *wrapped in a cloud* but *bright in splendour.* It will be shown that this coming to the world will have taken nearly 40 years from the time of his descent from Heaven. His identity over this period is obscured to the world by the "political" cloud wrapping of Rev. 10:1. The Lord's words *"coming in the clouds of heaven"* as spoken in the Gospels, refer to that period of time occupied in setting up his Kingdom and subjugating his enemies. This does not conflict with the idea of his coming from heaven in literal clouds as suggested by the words of Acts 1:10, 11.

Temple Symbology for Spiritual Israel

The Jewish tabernacle and its furnishings are used by the Revelator as the symbols of Spiritual-Israel's "wilderness" worship. Israel's "Holy of holies" symbolized the spiritual "Holy of holies" in God's heaven, into which Christ, having entered, makes intercession for saints at the mercy seat (Heb. 9:24). From here the existent Christ is seen to succour his troubled saints, and from it the seven angels emerge to receive their bowls of God's wrath and add their plagues to them. Their charge is to pour them in sequence upon the papal aggressor (Rev. 15:5-7).

There appears to be an interim spiritual temple set up in Jerusalem during the interval of tempestuous judgment between the Lord's descent from heaven (Rev. 10:1) and the *New Jerusalem* scene (21:1-4). The LAMB and his "144,000" are there to reveal the *ark of the covenant* to whomsoever will, then to execute the fiery judgments of the 6th and 7th bowls (Rev. 15:5-8).

The future literal Jewish temple of Ezekiel's prophecy (chapters 40 to 48) with its environment, fittingly symbolises important aspects of the spiritual holy city, the NEW JERUSALEM. These temple symbols are in keeping with the general pattern set in the apostolic letters of the New Testament, where saints are said to be lively stones, growing into a holy temple and worshipping in a spiritual tabernacle.

CHAPTER 2 - THE PROPHETICAL PROGRAMME OF THE REVELATION as contained in the Seals, Trumpets and Bowls

A PRÈCIS

It is deemed desirable at this stage to present in advance, a précis of fulfilment of all apocalyptic prophecies. With a subject so profound, the importance is stressed of viewing the message of the Revelation in its broad perspective against the background of the Divine Plan of world redemption. Only then may we consider exposition in depth and weigh the adducible evidence.

In surveying the précis, the reader will be made aware that the march of history, linked with the Christian dispensation in Rome and Europe, amply justifies the "historicist" interpretation. This is defined as regarding the book as setting forth in one grand sweep, a panoramic view of history from the first century to the second coming of Christ. This appears as the only logical basis for a harmonious and meaningful interpretation of its prophecies.

Where could we find a more apt description of the papal development than in Daniel's "stout horn" sprouting from the head of a Roman beast or of Paul's "man of sin" blasphemously claiming to sit in "God's temple?" Theirs is a history extending over nearly seventeen centuries. The Son of God, crucified on a Roman cross, was divinely appointed as judge and ultimate destroyer of a system which, to this day, is so distinctively representative of the fourth world dominion. This is what the Revelation is all about and this is the theme which determines what kind of history we look to when considering the interpretation of its prophecies.

Fulfilled Prophecy

The Six Seals (Rev. Chapter 6)

The Lamb is seen to open the seals.

- **SEAL No.1** (98-178 A.D.). The rapid spread of Christianity within the Roman Empire. Rider with bow on a white horse (6:1,2).
- **SEALS Nos.2 to 4** (183-300 AD). Judgements on the Empire from within due to corruption of rulers. Red, black and pale horses (civil war, famine and violence).
- **SEAL No.5** (303-311 AD). Severe persecution of saints, immediately prior to Emperor Constantine's ascension, by pagan emperor Galerius.
- **SEAL No.6** (311-328 AD). The first apocalyptic "Earthquake" bringing civil wars in which Constantine championed the cause of Christianity, elevated it to the throne of Rome and became first "CHRISTIAN" Emperor.

Pagan Rome Defeated (Rev. Chapter 12) (311 to 363)

An extension of the 6th seal in which Constantine, as "Michael," vanquished the Pagan "dragon" and set up the Christian "Woman". Paganism, being cast out of the Roman "heaven," sought to stage a comeback. This it did in the reign of Julian (361 AD). Constantine founded Constantinople 330 AD, making it his capital.

The True Woman Separated (Rev. 7:1-8) (323 to 337)

God separated out from Christendom the true believers, sealing them in the foreheads. They were His "Spiritual-Israel"—the true Woman—whom God nourished in the "wilderness." This was the symbolic Philadelphian Ecclesia, before which the Lord had set an open door. This sealing will continue to the second advent reaching a symbolic "144,000". The apostate "Laodicean" Woman was left in the courts of Constantine.

The Seventh Seal (Rev. Chapter 8) (395-526)

The 7th Seal is unloosed to reveal the seven trumpets. Verses 1 to 5 depict the Lamb succouring the "Philadelphian" Woman—those saints in tribulation whose prayers were answered by the TRUMPET judgment on the Roman Empire. There were wars of tribal invasion on Rome. Verses 7-13 are about the blowing of the first four trumpets by the four angels of Rev. 7:1. Germanic and other tribes invade Rome and the GOTHIC king took over the city in 476 A.D. The Empire divided into Eastern and Western Rome in 395 A.D.

The Sea Beast (Rev. 13:1-4 (324-610).

The development of Constantine's "Christian" Empire is seen as a "beast" rising out of the Mediterranean Sea. The Bishop of Rome, as head of the false WOMAN, was to infuse himself into the Roman State as a blasphemous "MOUTH". The first four trumpet invasions occurred during this development and the "Sea Beast" HEAD (with its mouth) was "mortally wounded". Eastern Emperor Justinian partly healed the mortal wound by vanquishing the Ostrogothic king, Theodoric, from Rome and increasing Papal authority there.

Fifth and Sixth "Woe" Trumpets (Rev. chapter 9) (632-1453)

The 5th and 6th "woe" trumpets were enacted by the Saracens and later by the Turks, upon the Eastern Roman Empire. This brought successive tribulations on the Catholic idol worshippers; with the overthrow of Constantinople and the end of the Eastern Roman Empire in 1453.

Papal "Mouth" Development (Rev: 13:5-10) 610-1572)

This concerns the gradual and fulsome development of the Papal "MOUTH" to a position of great power and authority. He was to persecute the saints for 1260 years. The splitting up of the Western Empire into ten "horn" kingdoms, from the fifth to the ninth centuries, worked out to papal advantage. He became both "head" and "mouth" of the Sea Beast, wielding secular and spiritual authority over kings and nations.

The "Two-Horned" Beast (Rev. 13:11-18) (800-1806)

Another Beast with two horns like a lamb and speaking like a dragon, was to arise in Europe. One horn proved to be the PAPACY and the other the EMPEROR. The papal horn gradually gained the ascendency over the Emperor horn, to make him serve the ambitions of the church. The two-horned beast lasted over 1000 years, from Charlemagne, king of France, to the Austrian Emperor Francis, overthrown by Napoleon in 1806. Both the "Papal Beast" in Rome and the two-horned "Holy Roman Empire," with its German emperor, coexisted for most of their career with the Pope dominant in both. His control over the civil jurisdiction of Europe enabled him to set up the "Image of the beast" for compulsory worship and the Papal INQUISITION gave power to the IMAGE to kill all refusing to worship it.

The Seventh Trumpet "Little Scroll" (Rev. 10) (1789 to end of 7th bowl)

This Christ-angel descended from God's heaven and announced the seven THUNDERS, which John was forbidden to write about. He then directed John to take a "little scroll" from his hand. This contained all the *woes* of the 7th trumpet, which were the seven last plagues. These were to be poured from bowls by the seven "plague" angels upon the SEA BEAST and the TWO-HORNED BEAST. These were to be God's final judgments on the fourth world dominion of Rome, terminating in its complete destruction. The "little scroll" judgments would see Christ and the saints enthroned in glory and the millennial reign initiated.

God's Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:1-7) (312-1572)

The "two witnesses" refer firstly to the true "tabernacle" of saint worshippers in the "wilderness" and secondly, those prepared to defend their civil and religious rights against papal imposition. The first were enjoined by the Spirit not to resist but to suffer martyrdom if needs be. The second resisted Rome by civil or

even militant action and suffered with the saints to the point of martyrdom. They were both to witness under persecution for 1260 years.

Second Apocalyptic Earthquake (Rev. 11:8-13) (1572-1794)

Part of the 6th woe trumpet judgment on Eastern Rome was reserved for the western two-horned Papal dominated Beast (Holy Roman Empire) for persecuting the Witnesses. This was the overthrow of the "tenth part" of the papal "CITY," involving the FRENCH REVOLUTION. The terrible retribution on Catholic France avenged the massacre of the Huguenots in 1572.

The 7th Trumpet (Rev.11:14-19) (1789 to end of 7th bowl).

The sounding of the 7th trumpet released the seven "Bowl" (vial A.V.) angels with their plagues. These verses summarize all the 7th trumpet judgments involved in the seven last plagues. They terminate with the annihilation of Beast and False Prophet at Armageddon and the complete destruction of "Babylon the Great," which is basically papal Rome.

The Seven Last Plagues (Rev. 15) (1789 to end of 7th bowl).

The persecution of the witnesses ended, they are presented as having conquered. Still mortal, the saints expectantly wait for the bowls of "fire" to be poured out on the papal "earth". As they sing the song of Moses and the LAMB, rejoicing in deliverance, the seven angels emerge from the heavenly temple with bowls full of the seven plagues. The temple—Christ and the saints in Jerusalem—is filled with the smoke of God's judgments at the pouring of the 6th and 7th plagues, still future.

The First Five Bowls (Rev. 16:1-11) (1789-1870)

The first five bowls were poured out to scourge the Papal Beast dominion and the European nations supporting it. The emperor of the emaciated "Holy Roman Empire" was broken in Austria by the 4th bowl and the papal throne "darkened" by the 5th bowl. God raised up Napoleon as the scourging agent to execute four of the first five, and England's naval victories performed the second bowl poured out on the sea. The swift Napoleonic victories in Europe reduced papal temporal power to practically zero. Garibaldi's successful wars against papal sponsored foreign intervention and intrigue in Italy, from 1849 to 1870, completed the work of Napoleon. This placed the Roman Beast in the "bottomless pit" or "abyss" leaving Rome as the ecclesiastical WOMAN, later to be styled "Babylon the great."

The Time Gap Between the Fifth and Sixth Bowls

Our summary is so far one of fulfilled prophecy, confirmed by the history of the Roman Empire and Europe. We occupy today a time gap in the apocalyptic time table, between the 5th and 6th bowls. This time gap is taken up with the remarkable events of Jewish restoration to their long desolated homeland. The *dry bones of Israel* started their shaking as early as 1860, but took definite shape with the first Zionist Congress in 1897. The First World War paved the way for Jewish restoration under British Mandate in 1917. The Second World War gave Israel their nationhood and forced back large numbers of Jews to the land. Three subsequent Jewish-Arab wars have served to establish Israel's nationhood and expand her territory.

It has already been suggested that the Apocalypse excludes from its prophecies Israel's war of liberation and survival, these being covered by the O.T. Russia today can be recognized as *Gog of Magog* of Ezekiel's prophecy (Chapter 38), also as the latter day *dragon* of the Revelation. She is already playing her vital prophetical role in the Middle East. Russia is seen as the strong arm of the Arab world, pledged to the annihilation of the State of Israel. Attention is drawn to two passages in the Revelation which may well be there to fill in, however obliquely, the time gap between the 5th and 6th bowls. They are:

Rev.10:1-4.

The mighty "rainbow angel" wrapped in a cloud is seen descending from heaven, his face like the sun and his legs like pillars of fire, which aptly answers to the Lord's coming to earth. It conforms in symbol to those many literal prophecies of his coming, as referred to elsewhere in Scripture.

His loud call like a lion roaring recalls his title, *The lion of the tribe of Judah,* saving his beloved nation Israel. At his call the seven THUNDERS sounded and a voice from heaven said to John, "*Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."* Thunder is the scriptural symbol of war and the question is posed here as to whether these may not be regarded as seven wars for the redemption of National Israel? They might span from the First World War of 1914 to the Gogian invasion of Israel and the Middle East, when Messiah in person comes to save Israel.

Rev. 20:1-3.

Again what appears to be the same Christ-angel as in Rev. 10:1—and the same descent as here prophesied—seizes the "dragon", the ancient serpent, binds him and seals him in the bottomless pit or abyss. It will be shown that this binding applies to the same event as repeatedly referred to in O.T. prophecies. It is the catastrophic overthrow of God's mighty army and its burial in Israel and Edom.

The Messianic role of Jesus is not part of the apocalyptic theme; but the drastic suppression and binding of the dragon sin-power certainly is. The latter day Gog and Magog will be shown to have taken its identity from the pagan dragon cast out of the Roman "heaven" by Constantine. This massive overthrow of Gog would close the time gap alluded to above, and place the LAMB on Mount Zion. The Revelation does not inform us how the Lamb got onto Mount Zion, but Old Testament prophecy does.

Unfulfilled Prophecies of the Revelation

The 6th and 7th Bowls

The First Resurrection (Rev.20:1-4) (Soon after the Lord's coming).

The first resurrection is briefly foretold. Those who "came to life" with immortality, constitute a council of judgment seated on thrones, to judge the beast, false prophet and Great Babylon. As Daniel wrote, "The court sat in judgment".

The Lamb on Mount Zion (Rev:14:1-5) (After Israel's deliverance).

The LAMB with his 144,000 saints are seen on Mount Zion in immortal glory. Their voice of rejoicing will come from the Jerusalem "heaven" like loud thunder.

The Pouring of the 6th Bowl

The Woman on the Beast (Rev.17:1-11)

(Soon after the Lamb's appearing on Mount Zion)

The elevation of the great Catholic system by some form of revived Roman dictatorship in Europe, is seen by John as an impure woman styled "Babylon the great" seated on a scarlet beast. This is to be regarded as preparatory to the pouring of the 6th bowl, if not part of it. Such development is sudden and will be a marvel to the world. It appears to follow the overthrow of God, and the earth-shaking success of Israel and their "newly found" leader against Israel's enemies. *"The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem"* (Joel 3:16) and the gospel is sounded from Jerusalem. Rome's reaction will be that of fear and hatred, but the

Lord is *"wrapped in a cloud"* (Rev.10:1) beyond recognition by the world at large. He comes to them as a snare and a thief.

The Eternal Gospel Proclaimed (Rev. 14:6, 7) (Soon after the Lamb's appearing on Mount Zion)

An *angel* (probably saints) *flies in mid heaven* proclaiming the "eternal gospel" to nations, peoples and tongues. He warns of impending judgments and commands worship of the true God in Jerusalem. The world-wide campaign will be with such vigour as to make large numbers of converts and create strong "protestant" resentment against false religion. This is symbolized as the censer of "gospel fire" thrown on the earth (Rev. 8:5). The proclamation of the gospel is seen as part of the pouring of the 6th bowl.

The 6th Bowl Poured on the River Euphrates (Rev. 16:12-16) (Soon after second advent).

The very important 6th bowl being poured on the Euphrates is analogous to Cyrus drying up the river Euphrates which flowed under the walls of ancient Babylon, in order that he might take the city. With spiritual Babylon the great waters are peoples, nations and tongues (17:15). When the "angel" throws the "gospel fire" into the earth and Zion's new leader begins to "*smite the earth with the rod of his mouth"* (Isa. 11:4), the bowl is poured. Defection of peoples and multitudes away from Great Babylon will weaken her defences against the new Zion power. The reaction is the issuing of demonic spirits from the mouths of dragon, beast and false prophet to assemble the armies of earth's kings to Armageddon. This is seen as a lying flood of propaganda against the alleged Antichrist and the Jewish nation. Military confrontation is fermented against the LAMB and his followers. The "horn" nations of Europe agree to place their armies at the Beast's disposal, in holy crusade against the "King of kings," Joel's *"prepare war"* (3:9) applies here. Duration of the 6th bowl could be more than 30 years.

Impending judgments on Babylon (Rev. 14:8-13) (After the gospel is proclaimed).

This appears as a warning prophecy of impending judgment. One angel says: *"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great."* Another loudly warns all beast worshippers of the dire consequences of their devotions. Mortal saints, called by the proclaiming angel, are exhorted to remain steadfast and their ultimate reward is announced. These warnings are also part of the 6th bowl "plague" poured on the "waters" of Babylon.

A Saint Harvest Reaped (Rev. 14:14) (Before Great Babylon falls).

The Lord, seated on a cloud, reaps the harvest of mortal saints, taken out of the world by the Gospel "angel" prior to the fall of Babylon (Rev. 7:9-17). This same harvest is seen as *a great multitude which no man could number. . .those who have come out of "the great tribulation."* They stood justified before the LAMB, who shelters them with his presence. These are in contrast to the "144,000" immortal saints who are then with their Lord on Mount Zion.

The Pouring of the Seventh Bowl

Treading of the Winepress (Rev.14:17, 18) (Over 30 years after second coming from heaven).

Having gathered the "harvest" saints, the Christ-angel commands the reaping angel (probably immortal saints) to gather the vintage of the earth into the winepress of God's wrath. This is to include the capture and destruction of the beast and false prophet at Armageddon. It is completed by the great EARTHQUAKE which engulfs GREAT BABYLON in revolution and anarchy.

(Rev.16:17-21). The treading of the winepress constitutes the vital 7th bowl *poured into the AIR* (universal extent): with the announcement *"it is done."* This produced lightning (the voice of the Lord) : thunder (war); a mighty earthquake (revolution and civil war), and a plague of hail (the spiritual sharp sword from the Lord's mouth directed against remaining beast and image worshippers).

(Rev. 17:12-14). Refers to the Armageddon conflict in prospect and the inevitable victory of the Lamb and his associates.

(Rev. 19:17-20). Refers to the ARMAGEDDON conflict in operation.

The Great Earthquake of the 7th Bowl (Rev.17:15 to 18:23) (After the battle at Armageddon).

The revealing of Christ to the world (18:1) causes the earth to be made bright with his splendour. He makes himself known to the world as the Christ of God. *"And he called out with a mighty voice, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!"* This triggers off the great EARTHQUAKE which consumes ecclesiastical Rome with fire.

(Rev. 17:15-18) The peoples of the beast and the kings create the earthquake by hating and desolating the harlot "woman": she being burnt up with the fire of their violence. The world becomes a LAKE OF FIRE set aflame by the Gospel of Christ. This gospel prepares *the way for the kings from the east* to take Great Babylon (Rev.16:12). These kings are the Lord and his saints.

(Rev. 18). A literal city once luxurious, throbbing with commerce and trading in ships, is pictured in chaos being consumed in flames. Formerly wealthy merchants behold and weep afar off. It symbolizes wicked and wealthy Babylon, whose spiritual priestly merchants waxed opulent by trading in the souls of men. In her was found the blood of saints and martyrs. The vast Roman Catholic system is here typified, from the sacred College of Cardinals to the widely dispersed emissaries of Rome diffused into the political life of nations and communities. When the WOMAN sits on the dictatorial beast yet to arise in Europe, the great mystical city will have reached the zenith of its glory and influence over mankind. She will say, *"A queen I sit . . . mourning I shall never see";* but *"she shall be burned with fire"* (Rev.18:7,8).

(Rev.19:21). With Babylon the great destroyed by the revolutionary earthquake, the terrible 7th Bowl is completed. It conceivably tapers off with an ideological warfare wagered with the vocal sword of the King of kings astride the white horse, together with his followers. Anyone continuing to imbibe the harlot's wine in secret will be spiritually slain.

Great Rejoicing in Zion (Rev. 19:1-9) (After the great 'Earthquake').

The immortal saints (the 144,000) are seen to rejoice in victory over the "great harlot" who corrupted the earth with her spiritual fornication. The mortal *harvest* saints, foundation members of the millennial ecclesia, hail the victorious King of kings and Lord of lords (then proclaimed world KING). They rejoice in contemplation of the *"Marriage Supper of the Lamb"* and his immortal BRIDE; they themselves to be the happy guests. *"Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb"* (19:9).

The Holy City, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-6) (Over 40 years after second advent).

A *new heaven and a new earth* are seen. The *new heaven* is the NEW JERUSALEM. A large unique city is portrayed to represent in symbol the THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT OF CHRIST'S NEW WORLD. The 7th Bowl opens with the prophetic words "It is done". At its conclusion the LAMB on his throne says: *It is done! I am Alpha, and Omega, the beginning and the end.*

(See also Chart, Fig. 4, THE REVELATION AT A GLANCE)

CHAPTER 3 - ONE SEATED ON A THRONE (Revelation 4:2)

The Eternal God

It is safe to say that no description of God's personal being is to be found in the Bible. *"To whom then will you liken God or what likeness compare with him?"* (Isa. 40:18). His state is conceived by Paul as: *"the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality* (underived) *and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see"* (I Tim. 6:15,16)

It may be assumed from the Scriptures that God has never, in mankind's history, personally vacated the unapproachable light in which He dwells, to come down to this earth. Such passages as *"Our Father who art in heaven"* and *"for God is in heaven, and you upon earth"* (Matt. 6:9; Eccl. 5:2), seem to give a permanence of abode to Deity. This is in keeping with His glory and divine dignity. *"When thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created"* (Ps. 104:30). *"Who makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire"* (Heb.1:7). Old Testament research shows the Almighty manifested on earth by the Elohim or angels. This is also true since the birth of Jesus, *"but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir or all things, through whom also he created the world* (the new creation). *He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power?* (Heb. 1:2,3).

One Like a Son of Man

To identify the "one seated on a throne" we must consider the one "with a loud voice like a trumpet" who first spoke to John (Rev. 1:10). *"And in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe . . . his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength"* (Rev. 1:12-16). Any description of a glorified being in Scripture *"like a son of man´* or *"the Son of man"* would at once associate the being with Christ himself. It is applied to Jesus prophetically in Dan. 3:25 and 7:13 and by Jesus to himself throughout the Gospels (Matt. 24:30; 25:31). In immortal glory he still retains the title.

The remarkably symbolized personality of Revelation chapter 1 is Jesus, because: He is like a Son of man. He said he died and was alive for evermore. The prefaces of his letters to the ecclesias cover his own description in the same terms as John described *"one like a son of man."* This picture of Christ in regal glory is strikingly similar to that given by Daniel (10:5,6) On seeing the vision, Daniel fell face downwards in a deep sleep. When John beheld Jesus in glory, he too fell at his feet as though dead (Rev.1:17). We must give full credit to John's preface; *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him . . . "* so that God himself speaks nowhere in the book. As God said at the Mount of Transfiguration, so in effect He is saying here: *"This is my Son my chosen, listen to him."* Truly He has spoken to us by a Son.

The Alpha and the Omega Title

Now Jesus tells us of himself "Behold I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay everyone for what he has done, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev.22:12). The Lord is here speaking at the end of the book, obviously about himself. In John's opening prologue he writes: "I am ALPHA and OMEGA, says the Lord God" (Rev. 1:8). These words follow John's own declaration. "Behold, he is coming with the clouds . . . " (1:7). Fitting that John should open the book with this sublime declaration of God himself; then by recording all he saw and heard to show that it was all to be accomplished through God's glorified Son.

This is the principle of GOD-MANIFESTATION which pervades the whole of the Revelation. Indeed it IS the Revelation. That is why Jesus is able to say about himself: *"the FIRST and the LAST who died and came to life"* (Rev. 2:8)

Who Is and Who Was and Who is to Come

Likewise, this declaration by God concerning Himself finds full expression in the work of His Son. It can truly be said of Jesus: he *Who Is* (now glorified in heaven); *Who Was* (Lamb of God on earth); *Who Is To Come* (glorified KING in Jerusalem). In terms of God-manifestation we may say:

WHO IS "He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature" (Heb. 1:3)

WHO WAS—"His name . . . Emmanuel (which means, God with us)" (Matt. 1:23). "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:19).

WHO IS TO COME—"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty" (Rev. 4:8). "Thou hast taken thy great power and begun to reign" (11:17).

The description given of Jesus in Rev. 1:12-16 is not that of the Lamb, but of the present king in heaven, *"The ruler of the kings on earth,"* now seated on the right hand of power. As the first-born of the dead he now has this kingship: *"And made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father"* (Rev.1:5,6). Peter defines the saints of God, now on earth, as such: *"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and holy nation"* (1 Peter 2:9) ; *"to offer spiritual sacrifices*: (1 Peter 2:5).

John draws this picture of present kingship, whilst Jesus walks thus among the "seven" ecclesias by his far reaching spirit. This belongs to the present phase of *"He who is.*

New Testament writers are lavish in their conception of the glory and authority of the risen Christ; also of the transcendent glory of his appearing and Kingdom. Here are the majestic words of the apostle Paul: *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation . . .all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent . . . "* (Col. 1:15-18). Paul refers here to the NEW SPIRITUAL CREATION, as does John when discussing the LOGOS in his Gospel. Having dictated his letters to the seven churches, Jesus concludes with his final message to them all: *"He who conquers, I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with My Father on his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches: (Rev. 3:21, 22).*

John Caught up to the Lord's Throne

This promise of regal honour to over-comers is the Lord's introduction to the vision of the 4th chapter. "After this I looked, and lo in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, Come up hither, and I will show you what must take place after this" (Rev. 4:1). Christ, the glorified one of Rev. 1:12-16, is speaking these words to John in the same trumpet-like voice which introduced him to the Lord's awe-inspiring presence (Rev.1:10-12. "At once I was in the Spirit," said John, "and lo, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne" (4:2).

The words, *I was in the Spirit,* suggest that John, when he went through the *open door,* was changed to spirit nature at the trumpet voice of the resurrection. To *take place after this* makes the vision prophetical and precludes the idea that the *one on the throne* was either the Father or Christ, seated on God's throne in heaven. Such would be "a present reality" in John's day, but he saw a vision of things to come. This remarkable scene is, in figure, a granting of the Lord's promise for such as John to sit with him, on his throne in his Kingdom.

The Revelation will continue a sealed book to those expositors who believe that the redeemed find their reward in heaven. Every mention of "heaven" will be seen by them as God's Heaven. Consequently, the one seen sitting on the throne is assumed to be God himself. It is basic to the understanding of the book, that the built-up vision of chapters 4 and 5 symbolises the Lord's throne and temple of the millennial age. Its location is of necessity in the future universal world capital, Jerusalem. The one seen on the throne can be none other than the Christ of God's glory. The study of GOD-MANIFESTATION in Old and New Testaments is a most profitable and interesting exercise. How effectively Orthodoxy has destroyed the principle of God-manifestation is seen in the history of the creeds. Christendom's Nicene and Athanasian Creeds put Jesus Christ through an illogical process of "God to God-man" and a "back-to-God" nature, at the whim and caprice of Roman Emperor Constantine.

The sublime truth of the matter is in Paul's words: "Yet for us there is One God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Cor. 8:6).

This makes Jesus the unique man, the full expression and vehicle for God's plan and purpose to those who exist for their Creator. It is worthy of our consideration, that in all of God's vast universe, this earth alone with its human inhabitants, appears to be the allotted sphere of Christ's redemptive work. His return in glory will find him still bound up with the destiny of his people Israel, whose salvation and vindication is part of his great work.

The "Where" and "When" of John's Vision

To understand the content of John's vision (chapters 4 and 5), we should firstly ascertain its place in the symbolic structure of the Revelation. To this end the use of the following expressions will assist our understanding:

1. SYMBOLIC REALITY, referring to visions of things which existed when John saw them.
2. SYMBOLIC VISION, meaning things which were to take place after John beheld them.

John was invited to see "what must take place after this," indicating that he was not to be shown "symbolic reality". Under our heading, "Temple of the Revelation" (Chapter 14), it will be seen that the "MOST HOLY PLACE" of God's spiritual temple now exists in heaven. It is occupied in figure by Jesus, as Great High Priest and therefore is to be regarded as "symbolic reality". Equally so is the earthly located *Tabernacle* or *tent of witness for mortal saint worshippers,* styled *the holy place.* The MILLENNIAL TEMPLE, introduced as "symbolic vision" in Rev. 4, will only become "symbolic reality" when it replaces both "the Most Holy" and the "Holy Place." In other words our Great High Priest will descend from heaven, bestow immortality on the "Holy Place" tabernacle worshippers; then later invite them up into the mystical Millennial Temple, the NEW JERUSALEM. John typified those invited ones to whom his Lord, with trumpet voice, will say, "*come up hither.*." This is expressed by Paul as *"caught up together . . . to meet the Lord in the air"* (1 Thess. 4:17).

The work of Jesus in heaven is to prepare a place on this earth, that his saints may be *with him where he is, to behold his glory* (John 17:24). This place is called by Jesus, *"The kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."* While the vision still awaits fulfilment, it is presented throughout the Apocalypse as if it were in actual existence. The divine wisdom in presenting it thus is because the work of Jesus in heaven is so intensely bound up with this earth. Jesus Christ *"has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities and powers subject to him"* 1 Peter 3:22). The real glory of Christ is copiously portrayed in "Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets". We shall now consider those Old Testament visions which embody a king, a throne and the "cherubim of glory".

Isaiah's Vision (Chapter 6)

"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim (cherubim); each with six wings . . . And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory'. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke" (Isa. 6:1-4). Fear fell on Isaiah, conscious of his sinfulness, "For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa 6:5). The one sitting on the throne in Isaiah's vision is identified for us by the Apostle John, in an incidental comment to Isaiah's prophecy that God would blind and harden Israel (6:9, 10). "Isaiah said this", says John, "because he saw his (Christ's) glory and spoke of him" (John 12:41).

John, in vision, saw the same cherubim as seen by Isaiah. They were four living creatures, "each of them with six wings . . . and day and night they never cease to sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" (Rev.4:8). The seraphim in Isaiah's vision addressed the one on the throne as the "LORD of hosts" whilst John heard them call him "Lord God Almighty." The three calls for holiness may be seen to apply to the three phases of Christ's ministry: Who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME.

All of God's great titles in the Old Testament are divinely declared titles; not as yet revered in the eyes of the world. Sinai demonstrated the truth that God dwelt in thick darkness in relation to this world. Apart from the effulgent glory through angelic manifestation, the Old Testament conceals His glory in general. When Jesus came to Israel, John said of him, *"We have beheld his glory; glory as of the only Son from the Father* (John 1:14)). Such glory was and is appreciated only by those who acknowledge Jesus as the Lord's Christ; and who see in spirit, God's transcendent glory through Christ in the age to come. It becomes close in the New Testament, and particularly in the Apocalypse, that Jesus makes manifest and vindicates all of God's greatness and eternal attributes. This is climaxed in the bearing of his Father's titles on earth for the millennial duration.

Ezekiel's Visions (Chapters 1, 10, 11 and 13)

What Isaiah saw of Christ in glory was revealed to Ezekiel in greater detail. There first came into his view the four living creatures, of which he gives a careful description. Of these he says: *"And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the thunder of the Almighty . . . and there came a voice from above the firmament . . . and above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne . . . in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was the likeness as it were of a human form. And upwards from . . . his loins I saw as it were gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire . . . and there was brightness round about him. Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain . . . Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD" (*Ezek. 1:24-28).

Ezekiel later saw the same vision with "the living creatures" standing at the door of the east gate of the house of the LORD; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them" (Ezek. 10:19).

After describing Israel's millennial temple in detail, Ezekiel looked: "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory" (Ezek. 43:2). The prophet saw the glory of the LORD enter the east gate of the temple and fill the temple itself. Then he records: "I heard one speaking to me out of the temple . . . Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever" (43:6, 7). It should need no prompting from John for us to recognize the glorified Jesus of a human form, enthroned above the firmament and saying to Ezekiel in vision, "This is the place of my throne."

The Enthroned Christ in the Psalms (Psalm 45; Heb. Chap. 1)

The most majestic reference to the Lord's throne and kingship is found in this Psalm. It is taken up in the epistle to the Hebrews to demonstrate the unique role of God-manifestation, which the Father has decreed for the Son of His love. *"He has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world* (age or dispensation) . . . *He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power" (Heb. 1:2,3).* With this introduction the writer to the Hebrews quotes from the 45th Psalm: "*But of the Son he says, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. The righteous sceptre is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (*Heb. 1:8).

The passage from which this is quoted, reads in the Psalm, *"Your divine throne endures for ever and ever. Your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity" (*Ps.45:6). This quotation from the R.S.V. has the alternative reading *"your throne is a throne of God."* The R.V. reads the same as the A.V., viz. *"Thy throne O God."* An interesting comment appears in "THE PSALMS—With Hebrew Text and English Translation," being Ginsburg's Hebrew Bible Translation by the Jewish Publication Society of America, with commentary by Dr. A. Cohen. His comments on this passage read:

"The Hebrew is difficult. A.V. and R.V., *Thy throne O God* appears to be the obvious translation but does not suit the context. The best interpretation is that given on the R.V. margin, *Thy Throne (is the throne of) God.* As his anointed he is God's agent to crush evil and promote right." The R.S.V. confirms this translation.

This understanding of Psalm 45:6 can be applied with confidence to the *"one seated on the throne" (*Rev.4:2). That *one* is the Son of God, sitting in prospect on the throne of his father David in Jerusalem (Luke 1:32), but called in the Old Testament *the throne of the LORD.* God said: *"I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill"* of whom David wrote, *"Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty! In your majesty ride forth victoriously for the cause of truth and defence of the right" (*Ps.45:3,4). John was called up in symbolic vision into the millennial "heaven," there to hear redeemed saints singing, *"Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created"* (*Rev. 4:11).*

Hebrews attributes the work of this spiritual creation to the Son: "Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest..." (Heb.1:10,11). This passage is quoted from Psalm 102:25, 26. It harmonises with those frequent New Testament Scriptures, which make Jesus the divinely appointed founder and head of the new spiritual creation. Paul's words in Col. 1:15-20 fully bear this out.

Peter declares that the heavens will pass away and the earth and its works will be burned up, but that we wait for new heavens and new earth. Like the Revelation, this is the language of symbol and metaphor. The present *heavens and earth* reserved for destruction are there by the will of God; but do not perform His will on earth. Not only has Jesus moulded history by his ministry, death and resurrection, but with his "all authority" from God, he has controlled history in every sphere affecting God's purpose. Our study of the Apocalypse means nothing if it does not fully bear this out. It confirms the truth of Paul's declaration that, *"things . . . in heaven and on earth, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him* (Col. 1:16). It can be seen how *the Most High rules the Kingdom of men* and that He has handed over this rulership to His Son.

The present *heavens and earth,* though they be but the expression of human evil and folly, have been judged, subdued, exalted and restrained by the Lord's Christ, to service the divine plan. That accomplished *"They will grow old like a garment . . . like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou* (Christ) *art the same and thy years will never end (*Heb. 1:11, 12).

When the living creatures addressed the one on the throne as *Lord God Almighty,* they added *who was and is and is to come. "Who is to come"* confirms the vision to be future to John's day. As already observed, there is a sense in which the vision was sustained in continuity, from the time John first saw it until the final destruction of Great Babylon. Symbolic vision will become reality from the time the Lamb and his saints stand on Mount Zion. The *Court* will really be in session for the duration of the 6th and 7th bowls. The *elders* and *living creatures* are there as organizational symbols of the saints (Rev. 14:3, 19:4). After the BRIDE merges into the New Jerusalem, the elders and the living creatures are no more referred to.

There is no reason to suppose that the realization of John's vision will not continue throughout the Millennium. It represents the regal power and authority of the Theocratic Government in universal dominion. It is set for judgment and rulership of the world. The New Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife, is complementary to this in its organization as will be shown later. Both will be co-existent in the Kingdom.

CHAPTER 4 - THE LAMB AND THE SCROLL (Revelation 5)

The One Enthroned

The *One on the throne* has been identified as Jesus Christ in future glory. "*He who conquers, I will grant to sit with me on my throne"* (Rev. 3:21). Suffice it to say here that the elders on thrones symbolize saints, who, having conquered, are seen with Christ in glory. The living creatures also signify redeemed saints, organized for judgment and spiritual warfare in the future Kingdom. They will be most active with the King, from the resurrection until the destruction of "Great Babylon" is completed.

Although Christ can truly say "*on MY throne,"* the Spirit in the 45th Psalm has stated: *"Your throne is the throne of God."* The *Glory of God* on earth is Christ and the perfect "oneness" of God and His Son is fully exemplified in the "only begotten" seen by John enthroned in Glory. Yet even now the Father dwells in him as *he reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature.* John saw the Christ *who is to come.* The Christ *who is* is the *living one* who "IS" because of what he "WAS". This is the existent Christ, who from his Father's throne wages secular and spiritual war against the fourth world dominion.

The Prophetic Scroll Opener

"And I saw in the right hand of him who is seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals" (Rev.5:1). Seven skins of parchment may be visualized as sewn together, rolled up and written on both sides, with each skin sealed up in the roll. The events there prophesied were to be spread over a period of nineteen centuries or more, until God's glory should be established on the earth. God said to Daniel: "Shut up the words, and seal the book, . . . for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4,10). The time of the end is the extended period of the apocalyptic prophecy and Daniel was to stand with his Lord at the end of the days.

"Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" (Rev. 5:2). The strong angel, possibly Michael, introduces "symbolic reality" into the "symbolic vision" of the 4th chapter. Whoever opened the seals would receive divine power and authority to execute the judgments which were written in them. The angel's query and John's deep concern at hearing it, served to dramatise and highlight the worthiness of God's appointed seal opener.

"I Saw a LAMB Standing"

It was fitting that one of the elders, signifying the redeemed, should answer the angelic query with a dramatic announcement: "Weep not; lo the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals" (Rev. 5:5). Then John looked "And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a LAMB standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes" (5:6). The Lamb so seen is the product of sacrificial death and resurrection and the wounds of his slaying were visible to John. The one he saw was the living "HE WHO IS" associated with He who was—THE LAMB OF GOD.

The one on the throne was the thrice holy one *who is to come.* The first seal was opened about the close of the first century. It was necessary that this be done by the existent one "who is" and not by one "who is to come." In presenting Jesus as the LAMB, his conquest over sin and death is established by a title he has earned in his own right. It may be called his ALPHA title. It is interesting to note that throughout the Revelation the "one on the throne" does not initiate any activity, but is seen as in future glory receiving the praise, homage and thanks of the redeemed saints and the angels.

A Difficulty Explained

With the introduction of the LAMB to open the seals, John saw him take the scroll from the hand of him who sat upon the throne. The one on the throne has been identified as Jesus Christ in future glory. The obvious objection has been raised as to how the Lamb can take a scroll from the Christ-king seated on the throne. The objection is valid but the paradox is capable of a satisfactory explanation. The throne John saw is not in God's heaven but in Jerusalem. That is where the redeemed saints will also be; not in God's heaven. The principle of GOD-MANIFESTATION is basic to the whole concept of Christ's millennial reign. We must accept that is God's will and pleasure to make Jesus His name bearer on earth. The ascription of holiness in Isaiah chapter 6 is to the "Lord of hosts," yet the visible glory is Christ's. In the 4th chapter of the Revelation it is holiness to the "Lord God Almighty" and as with Isaiah's vision the glory seen is Christ's. Jesus is to bear God's sovereign title "King or kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15, Rev. 19:16).

Since God is everywhere by His Spirit, He is with Christ on his throne; though it be Christ who will be visible to men. *"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily"* (Col. 2:9), When we try to decide whether it is God or Christ who sits there, the problem is ours not God's. In the 4th and 5th chapters of the Revelation, we are tantalized with the concealing phrases *one who sits on the throne* followed by a fourfold repetition of *him who is* (or was) *seated on the throne* and finally *he who sits upon the throne.* Perhaps John was inspired to preserve for Jesus, the same modesty displayed by the Master during his ministry. Often Jesus referred to himself in third person, not with such ambiguity as to be misunderstood; but to honour His Father while speaking of his own glory.

From the hand of one *Who is to come* sitting on a throne not then in existence, John saw the existent Lamb "WHO IS," take the scroll to open its seals. It would be difficult to comprehend the vision without realizing that God, in committing all things to the Son, has bestowed on him a threefold title *Who is* and *Who was* and *Who is to come.* This title is ascribed to God himself (Rev. 1:8) so far as His earthly plan is concerned, but Jesus is the chosen vehicle of its realization. As the Father is, so is Jesus the Alpha and the Omega of God's purpose. (Rev. 21:6, 22:13).

In symbolic vision *He who is to come* is seen seated on his millennial throne of glory. His elevation there is contingent upon the execution of a divinely conceived programme of world events filling in "the times of the Gentiles." It is appropriate that the King *who is to come* should appear in the vision, holding the divinely ordered programme in the form of a sealed scroll. Its judgments within the Roman fourth world dominion were to bring the full realization of the whole glorious vision. The chain of events hidden in the scroll and the KING *who is to come* are inseparable.

The programme itself is real, but the King on the throne is there in vision only. In his prospective glory he cannot unseal the scroll or set in motion the judgments written. Someone existent must do this for him. The LAMB is then dramatically introduced into the vision. He, the existent one, alone of all mankind and angels, is worthy and entitled to be the unsealer and executor of the scroll. As the active agent he takes it from the right hand of *he who is to come.* Once he breaks the seals the programme becomes operative. As the conqueror of sin and death the LAMB has the authority and power to do this. His title, "HE WHO WAS," denotes this conquest. He has become the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah.* The Lamb and the scroll then take over as the element of symbolic reality in the vision. The depth of Peter's words may be perceived: *"Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him: (*1 Peter 3:22).

There is to be observed in the development of the vision, a dramatically delightful way of introducing the existent Lamb of God into the realm of apocalyptic glory and power. Creatures and elders spontaneously burst into song, saying, *"Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood*

*didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth" (*Rev. 5:9, 10). The creatures and elders represent the saints in Kingdom glory, but this rejoicing in the LAMB as the scroll-opener must have occurred very soon after John wrote the Revelation. This is part of the wonder of the vision, in which creatures and elders represent existent saints in tribulation and wilderness worship. Their symbolic presence is thereby established before their great Shepherd and champion. There they are closely identified with his apocalyptic mission and offer their thanks and praise to the Lamb. The *wilderness* saints are at present *a kingdom and priests to our God* as Peter reminded us (1 Peter 2:5, 9), but even as the creatures and elders sang, *they SHALL REIGN on earth.* What a tremendous encouragement must have been theirs, especially in past tribulation, to join in spirit with the new song of the creatures and elders who prefigure them in glory.

Symbolic Vision Becomes Symbolic Realty

After this the vision reaches its grand climax of reality, with all the participants, including the LAMB, transported into the Kingdom Age. Myriads of angels were introduced who were not there before. *"Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels . . . saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!" (*Rev.5:11,12). Symbolic vision will have become reality. The LAMB is actually on his throne.

The angels are numbered in "myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands." "And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and in the sea, and all therein saying . . ." The whole world takes up the strain, rulers and commoners together: "To him who sits upon the throne and to the LAMB be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever: (Rev. 5:13). Their praises and blessings are directed to the two aspects of the ONE Christ. When they say 'Worthy is the Lamb' their emphasis is on the word WORTHY. They are beholding the "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," on whose shoulder the government of the whole world will then rest (Isa. 9:6).

Eternal salvation will be a precious thing in those days. Men and nations will seek after it, since they behold not only a great king upon a throne, but a mighty Saviour as well. That Saviour is the LAMB of God, whom the redeemed never cease to praise and extol. It is he whom Israel will keep in loving remembrance and in whose sheltering presence the teeming populations on earth will seek and find eternal redemption. Every incentive will be there for men to seek the Lord. All phases of Christ's mighty work converge in the Kingdom. He is ALPHA and OMEGA, the LAMB and LORD of HOSTS. He is Priest upon his throne. *"All thy works shall give thanks to thee, O LORD, and all thy saints shall bless thee! They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and tell of thy power, to make known to the sons of men thy mighty deeds and the glorious splendour of thy kingdom" (*Ps. 145:10-12). "*I saw no temple in the city,"* says John, *"for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb"* (Rev. 21:22). John Thomas would render this passage: *"For the Almighty is its temple, even the Lamb".* Weymouth's translation has it: *"For the Lord God, the ruler of all, is its temple, and so is the Lamb."*

CHAPTER 5 - THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES (Revelation 4 and 5)

Israel's Cherubic Glory

The mysterious cherubim of the Old Testament were associated with the manifestation of God to Israel. First heard of in Genesis, they were placed by God "*at the east of the garden of Eden . . . and a flaming sword . . . to guard the way to the tree of life"* (Gen. 3:24). In the wilderness tabernacle of Moses, two cherubim of hammered gold were made in one with the golden mercy seat, which was upon the ark of the covenant in the "most holy". Apparently of human form and face, the cherubim spread out their wings above, their faces one toward another (Exod. 25:20). In Solomon's temple they were of wood overlaid with gold, standing some 16 feet high and of similar width over their outstretched wings. They both stood high above the mercy seat, wings touching at the centre and faces turned inwards. That this inanimate statuary possessed a symbolic and prophetic meaning, there can be no doubt. God said to Moses: *"There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim . . . I will speak to you"* (Exod. 25:22).

God's presence in the "most holy" was assured by the miraculous glow which shone forth from between the cherubim. This divine effulgence was known to the Jews as the "shekinah glory." The cherubim were meant to look, not at one another, but at the mercy seat between them above the ark. We are told of *"the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim"* (1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam.6:2). David wrote: *"He (*God*) bowed the heavens and came down . . . He rode on a cherub and flew; he was seen upon the wings of the wind"* (2 Sam. 22:10,11). David gave Solomon a plan of the temple, including *"the plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD"* (1 Chron. 28:18).

From the letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament, we learn that the temple fixtures were but shadows of good things to come. For this reason we must turn our eyes to the future glory of the Kingdom for the ultimate reality of these things. David foresaw the reality as he contemplated the divine Kingdom on earth which God had promised to his son: *"The LORD reigns; let the people tremble! He sits enthroned upon the CHERUBIM; let the earth quake; the LORD is great in Zion . . . Holy is he! Mighty King, lover of justice" (*Ps. 99:1-4).

The static symbology of the temple cherubim first springs into symbolic activity when Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; . . . above him stood the seraphim; each had six wings; with two he covered his face . . . and with two he flew. And one called to another . . . ": (Isa 6:1-3). A Jewish commentary prefers the translation: "seraphim were standing over him," i.e. in attendance upon him. The word "seraphim" has a root meaning, "to consume with fire" which is borne out by one of them purging Israel's sin with fire from the altar. It was Jesus Christ enthroned in glory that Isaiah saw in his vision, and the seraphim correspond with the "living creatures" of the Apocalypse.

The Cherubic Visions of Ezekiel

What Ezekiel saw in his visions by the river Chebar in Babylon, provides an intimate description of these symbolic *living creatures* which he also calls cherubim. *"They had the form of men, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings . . . their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze" (*Ezek.1:5-7). Each creature had human hands under its wings. *"Each had the face of a man in front . . . the face of a lion on the right side. . . the face of an ox on the left side and . . . a face of an eagle at the back . . . and their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies" (*Ezek.1:10, 11).

His description shows that the four creatures stood four-square, since each of their wings touched the wing of another. This is also suggested by the words, *"When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went"* (Ezek. 1:17). If one particular creature faced east he would keep facing east, regardless of the direction the whole formation went. The "man" faces of the four creatures would be directed outwards to the four winds of heaven, since these faces were in front. The four eagle faces (at the back) would look forward to the centre of the square. *"In the midst of the living creatures* (within the square*) there was . . . like burning coals of fire, torches moving to and fro" (*Ezek. 1:13)

Each creature had a wheel beside it. The wheels had an inner and outer rim, joined with spokes and each retained its precise position relative to the creature to which it belonged. The wheels were *underneath the creatures* and rose with the whole formation when it became mobile. "*When they went they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel faced the others followed without turning as they went . . .*(Ezek. 10:11) They were whirling wheels and appeared to spin continually (10: 2,13). *"And their rims and their spokes, and the wheels were full of eyes round about"* (10:12) *And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of a host; when they stood still they let down their wings"* (1:24).

Under our heading*, One Seated on a Throne,* the vision of Ezekiel was considered as revealing in symbol the same scene which John witnessed in his apocalyptic vision. Over the heads of the living creatures in four-square formation. Ezekiel saw a *"firmament, shining like crystal, spread out above their heads"* (1:22). This was seen as "*a great cloud, with brightness round about it, with fire flashing forth continually"* (1:4). The human form above the firmament, enshrouded with fire and with rainbow brightness round about, has already been identified as Christ in Kingdom glory. *"Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it",* said Ezekiel, *"I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking" (*1:28).

The Realisation of Ezekiel's Visions

In spirit Ezekiel saw the vision shift from the plain of exile in Babylon to Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. "And a cloud filled the inner court. And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherubim . . . and the house was filled with the cloud . . . " (Ezek. 10:4). Jerusalem was about to be judged by God. The judgment was symbolized by fire taken from between the cherubim as coals, which one of them with his hand scattered over the city.

The visions of Ezekiel, Isaiah and John in the Revelation, all symbolize the same thing. They represent the THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT of the MILLENNIUM. In the Old Testament it is for national-Israel. In the Revelation it is Christ's dominion over Gentile powers. Jesus and his saints in glory are there judging and ruling the nations and peoples of the world. *The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ . . .* The first essential is a pure religion for all people. With "JUSTICE, MERCY and TRUTH" established and enforced to the remotest ends of the earth, prosperity and the full reward of labour is assured for all. These three pillars of good government and social well-being have so badly crumbled in our present world that their complete collapse is threatening. The same Gospel of Salvation, which made immortal kings and priests out of mortal earthlings, will flow from Zion to all peoples.

All peoples in turn will flow to Jerusalem, to hear the wisdom and to see the glory of the greater than Solomon. There they will pay their homage and worship. Candidates seeking eternal life and glory in the post-millennial age will be numbered in hundreds of millions. The BLOOD or the LAMB, who is visibly enthroned in Zion, will remain the focal point of redemption for Jew and Gentile. The splendid literal temple shown to Ezekiel in architectural detail and often referred to by other prophets, is primarily there for Israel's spiritual worship. It becomes, however, a House of Prayer for all nations; a tangible radiating centre of spiritual life and wisdom for all nations and peoples. It is the Lord's sanctuary, to be filled with the same "GLORY OF THE LORD" which

was seen by Ezekiel. *"Son of man,"* said God to Ezekiel, *"this is the place of my throne . . . where I will dwell in the midst of my people Israel for ever"* (Ezek. 43:7). Ezekiel's temple is the subject for a more detailed study in later chapters.

Visions of the Cherubim Compared

From a careful investigation of the three visions, it becomes evident that they all refer to the manifestation of God through the returned Christ. In the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, their visions have to do with the House of Israel. The glory of the Lord is to visibly fill their new temple to be built in Jerusalem by the Lord. In the Apocalypse it is the same manifested glory as will be seen by Israel; but in John's vision it takes on a larger dimension. John is viewing the world stage with Jesus as King over all peoples and nations. While the earth is filled with God's judgments for a space of some 40 years, the vision cannot be realized in its fullness. While the Lord's spiritual temple is filled with the smoke of his wrath, the throne is confined to Israel. The Lord will ride in the heavens on his cherubic chariot in swift mobile judgment as depicted by the Psalmist, until *"the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"* (Dan. 7:27).

A comparison of the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel and the Apostle John, will be seen from the following table to have a common identity.

ISAIAH Chap. 6	**Ezekiel chaps 1, 10, 43**	**REVELATION chaps 4 & 5**
The LORD sitting upon a throne	Appearance of a man "above the likeness of a throne was a likeness . . . of a human form	"One seated on the throne."
"The whole earth is full of his glory"	"Brightness round about him" like a rainbow	"round the throne was a rainbow."
"His train filled the temple." "The house was filled with smoke."	"The glory of the LORD filled the temple."	"The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of the Lord."
SERAPHIM	4 LIVING CREATURES (called Cherubim)	4 LIVING CREATURES
"said Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts."	_____	"sing Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty."
_____	Each had four faces: Man Ox Lion Eagle	Each creature was respectively like" 1st Lion 2nd Ox 3rd Man 4th Eagle
Took a coal in his hand from an altar.	Took coals in his hand from between Cherubim.	_____
_____	"the wheels were full of eyes round about."	"full of eyes all round and within."

What the Cherubic Glory Signifies

Quotations already cited portray the living creature formation as the Lord's chariot, on which he rides in judgment above the nations. "Lord of hosts" and King of kings" is exemplified in the words: *"Like the sound of many waters;" "Like the sound of a host"; "like the thunder of the Almighty."* All of this power and authority is vested in Christ and his immortal saints. The four-square NEW JERUSALEM is embodied in the living creatures and their formation. The fire of divine judgment is carried in their midst, as Ezekiel observed: *"Like torches moving to and fro . . . and out of the fire went forth lightning".*

The cherubim appear as the guardians of God's throne on earth, the powerful vehicle on which the great king and the glory of the Lord ride in triumph. Their movement and direction is controlled by their King. The great host they symbolize are his immortal servants and associates. The seven spirits of God which burn before the throne operate within the living creatures. The courage and strength of the LION, swift on its prey; the strength, endurance and patient service of the Ox; the MAN, then truly in the image of God, with a powerful reflection of divine intelligence and spiritual insight; the swift soaring flight of the EAGLE, with its unique eyesight, looking steadfastly on the brightness of the throne of God and of the Lamb; all of these characteristics are embodied in the Cherubim. The name, meaning "those grasped—held fast" conveys the idea of absolute stability and permanence, *like a pillar in the temple of my God.*

The arrangement of the symbology implies perfect organization and harmonious operation for world government; unlike the warring, changing and chaotic governments of the nations. The four wheels of Ezekiel's visions confirm the several references elsewhere in Scripture that the Lord is to ride as in a chariot, enthroned on the cherubim. The inner and outer rims of wheel within wheel suggest age cycles, the smaller possibly signifying the Millennium and the outer rim the eternal age beyond. The eyes, multitudinously dispersed around them and in the creatures themselves, symbolize so many individual saints. They are partakers of the spiritual perception and intelligence of their King, being activated by the spirit of God in harmony with the seven eyes of the LAMB: "which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth". The whole is an extension of Deity's omnipotence to world government. Their wings symbolize the powerful source of the Spirit's mobility; to carry true judgment, rulership and salvation to the ends of the earth.

De-symbolising John's Vision (Chapters 4 and 5)

The various symbolic visions we have considered, and in particular the apocalyptic vision of John, carry with them a tremendous sense of divine power, majesty and glory. They do this in a way that a literal description would fail to do. No explanation of their identity and function is valid that would regard the cherubim as operating in God's heaven. The living creatures of the Revelation are depicted as being rational and benign. *"When they stood they let down their wings"* as Ezekiel informs us. The visions of John show them quiescent, as they extol the name of God and the Lamb, and praise them with song and harp. They appear to be deeply concerned with the mercy seat, which they surveyed in prophetic symbology in tabernacle and temple. In reality they are the custodians of God's Word of Salvation and divine grace, which flows from the millennial mercy seat to all peoples. God spoke to Israel from between the cherubim. He will speak to the whole world from the throne of the LAMB surrounded by the elders and living creatures.

John's vision may further be de-symbolised in terms of swift judgment on the ungodly and the promotion of universal justice, equity, prosperity and individual happiness. Joy, mercy, truth, continual peace and knowledge will fill the earth. Above all there will be true worship of God through His beneficent Son. Without this true worship, none of the other benefits would be possible. The Psalms and the prophets enlighten us greatly in a literal understanding of these things. Psalm 72, Micah 4 and the last three chapters of Isaiah, are but sample word pictures of the New World Order under Christ.

CHAPTER 6 - THE ENTHRONED TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS (Revelation 4 & 5)

Elders in John's Vision

"Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their heads" (Rev. 4:4). In the Old Testament visions of cherubic glory, there were no such elders present, but coupled with the cherubim, we discern that redeemed saints are here represented. The difference between the elders and the cherubim would be one of organizational function in the Christ Kingdom. The elders are not angels, for John heard "around the throne and the living creatures and the ELDERS the voice of many angels" (5:11). "For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking" (Heb. 2:5). "Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?" (Heb. 1:14)

The elders are seen sitting close to the throne, and inside the living creatures who are *on each side of the throne,* i.e. the four sides as in Ezekiel's visions. The elders wear white garments *which is the righteousness of saints.* The golden crowns they wear are not associated with royalty for which the Greek word *diadema* would have been used, but in the Greek these crowns were called *stephanos.* This refers to the laurel wreaths awarded the victors of the games. Jesus said: *"Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown (*stephanos) *of life" (Rev. 2:10).*

Elders in Moses' Day

Because the Apocalypse draws so extensively on ancient temple worship for its symbology, the history of "elders" under the Law will serve as "shadow prophecies" of good things to come. *"Then Moses and Aaron . . . and seventy of the elders of Israel went up and they saw the God of Israel* (God's angel, Exod. 24: 9,10; Acts 7:38) *and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone"* (Exod. 24: 9.10). On another occasion *"he* (Moses) *gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and placed them round about the tent. Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them they prophesied"* (Num. 11:24,25).

Since Jesus is called the greater prophet *like unto Moses,* whom God was to raise up to Israel, there is a prophetical significance to the spirit in Moses being put on these elders. It had a first-advent fulfilment at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was put on the Lord's disciples. For the theocratic New World Government the symbolic "elders" are seen to share their great King's nature and exaltation. Christ will also come down in clouds to perform this transformation. Like Moses, Aaron and the elders, who *went up and . . . saw the God of Israel* in the form of a high ranking angel (probably Michael), so the saints are *caught up* to *see the God of Israel* in the face of his majestic Son. The literal number of elders under Moses were preserved throughout the history of National-Israel. This does not correspond with the symbolic number of twenty-four as seen by John sitting on thrones.

The David-Solomon Kingdom—A Type

In David's advanced age he made Solomon king in his stead. He also amassed great amounts of material, including gold and silver, for Solomon to build the temple of the LORD. Moreover he planned, under inspiration, and organized the various temple services (1 Chron. chap. 24). The number twenty-four figured largely in this organization:

1. 24,000 Levites had "charge of the work in the house of the LORD."
2. 24 Divisions of the sons of Aaron, each with a head, were appointed for the priesthood, to conduct the temple services.

3. 24 Leaders of temple musicians and singers, each having 12 performer under them, were appointed to praise the God of Israel.
4. 24 Gatekeepers were to guard the gates and storehouses of the temple during each watch.
5. 24,000 Armed service men, under each of twelve commanders, were there to serve the king month by month.

David, in the triumphant conquest of his enemies, typified his greater promised son, whom David addressed as his Lord. David said that this son of his would sit at God's right hand until his enemies were made his footstool. While David was a man of war, he could not build a temple to the Lord. His son Solomon took the throne as a prince of peace. To him God gave charge to build a permanent house of worship to His name. Solomon, with his temple and the glory of his kingdom, typified the greater son of David—the Prince of peace. Like David's troubled reign of 40 years subjecting his enemies, so it will take 40 years from Christ's coming in glory, before he can reign as Prince of peace. The evidence for this will be presented later. Like David, Christ has been gathering in abundance, the appropriate human materials for his great spiritual temple, the NEW JERUSALEM. They are men and women of tried faith, like gold from the fire and precious stones which are seen to garnish the walls and foundations of the New Jerusalem. As a prince of peace Jesus will build these men and women of the wilderness tabernacle worship, into a magnificent holy spiritual temple.

We may comprehend in the twenty-four elders, not that many saints on thrones, but a vast organization of Christ's theocratic government. They are there as *a kingdom and priests to our God* reigning on earth. The number "twenty-four" could nevertheless have some literal significance in the light of the David-Solomon type.

The scene Portrayed by Daniel

John saw the elders enthroned as the outcome of the first resurrection. *"Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed"* (Rev. 20:4). How they got there is revealed to John as souls beheaded, *"who came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years (*20:4). These are the same thrones as were seen by Daniel: *"As I looked thrones were placed and one that was ancient of days took his seat: . . . his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire"* (Dan. 7:9). The cherubic glory of Ezekiel's vision is to be seen here, with Christ enthroned above and God there present in Spirit; even as David wrote: *"He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! The LORD is great in Zion* (Ps. 99:1,2). What Daniel saw may be called the "GREAT ASSIZE" of world judgment at which the Lord's Christ presides. And Daniel looked when *"the court sat in judgment."* He beheld Jesus and the saints sitting in judgment on the 'stout horn' and the 'beast' of his vision (Dan. 7:10, 26)

The Cherubic Glory and the New Jerusalem

The divinely political import of John's early "Kingdom glory" visions needs to be related to the New Jerusalem of Rev. chapter 21. The latter will be fully dealt with under that heading, so we need only discuss its broad function in the Kingdom age at this juncture. Presented to us in the 5th and 21st chapters are two separate visions, the symbolism of one entirely differing from the other. It is significant that one was revealed at the beginning and the other at the close of the vast prophetical programme of seals, trumpets and bowls, which were to usher in the Millennium.

The scene of chapters 4 and 5 remains in active vision from the time John witnessed it, until its realization at the Lord's coming. John saw the existent LAMB of his day, standing in the midst of his future throne and releasing judgments on pagan Rome. Saints in visional glory were as living creatures and elders about the throne. It was a vision of things to come from Rev. 4:1 to 5:10 except for the Lamb himself. So long as it can be said of the saints. *"They SHALL reign on the earth"* (5:10), the realization of the vision is still pending. The same verse says, *"and HAST made them a kingdom and priests to our God . . . "* This refers to the mortal priesthood

of saints in their "wilderness tabernacle," Already referred to (1 Pet. 2:9; 2:5; Rev. 1:6). The words *hast made* applied to saints in John's day and since, but concerning actual kingship *they SHALL reign.*

Verse 11 of chapter 5 opens with the words *"Then I looked"* and John saw the symbolic vision spring to symbolic reality. He saw angels in the vision for the first time and there were myriads of them. This is the fulfilment of Jesus' words, *"When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne." "His glorious throne"* would initially be the throne of David; but what John sees (Rev. 5:11-14) is a scene of universal acclamation of the LAMB, initiated by the angels. Its setting is at the end of the 7th bowl judgment following the obliteration of Great Babylon. The scene corresponds with that of Rev. 19:1-7 where the 24 elders and living creatures fall down and worship (19:4). Here the marriage of the Lamb is imminent (v.7).

The Lord's throne is confined to Israel until the great "hour" of judgment is completed. Only then does his throne and dominion become universal in the acknowledgement and praise of all peoples (Rev. 5:13; 19:6). Only then do the saints take their millennial thrones and become a part of the Holy City, which is the Lamb's Bride. The NEW JERUSALEM is the permanent and indeed the perpetual "Glory of the Lord" that will carry on beyond the millennial reign and fill the whole Great Assize of Revelation 4 and 5, but in a different functional setting. Overtly it is there for ETERNAL SALVATION to the ends of the earth. It highlights the High Priesthood of Jesus after the order of Melchizedek and the priesthood of his saints. The intense spiritual unity of the ideal marriage bond will result in the spiritual begettal of millions of sons and daughters, entering into the gates of the Holy City.

The saints who make up the cherubim and elders are built into the great high walls of the city to reflect the glory of God to the world. Jesus is there both inti-typical *King of Salem* and *Priest of the Most High God:* after the order of MELCHIZEDEK. The heart of the theocratic government of the "new heavens" is the New Jerusalem and its primary function is to give mankind eternal redemption.

It is reasonable to think of the cherubic-elder formation as continuing to exist and operate beyond the severe judgment period, into the millennial reign. In a more subdued and benign form, it must remain the power behind the throne. Even after the great "earthquake" the ideological warfare will continue, in which the sword in the mouth of the King on the white horse will be *sharp in the heart of the king's enemies.* Also may be seen in the mobile and multitudinous cherubim, the white horse riders who blaze the Gospel throughout the New World. This symbology was used in the 1st seal (Rev. 6:1), when one of the living creatures, with a voice of thunder said "COME!" Then a white horse rider with a bow went out conquering and to conquer. This is interpreted as the early virile Gospel drive throughout the Roman Empire. Thus is seen the white horse, symbol of spiritual conquest, at both beginning and end of the long judgment programme.

Summarising the Evidence

The living components of John's vision and its symbology have been fully considered in the light of Old Testament evidence. It becomes clear that it constitutes the Great Assize sitting in judgment on the fourth world dominion, and in particular on the great Babylonian system and its false prophet. There has been a continuity of the vision since John's day and it still remains such. Beside the existent Lamb, the vision has been infused with elements of reality as a court of divine judgment throughout the Christian era. It finds reality when the Lamb and his "144,000" stand on Mount Zion. The court sits in active and realistic judgment throughout the pouring of the 6th and 7th bowls.

Some of the scriptures quoted may now be grouped, to show how they illuminate the fulfilment of John's vision.

ONE SEATED ON A THRONE:

He bowed the heavens and came down (Ps. 18:9)

The LORD is great in Zion . . . Holy is he. .....David

The LORD reigns. Mighty King, lover of justice.

His throne was fiery flames. .....Daniel

THE LAMB:

The Lamb stood on Mount Zion.

The Lamb will conquer them . . . for he is King of kings. .....Revelation

THE LIVING CREATURES (CHERUBIM):

He (the LORD) sits enthroned upon the cherubim.

He rode on a cherub and flew. .....David

He was seen upon the wings of the wind.

Its (his throne's) wheels were burning fire. .....Daniel

The armies of heaven followed him on white horses .....Revelation

TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS (on thrones):

Thrones were placed . . . the court sat in judgment .....Daniel

But the court shall sit in judgment.

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed. .Revelation

II: FULFILLED PROPHECIES OF THE REVELATION

CHAPTER 7 - THE APOCALYPSE IN DANIEL'S PROPHECY

The Dream Image of Four World Empires

Among the Hebrew captives taken to Babylon about 606 B.C., was a young man, Daniel by name, who was skilful in learning "and competent to serve in the king's palace.". He had understanding in all visions and dreams. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon dreamed a dream, forgot it, then commanded his magicians to both recall and interpret it. They considered the request most unreasonable. Daniel besought the God of Israel who revealed the thing to Daniel, so that he was able to tell the king his dream and then to interpret it.

The metallic image seen by the king depicted four great empires standing up on the earth, one after the other. The golden head symbolized Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon; silver breast and arms, Medo-Persia; brazen belly and thighs, the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great. The legs of iron, with feet and toes of iron and clay, stood for the great Roman Empire. The most remarkable feature of the dream was the complete breaking up of the image by a FALLING STONE cut without hands; which smote the image on its feet and toes. *"The stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (*Dan. 2:35). Special importance was attached to the toes of the image: *"And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle"* (Dan. 2:42). *"And in the days of THOSE KINGS (toe kingdoms) the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . It will break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever"* (Dan. 2:44).

The four successive empires commenced about 606, 539, 323 and 149 B.C. in the order named. Each in turn took over the land of Israel, thereby subjecting the Jewish people. Their total dominion over Israel was to last seven times, equal to 2520 years. Jesus referred to these times when he said *"Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24). From 606 B.C. to 1914 A.D. equals 2520 years, bringing us to World War I. In 1917 Jerusalem was liberated from the Turk and the Jew has been returning to his homeland ever since.

The fourth "Beast" Empire of Daniel's Vision

Daniel's own visions recorded in chapter 7 revealed four beasts coming up out of the "great sea" (the Mediterranean) different from one another. These represented the same four empires as did the metallic image of Daniel chapter 2. The fourth beast was *terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet"* (Dan. 7:7). This, Daniel was told, is "*a fourth kingdom on earth which . . . shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces"* (Dan. 7:23).

The fourth beast symbolized the Roman Empire and its head, the emperor-directed government in Rome. At the end of the 4th century A.D. the eastern half of the empire broke away under a separate emperor centred in Constantinople. This division into Eastern and Western Roman Empires constituted the two iron legs of the metallic dream image. The clay in the iron feet of the image meant that the Roman Empire was to mingle with the seed of men (Dan. 1:43 A.V.), covering territory much greater and with population far exceeding that of the Roman Empire under the Caesars. The ten horns which Daniel saw on the beast's head represented those tribes of Europe, who by conquest divided Western Rome into separate kingdoms. This was the introduction of the clay element into the imperial iron of Rome, but through lack of cohesion the result was a weakening of the empire as foretold by Daniel (2: 41,42). In this divided state the pope gradually usurped the secular powers of the former emperor thereby establishing papal power as the restored head of the Roman beast. Further, as the spiritual partner in the "Holy Roman Empire" he became the "stout horn" seen by Daniel

growing from the beast's head. His stout horn demanded and obtained firstly the spiritual and then the secular allegiance of the "ten horn" powers.

The fore-parts of the feet and their toes, stand for the Roman Empire in its two last phases, contemporary with the coming of Christ to reign. It is important to note that it is not in the "foot period" but in the "toe period" called "the days of those kings," that the God of heaven sets up His kingdom. His makes the toe kingdoms contemporary with the SETTING UP of Christ's Kingdom. The falling stone means the coming of Christ from heaven; and the stone becoming a great mountain refers to the setting up of his Kingdom and its extension to world dominion. There is a clear inference in Dan. 2:44 that the stone does not crush the toes until the Kingdom of God is "set up." This will have an important bearing on our interpretation of the final dramatic events of the apocalyptic visions.

A Papal Horn Recognized

The history of Western Europe is very much the history of the Papacy and the remarkable power it was able to wield over the nations of Europe. Daniel saw a LITTLE STOUT HORN rise up after the ten horns and cast down three of them (Dan. 7:8,11,20,21). History marks this stout horn as the pope of Rome. He had eyes like a man (holy see or seer) and a mouth speaking great things. He made war with the saints and prevailed. He acquired temporal power (papal states) in Italy, causing three of the ten-horn powers to be *"plucked up by the roots"* (Dan. 7:8). He was *the lawless one* (man of sin A.V.) referred to by Paul. *"He takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God"* (2 Thess. 2:3,4). His extravagant claims made him a man of blasphemy. He fused Christianity with Paganism. He was to have power over the souls of men and to persecute the saints of God for 1260 years (prophetical days) (Dan. 7:25). This stout horn was to challenge the glorified Christ at his return and oppose the setting up of his divine Kingdom. This will result in the HORN'S utter destruction (Dan. 7:11,26; 2 Thess. 2:3).

The vital link between Daniel's prophecy and the Revelation is this stout pseudo-Christian horn of Dan. 7:8,11. Daniel was directed to a wider horizon than the misfortunes and redemption of his own Hebrew people. This little horn power, with its eyes and mouth, was to wear out the saints of the Most High; until the "Ancient of Days" came in judgment and the saints received the Kingdom.

The dreadful fourth beast, as Daniel beheld it, remained in its initial pagan form up to the time of Constantine. Its true capital was always to be Rome of the Imperial Caesars. The ten "horn" nations sprouted from the head of a christianised imperial Rome after the 5th century A.D. The development of the Papacy into its "horn" phase was gradual, but it fully matured about the close of the eighth century A.D. Daniel's vision of the fourth beast in its formation, career and destruction by the Son of man and his saints is an epitome in advance of the apocalyptic prophecy concerning the papal power.

God's Key Plan—Roman Legs, Feet and Toes

The dream image of Nebuchadnezzar is to be regarded as the key plan of God's purpose, from the commencement of the "seven times" of Gentile dominion to the setting up of the Kingdom of God. By means of a human form, God displayed in broad outline all prophetical fulfilment since Israel's captivity to Babylon. It is important to determine how the fourth beast vision of Daniel chapter 7 and the Revelation, fit into the image interpretation of Daniel chapter 2. Daniel's fourth beast vision is firstly identified as the western leg of the image, both in its pagan and imperialized Christian form. For the central theme of the vision—the "stout horn" in a disintegrated Roman Empire—we must look at the western iron-clay foot of the image, which has been in existence for nearly fifteen centuries. Together with the imperial western Roman leg this foot contains all the prophecies wrapped up in Daniel's fourth beast vision and their extensive elaboration in the Revelation.

The actual growth of this western foot of the image, is measured in the fulfilment of these prophecies up to our present time. The growth of the toes on both feet is still future and these may be identified as the ten kings of Rev. 17:12. Care must be taken not to confuse the ten kings of Daniel's fourth beast (Dan. 7:7, 20), with the ten "toe" kings of the dream image (Dan. 2:42,44). The ten toes of the image, on which the Messianic STONE POWER was seen to fall, is a future development of fourth World Gentile Dominion. Indeed this ten-toe phase will not materialize until after the Lord and his redeemed saints stand upon Mount Zion. Suffice it to say here that the ten-toe phase will involve the beast and the stout horn in their final and leading role of confrontation with the returned Son of God.

The Eastern Roman Leg

Since the eastern leg and foot of the image have not been identified with Daniel's fourth beast, nor with the central theme of the Revelation, the inevitable inquiry must be anticipated. The eastern leg of the image is definable as the Eastern Roman Empire, with its headquarters in Constantinople. Its duration in history as a separate empire extends from the fourth to the fifteenth century A.D. and it is apocalyptically styled the "dragon." The true characteristic of the "dragon" power is its pagan or godless religion. When Constantine cast the pagan dragon out of Rome it renewed its apocalyptic identity in Constantinople and was found there in a christianised form in 395 AD. The seeds of a divided empire were sown when Constantine built his new Eastern capital, calling it after his own name.

The first six seals of the Revelation concerned the dragon power in Rome. After his exit from Rome, the dragon played a minor but important role by yielding his power and authority to the papal "mouth" in Rome. The disintegration of the Eastern Roman Empire and its mingling with the "seed of men," came many centuries after that of Western Rome. It was this mingling of the iron leg or the east with other nations that formed the iron-clay eastern foot of the image.

Evidence will be adduced to show that Soviet Russia and her satellites constitute the modern dragon power in Europe. As such it is the eastern foot on which the image is at present standing. The major role of this modern dragon power is not part of the apocalyptic prophecies, because it has to do with National-Israel at the Lord's coming. Nevertheless the binding and ultimate destruction of the dragon as the godless serpent, Devil and Satan is clearly foretold in the Revelation. It is to Old Testament prophecy we must turn for details of that mighty event which introduces Messiah's presence to the Jewish nation. This will be the subject of further chapters.

While Russia and her confederate nations, as the modern dragon, may be regarded as the eastern foot of the image, she will for a time dominate both feet (eastern and western Europe) until destroyed by the Lord's coming to Israel. Thereafter, when the ten toe kingdoms appear and the papacy rises to power, the West will dominate the toe kingdoms on both feet. This will be made clearer as we proceed. Such is the outline of events given in symbolic and graphic form by the spirit of God working in Daniel six centuries B.C. It was about seven centuries later that the risen Saviour, exalted to the right hand of God, revealed to the apostle John in detail, the outworking of Daniel's visions and prophecies.

CHAPTER 8 - PAPAL ASCENDENCY IN THE REVELATION

Constantine versus Paganism

In the early chapters of the Revelation, the growth, persecution and subsequent declension of the Christian Church is foretold (see 2 Thess.2:3). This transpired over the two centuries which followed the revelation to John. There then came a crisis period in Roman history, when the age old pagan religion of Rome was challenged and threatened by the then influential and apostate Christianity which it persecuted. The church had a brilliant champion in the person of Constantine (312 AD). The persecuted church, like a woman in travail, *"brought forth a male child"* (Rev. 12:2,5). *"Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon . . . and the great dragon was thrown down . . . to the earth" (*12:7-9). The church became clothed with the Sun-god of paganism (Rev. 12:1).

History interprets this symbology with great clarity. In 309 AD there were five sub-emperors associated with pagan Emperor Galerius, Constantine being one. The *war in heaven* was a contest between them for the throne and government of the Roman Empire. Constantine, a pagan believing he saw a vision of a cross flaming in the night sky, took it as a symbol of his victory over paganism. He inscribed the cross on his soldier's shields, with the words, "take this and conquer." His armies and generalship were invincible and with such a champion the apostate "WOMAN" church was elevated by Constantine to bask in the sun of Rome's imperial throne (Rev. 12:1).

The true Ecclesia, shunning the patronage of an emperor, fled into the "wilderness" (Rev. 12:6). In this obscurity she continues to remain until the coming of the Lord. By 324 AD Constantine had vanquished all his rivals. Paganism was here seen as a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, plainly identifying it with Daniel's fourth beast. In the divine purpose it had to be removed to make way for a new form of despotism upon the seven hills of Rome (2 Thess. 2:6,8).

Rise of the Sea Beast

Having completed its pagan phase, the Revelator presents the Roman Empire as a beast with new characteristics. "And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems upon its horns and a blasphemous name upon its heads" (Rev. 13:1). Here was a second phase of Daniel's fourth beast. It developed out of Constantine's conquest of paganism. It was pseudo-Christian, since it was stamped with a blasphemous name. The first five forms of Roman government had passed away when John wrote the Revelation, but the sixth head of the imperial Caesars still existed. The seventh head was to come (Rev. 17:10). The heads also stood for Rome upon its seven hills (Rev. 17:9). The blasphemous name developed upon the Bishop of Rome, elevated to universal bishop by emperor-decree. He assumed such titles as "Successor of St. Peter"; "Vicar of our Saviour

Jesus Christ on this earth"; "Father of the Princes of Kings"; "Pontiff of the World"; "Pope" (Father) and even "God". Blasphemy issued from his spurious doctrines of priesthood, image worship, purgatory, celibacy, papal infallibility and authority over earthly kings and the souls of all men. The beast was given a mouth like a lion's mouth and it was said to *"utter haughty and blasphemous words" (*Rev. 13:5). The ancient Babylonian symbol of the lion was now applied to the papacy (Dan. 7:4), Rev. 13:2,5, 6).

A line of Roman emperors from Constantine in 311 to Phocas in 607 conceded papal claims and *"gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority"* (Rev. 13:2). Roman Catholicism became obligatory as the state religion. Papal edicts of ex-communication thundered from the "Chair of St. Peter," often against high dignitaries and even emperors.

The Gothic Seventh Head

The transfer of the emperor's throne from Rome to Constantinople not only gave the Pope full scope for wielding and augmenting his spiritual authority; but it enabled him to gradually build up temporal authority as well. This divided control from two remote cities weakened the emperor's authority. In the reign of Theodosius (378 to 395), the empire divided into East and West with two emperors. The Western Roman Empire ceased to exist as such after 476 A.D. Odoacer the Goth invaded Italy, followed by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, the notable king of the short-lived seventh head in Rome. The duration of this head was sixty years (Rev. 17:10). The ten horns were starting to sprout on the head of the beast, as the Germanic and other European tribes began to invade and threaten Rome. These tribes espoused Christianity but not Roman Catholicism. Theodoric was an "Arian" as opposed to papal trinitarianism. The papacy found itself restricted and its ambitions frustrated. The sixth head, which papal Rome was ambitious of assuming, had received a mortal wound (Rev. 13:3).

The Wounded Sixth Head and Its Healing

This mortal wound was healed in part by Justinian, Eastern Roman Emperor in Constantinople. His generals overthrew the Gothic king in Rome and Justinian replaced him with his own viceroy in Ravenna, N.E. Italy. Through this medium, the Eastern Roman emperors exercised civil jurisdiction over Italy and the papal domain from 554 to 759 A.D. Justinian was an avid Roman Catholic; assuming the role of a theologian to further Catholic interests and promote the authority of the Bishop of Rome. He authorized and confirmed by decree, the Roman Bishop's claim to supremacy over all the bishops of the Roman world, at the same time "rendering honour to the Apostolic throne and to your holiness . . . We hasten to increase the honour and authority of your throne."

A decree by Justinian, "THE SETTLEMENT OF ITALY," was granted at the pope's request in 554 A.D. It reduced Rome to the second rank and left the "Apostolic Throne" therein free from the overshadowing and blighting "supervision" of a temporal sovereign authority. Thus "*the dragon (*Eastern Rome) *gave him his power and his throne and great authority"* (Rev. 13:2). "We ordain," wrote Justinian, "that the most 'Holy Pope' of the elder Rome be the first of all priests." What Justinian decreed, the Eastern Emperor Phocas confirmed and established in 607 A.D., declaring the Church of Rome to be head over all other churches.

Emperor vs Pope

With other Eastern emperors, a passive struggle developed between them and the papacy. The pope continued to press his claims of spiritual and ecclesiastical authority over the souls of all men, including emperors and kings, *"And authority was given it* (the mouth of the beast) *over every tribe and people and tongue and nation" (Rev. 13:7).* In the ensuing struggle over the long centuries, the popes of Rome were plainly the victors as attested by the history of Europe.

There were times when papal fortunes were at a low ebb, but the papal line is marked with popes of outstanding abilities and astuteness; masters of deception and diplomacy. Nor were they lacking in the spirit of martyrdom in order to achieve their ambitions. They laboured mightily over centuries to increase their spiritual and secular authority over earthly kings and rulers. Such popes as Innocent I, Boniface I, Leo I, Gregory I and Boniface III, ranging from 400 to 607 A.D., were prominent in the development of the "beast mouth." Overall they outwitted and outmatched the Eastern Roman emperors; as they were subsequently able to do with the kings of Europe.

The taboos, superstitions and credulity of paganism were carried over into the Catholic religion. There were more saints created than there were pagan gods. The old idol worshipping instincts were catered for by the numerous statues, paintings, crosses and ornaments of worship within the churches. Crosses and relics were venerated and pilgrims touched and kissed the lifeless remains of "martyrs and the bones of saints." Claims of visions and miracles, of pictures and statues which spoke and moved and bled, were made by "the faithful." The church provided all the props, paraphernalia and alleged traditional details to excite and satiate the depraved credulity and superstition of the times.

It was all clothed with monkish mystery, claiming endowment of divine energy with an inherited divine authority. Kings and commoners alike responded to the deception and were overawed by the grandeur of ritual peculiar to the genius and pomposity of Rome. The magnificent virtue and self-sacrifice of the lowly Nazarene, so appealing to the human soul, were enjoined upon the laity for subservience and abject loyalty to an hierarchy and head, who usurped all the glory, authority, majesty and power that belonged to the exalted Christ. The Apostle Paul's remarkable prediction describes it as: *"By the activity of Satan . . . with pretended signs and wonders and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, . . . Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false"* (2 Thess 2:9-11).

A Papal Dominated Rome

Around 570 A.D., the Lombards, a "horn" power opposed to the papacy, conquered the greater part of Italy. Rome became a decadent city with the pope in secular authority to guide its fallen fortunes The advent of pope Gregory (the Great) in 590 A.D. revealed a prudent and cunning ruler, whose wise administration in a time of stress greatly enhanced papal prestige. A distinct step toward temporal power by the Roman pontiff had been effected.

Following the Lombard invasion the Eastern emperor's hold on central Italy slipped. The final break between Rome and the East came when Eastern Emperor, Leo III, decreed that all image worship in Christian churches should cease. Pope Gregory II (715-731) ignored the decree and excommunicated Leo. Gregory's letter to Leo was a sample of what the great "MOUTH" had in store for the world.

"How tremendous the scandal," he writes. "You now accuse the Catholics of idolatry; and by the accusation, you betray your own impiety and ignorance . . . you assault us O tyrant with a carnal and Military hand . . .You declare with foolish arrogance, I will dispatch my orders to Rome: I will break in pieces the image of St. Peter . . . The eyes of the nations are fixed upon our humility; and they revere as a God upon earth, the apostle St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy . . . these pious barbarians (the Lombards) are kindled into rage; they thirst to avenge the persecution of he East. Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise. . . . and repent. If you persist, we are innocent of the blood that will be spent in the contest." (Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Low abridgment, Pelican, p.b. pp 631, 632).

Leo's attempt to curb the papal rebellion resulted in his fleet arm being routed on the river Po. Italy was now virtually free from the Eastern emperor. In 750 the Lombards took over the Eastern Exarchate in Italy but Pepin of France wrested these States from them about six years later.

Papal Overtures to the West.

With Rome severed from Constantinople, a new phase of papal power opened up in the West. With the Lombards threatening Rome, pope Stephen turned to the Frankish kings for help. He suggested that Mayor Pepin II, son of Charles Martel, assume kingship. Encouraged to assert himself by force of arms, Pepin and his son (the future Charlemagne) were anointed by the pope "Protector of the Romans" and Pepin elevated to the Frankish throne. Pepin then delivered Rome from the Lombards who surrendered to Charlemagne in 774. Territories of Eastern Rome in Italy were donated to the Church by Pepin. These "Papal States" made the pope a secular ruler in his own right.

The development of the "SEA BEAST" (Ref. 13:1) is here traced for about 450 years from Constantine's day. Five of the Beast's head had historical significance only and the living head was the sixth "emperor" head of the Caesars. This sixth head was the one seen on Daniel's fourth beast (7:20). It started with Caesar Augustus in the days of Christ and was finally seen as the papal "LION MOUTH" of the Sea Beast. When the papacy threw off the yoke of Eastern Rome, the "Sea Beast" was centred in Rome. The papacy was its sixth head and Italy was its body. Guaranteed by Charlemagne, it could be said in Gibbon's words:

"The sovereignty of Rome no longer depended on the choice of a fickle people; and the "successors" of St. Peter and Constantine were invested with the purple and prerogatives of the Caesars."

The "Donation of Constantine" – Papal Pillars

Before the end of the 8th century the papal archives suddenly revealed letters, decisions and laws of the Bishop of Rome, dating back to the first century, together with alleged State documents. One document claimed how Emperor Constantine (311 A.D.) was healed of leprosy, then baptized by Bishop Sylvester in Rome. Also that Constantine, out of gratitude, withdrew from "the patrimony of St. Peter," declaring his resolve to found a new capital in the east (Constantinople); and resigned to the popes the "free and perpetual sovereignty of Rome, Italy and the provinces of the West."

Seven centuries elapsed before historians and lawyers discovered that these were all base forgeries. Gibbon described these forged papal decretals and "Donation of Constantine" as "The two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the popes." Adrian I (pope 772-795) exhorted Charlemagne by letter to imitate the liberality and revive the name of the great Constantine. Renwick remarks:

"The aim was to support the stupendous claims then being made by the pope for dominance in church and state. On such a false foundation the mighty power of the Roman Church was largely built up." (The Story of the Church, p.84)

CHAPTER 9 - THE TWO-HORNED BEAST (Revelation 13:11,12)

It Rose Out of the "Earth"

"Then I saw another beast which rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed" (Rev.13:11,12). First a sea beast, but here an earth beast: that is, its body politic was situated remote from the Mediterranean Sea. It had horns like a lamb, suggesting that it might be a champion of Christianity; but its voice belied it for it spoke like a dragon.

This concise description of the EARTH BEAST has been remarkably fulfilled in medieval history by the "Holy Roman Empire". It started in 800 A.D. as a co-partnership of pope and emperor, the latter first Frankish and later German. With emperor first dominant, the power balance soon shifted, and the pope finally assumed and then asserted both temporal and ecclesiastical dominance over the nations of Western Europe. The testimony of Gibbon, the historian, based on many earlier historical annals, bears eloquent testimony to the accuracy of the Lord's revelation to John.

Charlemagne-Papal Pact

Charlemagne became king of the Franks in 771 A.D. On his first visit to Rome, Adrian the pope dispatched magistrates and nobles of Rome to meet him with a "holy banner"; whereupon Charlemagne dismounted and led the procession to the Vatican. He devoutly kissed each step to the "threshold of the apostles". Gibbon records how the pope and Charlemagne embraced as equals, while the people swore allegiance. Twenty-six years later, during his fourth pilgrimage to Rome (800 A.D.), Charlemagne appeared in the church of St. Peter.

"On the festival of Christmas," writes Gibbon, " . . . after the celebration of the holy mysteries, Leo (the pope) suddenly placed a precious crown on his head . . . with the acclamation of the people 'Long life and victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God the pacific Emperor of the Romans!' . . . after the example of Caesar he was saluted and adored by the Pontiff: his coronation oath represents a promise to maintain the faith and privileges of the church." ("The Decline and Fall . . ." Low's abridgement, Pelican, p.b. pp. 643 ,644.)

So came into existence the TWO-HORNED BEAST; the Frankish secular horn overshadowing the papal partner born in Rome. The words of Gibbon are significant.

"And Europe dates a new era from his (Charlemagne's) restoration of the Western Roman Empire."

Under the caption "Holy Roman Empire" in the "New World Encyclopaedia" (1935) we read:

"The Holy Roman Empire was in theory the secular arm of the Papacy. It stood for the world government of Christendom in the same way as the Papacy stood for its spiritual government and naturally enough they quarrelled. The history of Medieval Europe is overshadowed by the struggles of these two national institutions. The result was the defeat of the empire."

Of the period 1016 to 1122 A.D. it reads:

"The Papacy claimed complete superiority over all secular powers, including the Holy Roman Empire. The famous Pope Gregory VII was determined to free the church from all vestige of lay control. In 1075 he laid down the claim that the election and institution of clerics must be free from interference from all temporal powers."

In the struggle, Henry IV of Germany was excommunicated and later deposed by Gregory, who in turn was later deposed by Henry. In 1122 Henry V and the pope came to terms and the "Concordat of Worms" settled the matter in favour of the popes. In 1152 Frederick I "interfered with Italy," and became involved with the

papacy and the Lombard cities. “At the battle of Legnano (1176) he was defeated, and Europe again saw an emperor making submission to a pope.”

A Papal-Activated “Two-Horned Beast”

The MOUTH of the Sea Beast in Rome, developed for five centuries under Roman emperorship, was now active in the two-horned beast which followed it. “*It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast . . . “ (13:12).*

The “Sea Beast,” wounded by the Gothic sword in Rome, was now fully healed. This quotation shows that the countries of Europe were to be coerced and induced by the “Earth Beast” to pay spiritual homage to the Sea Beast in Rome. The struggle between the secular and Episcopal horns of this second beast did not dim the ardour of the emperor to have his whole empire “christianised” to papal pattern.

Renwick remarks:

“Early in the ninth century Ansgar carried the gospel to Denmark and Norway. In 846 Rastiz slaughtered his subjects in Moravia until he succeeded in making his domain ostensibly Christian. In 848 fourteen Bohemian princes were baptized . . . in 860, Boris, king of Bulgaria, followed the general policy of Rastiz and massacred many. In 968 Poland became nominally Christian. The Magars fell under Christian influence from 973 onwards after being defeated by Germany. . . By the end of the 13th century nominal Christianity covered all Europe except Finland and Lapland.” (“The Story of the Church,” p.88.)

The emperor’s oath bound him to this policy. Under papal ecclesiastical direction he “*makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first* (sea) *beast.”*

After the Western Roman Empire terminated, due to the Gothic invasion of 487 A.D., the empire was divided up among the ten horn kingdoms seen by Daniel on the sixth imperial head phase. Daniel saw the stout papal horn usurping the rulership of three of the “ten” horns, who were plucked up by the roots (Dan. 7:8). This unique horn had eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things. His was unmistakably the mouth of the Sea Beast speaking great things. This was unmistakably the mouth of the Sea Beast speaking from the Earth Beast also, and matching up with its papal horn foreseen in Daniel’s vision. The progression of this horn resulted in the vanquishing of the Vandals, Lombards and Huns as kingdoms, first by Justinian 533, then by Pepin 774, and by the Holy Roman Empire in the tenth century.

The Divine Assessment Always Right

Be it carefully noted that the prophetical spotlight of the Spirit, in both Daniel’s vision and the Apocalypse is continually focused on Paul’s “LAWLESS ONE” who *takes his seat in the temple of God,* so becoming the usurper and false Christ of prophecy. The MYSTERY OF INIQUITY holds the world stage, while emperors, kings, nations and governments are seen to act out their part for but a season. History, in its broad perspective, has a meaning which has to be interpreted by a subsequent generation. This is because there are elements of policy, intrigue and motive, so often concealed at the time of happening.

It is the stamp of divine revelation, that in the prophecies considered, the symbology not only predicts the events; but together with the literalised comments, reveals the subtleties of those contriving and motivating them. The ramifications of Rome are so steeped in subtlety and deceit that only the divine Spirit can penetrate the depths of this “mystery of iniquity.”

Whatever man may say about papal history, we may rest assured the divine assessment is the correct one. Paul was speaking under inspiration when he wrote that is was *"with pretended signs and wonders and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish . . . to make them believe what is false"* (2 Thess. 2: 9-11).

The Struggle of the Two Horns for Power

The Apostle John saw in a symbolic vision, 700 years beforehand, that remarkable event which was to shape the history of Europe over a period of a thousand years of papal ascendency and decline. The Papal-Charlemagne pact was adopted as an expedient by the pope, against the threat of possible annihilation by the Lombards. To the Frankish kings it meant a greatly extended empire at small cost of arms. The title "Emperor of all the Romans" also carried with it the glory of a Constantine; a flattery which Charlemagne was proud to accept and the papacy quick to exploit to its own interests. On his part the king and later the emperor, sought to exploit the papal influence over the souls of his subjects, in order to promote empire and unity. The name "Holy Roman Empire" actually dates from the conquest of the Franks (including Italy) by Otto, king of Germany in 962. Otto received his emperor's crown from the Roman Pontiff.

From the pen of Gibbon we read:

"In the beginning of the twelfth century . . .Rome was revered by the Latins as the Metropolis of the world, as the throne of the pope and emperor, who, from the eternal city, derived their title, their honours, and the right of exercise of temporal dominion . . . In the church of St. Peter coronation (of the emperor) was performed by his (Peter's) successor; the voice of God was confounded by the voice of the people; and public consent was declared in the acclamations of 'long life and victory to our Lord the Emperor' . . .)"

Decline and Fall . . ." Low's abridgement. Pelican p.b. p.856.)

Beneath this veneer the Romans regarded their emperor as a foreign intruder. Germany was meanwhile torn with internal dissension fermented by the bishops and princes under papal influence. From 1256 to 1273 the "Holy Roman Empire" had no emperor and when it revived it no longer included Italy.

Again from "The New World Encyclopaedia.":

"Unfortunately for imperial aspirations in Italy, there was another international power, the Papacy. Drawing on all Christendom for its resources, moral and material, it was able to resist the Empire and finally to defeat it . . . The dream of Roman unity, on which the Holy Roman Empire was based, could not have been achieved while this conflict of spiritual and temporal power remained unresolved. The Papal claim was that the state should serve religion."

Papal Triumph in the Contest

In 1143 the Lombard cities of Italy proclaimed a republic. The young German Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, attempting to quell the insurrection, was thoroughly beaten by the Lombard cities, whereupon the great emperor, Frederick, knelt before Pope Alexander and kissed his feet. Then holding the pope's stirrup like a menial, he led his horse by the bridle along the street; a complete surrender to papal authority. It was around this period that Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) and his successors laid the foundation to the pinnacle of papal power.

"His methods," says Renwick, "were brutal, involving the free use of military force . . . he carried through a revolution in the position of the church. He held that, as Vicar of Christ and representative of Peter, he could give and take away empires, kingdoms, duchies . . . and the possessions of all men. Everyone on earth, from the emperor down to the humblest peasant, must acknowledge him." (The Story of the Church, pp.88,89.)

The Revelator informs us of the earth beast: *"It works great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of men . . ."* (Rev. 13:13). This "FIRE" is seen as the amazing and audacious papal decrees, interdicts, indictments, bulls and acts of defiance of emperors and kings, based on his haughty and blasphemous pretentions. As Gibbon comments:

"And sometimes, thundering from the Vatican, he created, judged and deposed the kings of the world"

The figurative use of "heaven" and "earth" to represent a nation's throne of government and the common people respectively, is found throughout the Scriptures. The "earth" was scorched by the papal "fire". The ordinary officialdom of Europe and its citizens might well wonder and superstitiously regard as divine miracle the spectacle of a religious potentate, without any visible army, dethroning and defying kings and compelling them to obey his dictates.

Quoting Renwick:

"The humiliation of Henry IV of Canossa and Barbarossa at Venice, had led the people to believe the pope was all powerful and that every ruler was under his authority."

"And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation" (Rev. 13:7).

CHAPTER 10 - AN IMAGE FOR THE BEAST (Revelation 13: 13-15)

Deceived Those who Dwelt on Earth

It will now be realized that there were two papal arms of power and authority in Europe:

1. The assumed secular power of the sixth Roman head with civil jurisdiction in Rome and Italy, now guaranteed by an emperor in Europe. The over-riding and awesome "presence of God" in St. Peters was enthroned there as Vicar of Christ for the worship of kings and commoners. It was the throne on which he was placed by the "dragon" emperors, from Constantine to Phocas.
2. The far reaching arm of papal spiritual dominance, bending the secular power and will of a European emperor to serve the interests of the Catholic hierarchy. This aimed at the establishment of papal authority far beyond Italy. From this vantage point the papacy was able to press its claims for secular power.

"And by the signs which it is allowed to work in the presence of the (sea) beast, it deceived those who dwell on earth, bidding them make an IMAGE for the (sea) beast which was wounded and yet lived" (Rev.13:14). These "earth dwellers" who were deceived by the papal signs of power, extended eastward from Spain to the Black Sea and from Italy northward to Norway. It has been demonstrated how the "fire" sent down from the papal "heaven" affected the "earth dwellers." Paul predicted that it would be "with all power and with pretended signs and wonders and with all wicked deception . . ." (2 Thess. 2:9,10).

The deception was by reason of their inability to discern things that were false. They refused to love the truth and believed a lie. The same power which deceived them bade them make an image for the papal Sea Beast. They were bidden to do this by the Earth Beast through papal command and with emperor backing. Catholic archbishops, bishops and clergy carried the deception far and wide, bidding rulers, nobles, magistrates, civil authorities and armed forces, to make an IMAGE to "his Holiness the pope." It meant in effect that all must worship according to his dictates and accept all of his claims. All must mark and search out the heretic or be considered heretics themselves. As a decree it came from the emperor. The Roman Sea Beast was to continue for 42 months (Rev. 13:5), prophetically representative of 1260 years. Over this period *"it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation . . ."* (Rev. 13:7; see Dan. 7:25).

Formation of the Image (Rev. 13:13-16)

A perusal of these verses with verse 17 makes it clear that papal persecution of Christians resulted from their refusal to worship this apocalyptic "image." Since the spirit of Christ in the Revelation styles the Roman Catholic system "Babylon the great" (Rev. 14:8; 17:5), our mind naturally reverts to the ancient king of Babylon and his empire. King Nebuchadnezzar set up an image of gold for compulsory worship (Dan. Chap. 3). It was 90 feet high by 9 feet wide. The king's heralds proclaimed that all rulers and peoples, when they heard the sound of the king's music makers, should fall down before the image and worship. Any refusing were to be burned to death in a fiery furnace. This ancient edict and its consequences found its anti-typical fulfilment in the "earth" countries of Europe, under the most withering despotism and scorching persecution that ever wrung the hearts of men.

The INQUISITION had been defined as a Roman Catholic tribunal for the investigation of heresy, first formed in 1210; (St.) Dominic being the first Inquisitor-General. A committee set up in each parish brought before bishops all suspected of heresy. If found guilty after examination they were handed over to the civil arm for physical punishment, which included torture and death by burning. The inquisition spread throughout the

countries of Europe and was not abolished until the 19th century. Its victims over the centuries are said to number many millions. In France alone more than a million perished.

Power to put to Death

"And it (the earth beast) was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the (sea) beast should even speak, and to cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain" (Rev. 13:15). The Albigenses in southern France became numerous. They regarded the clergy of the time as corrupt and Roman Catholic rites as worthless. Archbishop Trench wrote, "The machinery, so wonderful in its wickedness and its craft, did not fail in its object . . . by the middle of the 14th century there were probably few Albigenses more." Four thousand Waldenses, Christians in the north of Italy and southern France, dating back to 1170, were massacred in Provence in 1545. On the night of August 24th 1572, came the diabolical massacre of St. Bartholomew, when 30,000 or more were murdered in France, starting in Paris. Some have put the total as high as 100,000.

Philip II of Spain introduced the inquisition in 1555 and it became an offence even to read a Bible. Beheading and burning characterized his reign. In both Germany and England the long arm of the inquisition wrought its fiendish work. Protestant clergy and bishops of England paid the supreme price, including Hooper, Ridley and Latimer, also Cranmer, Thomas Cromwell and John Rodgers, assistant to Tyndale. In the five-year reign of Mary Tudor (1553-58), there were 286 burnt to death for being protestants, besides many more who died in prison. In Germany the reformer Huss and Tyndale himself were burned or strangled at the stake; Huss in 1415 and Tyndale in 1536.

Papal Edicts Enforcing Image Worship

To quote from "Eureka," the work of John Thomas:

"Lucius III and Innocent III (popes), by formal decrees, required heretics to be seized, condemned by bishops to the civil magistrates, to be capitally punished and enjoined the princes and civil magistrates to execute on them the sentences denounced on them by the canon and civil laws."

From these decrees the following is extracted:

"Supported by the presence and energy of our beloved son Frederick, the illustrious Emperor of the Romans, by the council of our brethren, other patriarchs, archbishops also, and numerous princes, who have assembled from different parts of the world, we rise by this decree against all heretics and by apostolic authority condemn every sect, by whatever name it is designated" (Vol. III p.342).

This establishes that these edicts were issued by the papal-directed "Earth-Beast" – the "Holy Roman Empire" – which was the secular arm of the Papacy. In effect the words of Rev. 13:14, *"BIDDING them to make an image for the beast"* were fulfilled by this far-reaching and sinister papal-inspired edict from a "council . . . assembled from different parts of the world." They were there under duress and "deceived" by the "signs" of power issuing from the papal *mouth* (verse 13).

Back in ancient Babylon six centuries B.C., Nebuchadnezzar summoned the same kind of assembly for a similar purpose: "Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the IMAGE which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up" (Dan. 3:2). The fact of later history is, that whether out of abject loyalty or fear, or conviction that the decree was justified, the papal edict was carried out with devastating effect on all refusing to fall down before the image. Renwick remarks:

“Since the bishops . . . had put little heart into their use of the inquisition, in 1231 Pope Gregory IX put this engine of iniquity into the hands of the Dominican Order, giving its leaders vast powers to coerce bishops and nobles, whose help they wanted in their nefarious work” (The Story of the Church, p.98).

The bishops, rulers and civil authorities were BIDDEN by decree of the “earth beast,” to set up this IMAGE, demand its worship by great and small and prescribe punishment for any refusing to do so. The command had the backing of the emperor and the empire, as the papal arm of power; especially throughout the countries of Western Europe.

No Loophole of Escape

To illustrate the far reaching terror of the inquisition and its violation of human conscience, a further extract from a papal edict is illuminating, quoting “Eureka,” Vol. III p.343:

“All who venture to preach publicly or privately, without authority from the Apostolic See or the bishop of the place, and all who dare to think or teach otherwise in respect of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, or baptism, or the remission of sins, or matrimony, or the other sacraments of the church, other than the Holy Roman Church preaches and practices; and generally all whom the Roman Church or individual bishops in their dioceses . . . shall judge to be heretics, shall be bound with the same bond of anathema . . . But a layman who is infected with the pest, unless abjuring the heresy and making satisfaction, he instantly flies to the orthodox faith, is to be left to the will of the secular power to suffer a vengeance in correspondence with his crime.”

The edict was all-embracive and left no loophole of escape. Beside the actual “heretic,” others culpable and worthy of like punishment were: Any who harbour or defend them; any who patronize or favour them; those who condemn the severity of punishment; those who are marked by the mere suspicion of the church if they cannot demonstrate their innocence. Those relapsing after recanting are to be punished most severely. Moreover any holding secret assemblies or differing in manners from the “faithful” were to be searched out twice a year in the parish, by bishops and populace who swear to report such.

Any failure to satisfy committed them to the tormentors. Any who refused to swear on oath were to be treated as heretics. Counts, barons, prefects and consuls were to promise under oath to effectively aid the church against heretics and accomplices and to execute the ecclesiastical as the imperial laws. Refusal to swear and obey such oath was to result in divestment of office, excommunication and lands placed under church interdict. Any city resisting decrees or refusing bishop’s request to punish those resisting, was to be deprived of the commerce of other cities. Any favouring heretics, condemned as such, were to be debarred from office as advocates or of giving testimony; and from all civil employment.

The famous LATERAN COUNCIL of 1215 under Innocent III, with 1000 bishops and abbots present and ambassadors from most kingdoms, enacted similar canons. A civil lord, neglecting after church admonition to clear his territory of heretical nuisance, is to be excommunicated. On refusal, after a year to comply, the supreme pontiff declared his vassals freed from serving him and allowed Catholics to seize his land.

“Catholics who assume the ‘sign of the cross’ shall gird themselves to the extermination of the heretics, shall enjoy the indulgence and be fortified by the sacred privilege . . .”

Behind such terms as “bond of anathema,” “condemn,” “suffer a vengeance,” “severest sentence,” “capitally punished,” etc., was the hideous concept of physical torture and confinement leading to the fire stake or the executioner’s block. The pagan dragon, centuries old in the technique or torture, had set the pattern for papal ingenuity to perfect and systemize. *“Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or on the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the*

mark . . . (Rev. 13:16,17). The papal Inquisition is history's complete answer to these remarkable prophecies of the Revelation as contained in its 13th chapter.

CHAPTER 11 - THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST DEFINED (Revelation 13: 14-17)

The Basis for its Definition

The outworking of these prophecies can only be appreciated from a factual picture of the papal inquisition in history. Our modern world tends to regard the recollection of such things as betokening sectarianism. The hard fact is that God will not allow man to forget history. The history we are considering is indelibly linked with those future mighty acts of God still required to complete the apocalyptic programme.

The image we seek to define was an object of compulsory worship, yet had the power within itself to kill any refusing to worship it. Its definition hinges around the words of verse 14, *"it* (the earth beast) *deceived those who dwell on earth, bidding them make an image FOR the* (sea) *beast that was wounded . . . and yet lived."* From historical evidence considered, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. It was not a literal image.
2. The "earth beast" BID or commanded its setting up. [Catholic bishops and clergy, as direct agents of the Pope, set up the image throughout Europe with power to coerce civil authorities to help "make" the image]
3. The "earth dwellers"—kings, counsellors, judiciary, etc., directed by local bishops—were to make the image in their own country. [The decree was "supported by the energy of . . . the illustrious Emperor . . . and numerous princes." Civil administrators dare not resist]
4. The specification for the image was given them by the "earth beast" under papal direction. [The pope and his high counsellors defined the "form" of the image; supported by the "counsel of our brethren, patriarchs and archbishops"]
5. The image was given "breath," "speech" and "authority to kill" those refusing to worship it (v15). [The INQUISITION was a papal concept with emperor backing. The image had within itself power to accuse, condemn, imprison and kill; and decreed on both accusers and killers the fate of heretics if they refused to comply]

Essentially a Name of Blasphemy

Basically the image constituted the assumed "Divine Authority: of the Pope, formulated by the Catholic hierarchy and guaranteed as law by the emperor. This "son of perdition" is seen by Paul as one *"who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship* (earthly kings and rulers)*,so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (*2 Thess. 2:4). The papal hierarchy, cardinals and archbishops, who finally wrested from the emperor the power to select their popes, helped to invent and then to extol as divine truth, the blasphemous titles and claims of papal grandeur. They were part and parcel of the MOUTH uttering *"haughty and blasphemous words" (*Rev. 13:5).

Papal canonists (ecclesiastical law interpreters) wrote, as quoted in "Eureka" by John Thomas:

> "The pope may be called a king. He is the Prince of princes, and Lord of lords. He is as it were, a god on earth. He is above right, superior to law . . . He can do all things against right and without right . . . Some say that he is greater than an apostle, and not bound by the commandments either of Peter or Paul. His sentence prevails against the judgment of the whole world. His sole will is instead of reason in the bestowment of ecclesiastical offices. . . He can take away a possession from the church and give it to another, even without a cause; . . . He is not bound by treaties. The Pope and Christ make one consistory. He can make justice of injustice. He can change the substance of things and make a thing out of nothing. He can change squares into circles." (Febroni de Statu Eccl. Lib. i. cix p. 527)

In our scientific and democratic twentieth century this may sound amusing; but it was instrumental in elevating a man to the greatest pinnacle of world power ever known; and promoted the death of millions of innocent and righteous people.

False Doctrine—Part of the Image

"Strong delusion, to make them believe what is false." So said Paul of those who worship this "man of lawlessness." Though not literal, the image was plainly that of a man claiming to be God. Everything proceeding from the MOUTH of this man was to be accepted as the commands of God himself. He was the Apostle's successor with the "keys to open and shut," but was superior to him. Centuries of apostate deliberations had built up a canon of spurious doctrines and dogmas, completely foreign to New Testament teaching. They became a part of the "image" that men and women were to fall down and worship.

They were to believe in priestly power to turn bread and wine into the literal body and blood of Christ; in priestly prerogative to hear confessions and forgive sins (mostly at a price). They were to accept the sacraments of infant baptism, matrimony, masses for the dead, fastings and other sacraments of the "Holy Roman Church." Belief in the soul's immortality, heaven going at death for "saints," purgatory for the great masses of Catholic humanity (to fill papal coffers), hell torments for heretics and mortal sinners, a literal devil to torment the living and the "dead"; all these were obligatory for belief by image worshippers.

Literal image worship and relic worship in churches, temple dedications, papal festivals, rosary beads and incantations, saint making to papal specification—all these and more were to be received without question. "All who dare to think . . . otherwise"; "all who venture to preach publicly or privately without authority from the Apostolic See"; thus spoke the image, causing all who refused to worship according to its false doctrines to be slain.

`The image of the Roman Sea Beast whose head was a man, was transported into nearly every country and kingdom of Western Europe. Its "body" reflected the secular power of the beast vested in the inquisition. Archbishop or bishop in every place was the "speaking voice" of the image. Their "breath and speech" were papal inspired and spurred by the inquisition; which was the slaying instrument for those accused by the speaking image. The papal ecclesiastical minions correspond to the musicians of old Babylon, playing on all kinds of instruments. When the people heard the music, they were to fall down and worship the image of Nebuchadnezzar himself, which he had "set up". The furnace awaited all refusing to worship.

The Mark of the Beast

"The 'earth beast' caused all . . . to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark . . . " (Rev. 13:16,17). This symbolism is taken from the ancient practice of marking slaves on hands or foreheads, with the name of their master or with an identifying number. It depicts a mental attitude of slavish worship or loyalty, born out of fear or delusion on the part of "beast" worshippers. It was "with all wicked deception . . . because they refused to love the truth" (2 Thess. 2:10). Their minds were conditioned by compulsion and deceit and their own credulity.

The image power, however, was not satisfied with a mental assent. It required its devotees to make "the sign of the cross" upon themselves. Their right hand was placed on their forehead, then their breast, then right and left shoulder, while repeating "the mystery of the holy trinity"—the cardinal doctrinal error of Rome. While identifying the worshipper it betrayed the "heretic." In contrast to this inner and outer marking of "beast" worshippers, there were those *"who had his* (Christ's) *name and his Father's Name written on their foreheads*" (Rev. 14:1). Here is a powerful conviction of truth which means a denial of false religion and a loyalty to the Most High God and His righteous Son.

It is clear from these papal edicts, quoted in part, that only those bearing the mark or sign of the beast, were allowed to preach the "gospel." This appears the basic meaning of the words, "*so that no one could buy or sell uness he had the mark of the beast or the number of his name" (*Rev. 13:17). It had a literal application too, when whole towns could be isolated commercially for having failed to eradicate its 'heretics."

The Number of His Name

The exalted Jesus, speaking from the right hand of his Father, is the basic author and focal centre of the Revelation. In disclosing the amazing career of apostate Christianity within the Roman Empire, our Lord made it abundantly clear that men had to choose between the "son of perdition" and the Lord of Life. The fourth great empire of Rome, that bruised the heel of the WOMAN'S SEED, Jesus Christ, was in turn to be bruised in the head by the same Christ at his appearing and Kingdom. ROME, the "eternal city" with its massive world-wide form of pseudo-Christianity and its supreme pontiff, is the very antithesis of JERUSALEM, the city of the Great King.

The mark or sign on the worshippers of the image is specified as: "The name of the beast or the number of its name . . . Let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number (the number of a man A.V.) its number is six hundred and sixty-six" (Rev. 13:17,18). One can only speak of the number of a name, when the alphabet of a language is also used to express numbers. This is so for Latin (Roman), Hebrew and Greek. It was apparently common practice in the apostle's day to make a riddle out of a name by adding together the numeral value of its letters. Because the Revelation was first recorded in Greek, the number would have to be reckoned or computed from a name of the beast written in Greek, the letters of which would add up to 666.

The solution to this divine enigma aroused Christian curiosity at a very early date. Irenaeus, overseer of the church at Lyons about the year 166 A.D., gave it as his opinion, that the name in Greek was "LATEINOS". The name means "The Latin Man" or "The man of Latium". Latium was that part of ancient Italy where the city of Rome was founded and its language developed. The *number of the name* is computed as follows:

L		A		T		E		I		N		O		S		
30	+	1	+	300	+	5	+	10	+	50	+	70	+	200	=	666

Ireneus wrote: "The name of 'Lateinos' contains the number 666, and it is very likely for they are Latins who now reign." The name applies to an imperial line rather than to an individual man. It is the "Supreme Pontiff" on the seven hills, whoever he may be at the time under consideration. Six is indeed a human-number, for man was made on the sixth day; but God's Millennial REST DAY of 1000 years for the world, is the seventh. SEVEN is God's number, but the Beast on the seven Hills with its seven heads, is a usurper claiming Godship.

Nebuchadnezzar's image of himself, set up for compulsory worship, was 60 cubits high by 6 cubits wide; a type of the beast number. Under the sixth or "emperor" head of the beast, our Lord was crucified. Out of the same head the papal horn grew; and the same sixth head is to come alive again to oppose Christ at his Second Coming (Rev. 17:8).

The Roman Catholic Church is called the Latin Church and uses Latin as its official language. Pope Vitalian, in 666 A.D., declared Latin as the official tongue of the Church and as the "Mystery of Iniquity" developed, so did its use of the traditional language of the Roman Caesars. "Catholic Belief," an authentic Catholic exposition, states: "Thus the Church speaks Latin because she is Apostolic, Unchanging and Catholic." It seems more than coincidence that the name, "The Latin Kingdom" in its Greek form, contains the same total number of "Lateinos," which so early appeared as the probable solution long before the Man of Latium and his great apostasy ever materialized.

The name Lateinos could possibly have been passed on from the Apostle John to Polycarp, thence to Irenaeus. Polycarp said he was John's pupil and Irenaeus was said to be taught by Polycarp.

CHAPTER 12 - THE DURATION OF THE SEA BEAST, EARTH BEAST AND THE IMAGE

The Papal Sea Beast

The career of the Sea Beast may be reckoned from the time of Constantine, the "son" of the apostate Christian "Woman," who set up the *son of perdition* of 2 Thess. 2:3 upon the throne of Rome. It can also be said that when Constantine removed to Constantinople, he acted in a dragon role of passing his power and authority to the Bishop of Rome. The apocalyptic dragon is called Satan, and Paul spoke of *"the coming of the lawless one by the activity of satan"* (2 Thess. 2:9). From the formation of the Christian Church at Pentecost to the advent of the "man child" Constantine, is a period of 280 years. On the day for a year principle as the standard scriptural yard-stick for prophetical times, there would be a gestatory period of 280 days to when the "man child" was born to the church (Rev. 12:5).

With the Bishop of Rome promoted to ecclesiastical authority by the "man child", the papal mouth of the beast developed gradually, *"and the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months"* (Rev. 13:5,6). Daniel gave the same period as *"for a time, two times and half a time"* (7:25). A "time" can be shown to equal 360 days and three and a half times is equal to 1260 days. This period, as we shall see, is 1260 historical years. Like the sun in its course the Papacy rose in strength till noonday and gradually waned to its sunset. The exercise of this authority, both ecclesiastical and secular, can be said to date from 607 A.D., from the decree of Phocas (already discussed) to the year 1867; a period of 1260 years. In 1867 the papacy was stripped of the last of its estates and temporal power. Add half of 1260 to 607 A.D. and the year 1237 is obtained. Around that time was the noon-day or zenith of papal power and his making war on the saints (Rev. 13:7).

The Earth Beast or "Holy Roman Empire"

The TWO-HORNED or Earth Beast, reckoning from 800 A.D., lasted over 1000 years to 1806 but it was shaped by the papacy into a tool to serve papal authority. Quoting from the "New World Encyclopaedia" under "Papacy":

Under Innocent III (1198-1216) and his successors, the Papacy reached the peak of its power. Innocent attempted to make the kingdoms of Christendom his vassal states and the ideals of Papacy and Holy Roman Empire were nearly united in the one institution, the Papacy."

This bears out precisely what the Revelation, chapter 13, tells us. The Earth Beast became an extension of the papal secular arm—an adjunct to the Roman Pontiff. Continuing from the same source we read:

"In the conflict between Empire and Papacy which broke the power of the former . . ." and under the caption, "Holy Roman Empire": "From the 17th century to the extinction of the title in 1806, the Holy Roman Empire was . . . neither holy nor Roman nor an empire. It was an empty title . . . the ghost of a power which had perished a long time since."

The Reformation gradually brought to an end the Papal secular domain; and the year 1870 witnessed a completion of the inroads on papal power initiated by Napoleon some 70 years previously. Stripped of secular power and estates the pope found himself very unpopular with the kings of Europe. Apocalyptically, he is now in the "abyss" or "bottomless pit," from thence to emerge at a time still future (Rev. 17:8)

The "Image of the Beast"

The image of the beast as an object of compulsory worship was of much shorter duration, dating from about 1210 to 1820. This was the official life of the Inquisition but "war on the saints" existed from the days of

Constantine (Rev. 12:6). On the other hand the Reformation gradually effected the suppression of the Inquisition in one country after another until its abolition in 1820. The worship of the beast and its image, though no longer compulsory, is still part of the Catholic system of worship and will only be terminated by the Lord's destruction of Great Babylon.

Of the Beast in the Abyss

Divested of secular authority in 1870, the papacy has at this time of writing, been in the apocalyptic abyss for 100 years. No longer has he the power to make war on God's saints. During these 100 years, Protestantism has worn very thin and papal ecclesiastical influence has gradually increased. This has largely been due to Jesuit influence and activity. It was instrumental in 1869 in securing, in the Vatican council, the doctrine of Papal infallibility to bolster the pope's fallen fortunes. In this modern world, Roman Catholicism has expanded along with protestantism and can claim dominion over 60 per cent of the world's thousand million nominal Christians. A concordat with Mussolini and the king of Italy in 1929 gave the Vatican jurisdiction over 110 acres of Rome, including the Vatican and St. Peters. A small sovereign State was formed.

The papacy, working through secret channels, still exerts a profound influence on world politics and international relations. This is much greater than the average citizen appreciates or wishes to be concerned with. Pope Pius XII (1939-58) was known as "the political pope". His intrigue with Hitler to establish Germany as "the sword of the Catholic Church" to revive the Holy Roman Empire, is now a matter of history, attested by undeniable evidence. The "bottomless pit" interval which followed the decline and cessation of papal power is clearly implied in the Revelation. It was to precede a final spectacular ascendency of papal dominion as would dazzle the modern world and galvanise the nations of Europe into militant Opposition to the returned Christ. This dramatic and world shaking event is symbolised in the 16th and 17th chapters of the Revelation. It is the final phase of the fourth world empire of Rome, and is of course future.

Daniel's Times and Seasons

It is beneficial at this point to review the closing scene foretold in Daniel's 7th chapter. The spotlight there is on the STOUT HORN with the eyes and mouth. The one and only head of Daniel's fourth beast was the 6th imperial head. Out of this grew the stout papal horn which was to *"wear out the saints of the Most High . . . and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times and half a time" (7:25).* This has already been computed as 1260 days. The "day for a year principle" is clearly shown in Dan. 9:24 R.S.V.; *Seventy weeks of years* (490 days of years) *are decreed concerning your people and your holy city."* History proves that these times, associated with Messiah's first coming, were actual years and not weeks of days. Jewish months were of 30 days and 29 days duration. Twelve months are equated to a "time" and also to 360 days in the Apocalypse. The 30 day month is here seen as the major division of God's prophetic "time period".

To compare Daniel's symbology of papal dominion with that of the Revelation, the symbols of papal development are listed below with the various BEAST phases depicted in the 12th, 13th and 17th chapters of the Apocalypse.

ALREADY FULFILLED

Beast No. 1 (Correctly known as the dragon)	Pagan Rome vanquished by Constantine, born to deliver the Christian Church from the GREAT RED DRAGON with seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 12:3).
Beast No. 2	A MOUTH uttering blasphemous words, given to a SEA BEAST with seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 13:1,5).

Beast No. 3	A HORN on a TWO-HORNED BEAST like a lamb and spoke as a dragon. This beast came later than No. 2 (Rev. 13:11)
Beast IMAGE	An IMAGE for Beast No. 2, set up by beast No.3 for compulsory worship. (Not a new beast.) (Rev. 13:14,15)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Beast No. 4	A SCARLET BEAST in "the wilderness" with seven heads and ten horns and full of blasphemous names (Rev. 17:3)
A WOMAN	Seated on Beast No. 4 having a name of mystery "BABYLON THE GREAT" (Rev. 17:1,4,5)
FALSE PROPHET	The papacy associated with the WOMAN (Rev. 16:13,14)

The Time Gap in Daniel's Prophecy

A careful perusal of Daniel's vision of the 7th chapter shows that it does not embrace the final development of the papal system and the Roman Empire, as depicted in the 17th chapter of the Revelation. Daniel's vision seems to cut the scene at the termination of the papal "STOUT HORN" power in 1867-70. It then bridges the "gap" of the "abyss" period with the words: *"But the court shall sit in judgment and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end"* (Dan. 7:26). If "his dominion" be regarded as his temporal one, it may now be said that it has been taken away. There is no suggestion in the Apocalypse that the papacy will achieve temporal power again. It is, however, to have great ecclesiastical power and influence over the nations of Europe and indeed of the whole world.

Daniel's words, *"the court shall sit in judgment"* (7:26), are consistent with *"the court sat in judgment"* (7:10), which is to transpire at the coming of the Ancient of Days. This being so the whole of the above quotation from verse 26 applies to the final judgment by Jesus and the saints. They constitute in Zion the great court of judgment, before which *the books* (of papal deeds) *were opened.* This is Daniel's prophetic climax of the final judgments on Beast and Woman and false prophet, as elaborated in the 17th and 18th chapters of the Revelation. With this should be coupled the words of verse 22: *"until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High and the time came when the saints received the kingdom"* (Dan. 7:22). The execution of the sentence to *be consumed and destroyed to the end,* obviously means the total extinction of the "stout horn" and the beast supporting it. This is equivalent to the Woman and false prophet of Revelation, chapter 17, together with the beast on which they sit.

CHAPTER 13 - THE TWO WITNESSES AND THE SECOND GREAT EARTHQUAKE (Revelation 11)

Defining the Witnesses

John was told to measure the temple of God. I was to be trampled down by the nations for 42 months or 1260 days (Rev. 11:1-3). John Thomas has shown in his "Eureka" that the two witnesses were firstly, the true and faithful saints who were "sealed" by the angel (7:2); and secondly, the semi-professing Christians, the freedom loving, civil-rights-protector class. These latter were styled "the earth" which "came to the help of the woman" (Rev. 12:16). They were prepared to use force of arms if necessary to preserve their rights. They hated the papal system for its religious intolerance and impositions and were strongly opposed to the dogmas and claims of Rome. The first witness, the true woman, followed her Lord's injunction and fled from persecution. Her weapons were spiritual, not carnal. Both were witnesses for God against papal wickedness, and both were suppressed by the might and intrigue of Rome. Both witnesses suffered martyrdom.

The span of time for the trampling of the "wilderness tabernacle" was 1260 years, given prophetically as 42 months. John Thomas selected the year 312 A.D. as the commencement of this period, in which the Donatist sect, in the Carthage or African "wing of the great (Roman) eagle", was placed on trial by Constantine. They were denied justice as against the Catholic hierarchy whom Constantine upheld. The emperor deprived them of places of worship, banished their bishops and punished them with death. Gibbon considered that the Donatists maintained the sentiment of the greater part of the primitive church; and they opposed the creeds and ritualism of the Catholic church.

The terminal point of the 1260 years, taken from 312A.D. (Constantine) was the year 1572. This year saw the frightful massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in France. This papal-inspired slaughter was marked by incredible torture. *"And when they had finished their testimony, the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit will make war upon them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which is allegorically called Sodom and Egypt . . ."* (Rev. 11:7,8).

The Huguenot Massacre

The "*witness"* who suffered this dreadful fate comprised the French protestants, known as the Huguenots, numbering about one and a half million. Persecution went on apace until the Edict of Nantes in 1598 by Henry IV, king of France, giving religious freedom to French protestants. This edict was contested by the ill-famed and unscrupulous Cardinal Richelieu and revoked in 1685 by Louis XIV. The former persecution was renewed, all churches were to be demolished and all meetings prohibited on pain of death. As a result, half a million Huguenots fled France. Any caught leaving were executed.

The inquisition had silenced their witnessing, which is conveyed by the words, "their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city . . . For three days and a half men from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb" (Rev. 11:9). In other words a "fire" had been lit by the Huguenots which could not be quenched. Their "dead bodies" symbolize their righteous cause, which the peoples and nations of Europe were not prepared to bury. From the "Modern World Encyclopaedia" (1935) under "Huguenots" we quote: "But the movement was not crushed; it drew strength from the persecutions and hope from the growing spirit of liberation of the 18th century." The work of the early reformers was now taking root throughout Western Europe.

The papal-riddled royalty and hierarchy of France preserved the feudal system and peasant and worker alike groaned under the burden of oppression. The witty and satirical Voltaire, in books and plays, did much to fan the flames of revolt.

Papal Rejoicing Over the Huguenots

"And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth" (Rev. 11:10). After the massacre of 1572 the French papal legate assured Pope Gregory XIII, through the Assembly of Cardinals, that the will of the French king had been faithfully executed. This led to the pope and his cardinals assembling to thank God for his blessing on Rome and Christendom. Afterwards a jubilee was proclaimed for Christendom to thank God for destroying the enemies of the church of France. A special free medal was struck to commemorate the event, with the bust of Gregory on the face; and on the other a winged angel with cross and two-edged sword. Before the angel were men, women and children depicted as dead, dying and about to die; and in the background, a woman with raised arms as representing the Catholic Church. The translated legend was: "The Massacre of the Huguenots, 1572". Here indeed was an ample fulfilment of the verse quoted above.

There was a Great Earthquake

"And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell" (Rev. 11:13). The apocalyptic *"earth"* represented the people and the subordinate civil authorities. The earthquake is a symbol of political convulsions and upheavals of the people by revolution or civil war. In this instance it was the FRENCH REVOLUTION, the second earthquake of the Revelation which was part of the 6th trumpet judgment. In the year 1789 the despotic king Louis XVI sat on the French throne.

There was no freedom of religion or press and imprisonment was without proper trial. The nobles and Catholic Clergy fared sumptuously on the 80% tax levied on the half-starved peasants, as well as the exorbitant workers' tax. The feudal system was supreme and Paris was filled with desperately hungry people begging bread. Reforms were demanded of the king. In July 1789 the municipal guards, with the mob, stormed the hated state prison, the Bastille, and broke it up. The king and royal family were forced to reside in Paris, where, humiliated and insulted, they were virtually prisoners.

A newly formed legislative assembly of moderate policy passed a Declaration of Rights, but a rival Commune of extremists took control. The mob invaded the palace demanding expulsion of the priesthood from France. The king declined and in June 1792 the mob filed into the Assembly and forced the king to don the "red cap of liberty." In July the people's army gathered outside. Paris and the royal court was in consternation. An "Insurrection Committee" was formed and in August 1792 there was a cry "to arms!" The palace was besieged and the king's 900 guards went down in a welter of blood. The palace was plundered. The Royal family escaped but were later imprisoned in the "Temple". In September 1792, royalty was abolished by the Assembly and France declared a Republic. King Louis was tried, condemned and guillotined in January 1793.

Basically an Anti-Papal Revolt

"Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven" (Rev. 11:13). The earthquake convulsions continued for three years, before the French "tenth" of the mystical papal city fell. The intensity of the shocks increased as the fury of the people mounted. The Commune took over from the Assembly, forcing the latter into momentous decisions. The feudal system was abolished. Equality of rights was established and clergy were to be maintained by the State.

The vast properties and possessions of the Catholic Clergy were taken over by the State. Those cloistered were freed from religious vows. Apocalyptically this earthquake was directed primarily against the Papal hierarchy and the king and nobles of France. It was to avenge the slaughter of God's witnesses. Also, as history has shown, it brought forth God's avenging "angel", NAPOLEON, to execute the bowls of wrath on the beast. The clergy only worsened their plight by circulating writings, that the revolution was designed to attack the Catholic religion. In 1790 all titles were abolished; addressing the king as "sire" or "your majesty" was suppressed and clergy declared no longer a political order. Bishops were to be elected and bound by oath as public servants.

The Commune went further: "only government by reason: was their cry and no worship to be allowed outside churches. Images of virgins and madonnas were suppressed and sales of "holy" emblems forbidden. Reason and Nature were the only gods. Clergy were invited to publicly adjure their Catholic name; and Gobel, Bishop of Paris, and many of his clergy did so. Freedom of religion was declared. In May 1793 Catholic edifices were seized, churches stripped of gold, silver and shrines, all to be taken in procession to the Convention. The spoils of the altar ended up at the mint. The "holy" robes and garments of the church were worn by the populace to burlesque and mock the ceremonies and ritual of worship. Church buildings became temples for the worship of deified "Reason." A festival of Reason, attended by the newly constituted authorities, was celebrated in November 1793.

Symbolic 7000 Die in Earthquake

The revolutionaries were the sword of the Lord's vengeance. There were brought into prominence base and fanatical leaders. Such a one was Marat, one of the "heroes" of the Revolution. He was described as hideous, of a daring mind, vindictive temper, ungovernable imagination and with the head of a tiger. He preached murder, revolt and pillage, and was said to have had a blood lust for the extermination of multitudes. He claimed it necessary to strike off several thousand heads and destroy all the aristocrats—those who had carriages, servants, silk clothes and came out of theatres. Under Marat's orders prisons were filled with suspects, only to be slaughtered without trial. At a prison hospital in Paris, 8,000 were despatched and the prison filled again to repeat the process. In the church of the Carmelites, 200 priests were liquidated. The guillotines worked incessantly, augmented with swords, pikes and musketry. When victims were too numerous canon was used. Freron, one akin to Marat, claimed 200 heads a day at Toulon, where canon was later used to kill 8,000. These are but random examples of a reign of terror and massacre which accounted for over a million dead throughout France.

"The Rest Were Terrified"

Unspeakable atrocities were committed by the insatiable mobs, bent on evening the score against the centuries-old tyranny of the Catholic Bourbon kings. France was drenched in blood and the men who organized the killing, such as Marat, d'Herbois and Miallard, struck terror into the hearts of French citizens. Arrest and condemnation awaited them under the slightest pretext. A word spoken in privacy could mean betrayal by friends and relatives. They suffered dire hardships in the scarcity and confiscation of food and the amenities of life. A charge worthy of death was "Enemy of the Revolution". At the top or "Mountain", the party of Robespierre of the Jacobins became dominant. Even verbal opposition to the reign of terror brought death to leaders earlier regarded as extremists.

It can well be understood how *the rest were terrified* while a million of France's twenty-five million people were being executed. This number, symbolized as *seven thousand people,* was the price paid by France and the papal system, for the killing of an estimated million "Witnesses" over the inquisition period.

”Gave Glory to God”

The giving “glory to the God of heaven” (Rev. 11:13) by “*the rest who were terrified,”* has been interpreted by John Thomas as Robespierre’s dramatized public declaration of his belief in God. He addressed the National Convention in May 1794. He sought to repudiate the atheism of the extremists who had set up the goddess of Reason in Paris with the cry “There is no God!” Robespierre argued that the idea of a Supreme Being and the “immortality of the soul” is a continual recall to justice; it is therefore social and republican.

“What is there in common,” said he, “between the priests and God? The priests are to morality what quacks are to medicine. How different is the God of nature from the God of the priests; I know nothing that so nearly resembles atheism as the religion which they have framed. By grossly misrepresenting the Supreme Being, they have annihilated belief in him so far as lay in their power. The priests have created a God after their own image; they have made him jealous, capricious, greedy, cruel and implacable; they have confined him in heaven as in a palace, and have called him to earth only to demand of him, for their own interest, titles, wealth, honours, pleasures and power. The real temple of the Supreme Being is the universe; his worship, virtue; his festivals, the joy of a great nation, assembled in his presence to knit closer the bonds of universal fraternity and to pay him the homage of intelligent and pure hearts.”

His speech was acclaimed by the Assembly and resolutions passed: That the French people acknowledge the existence of the Supreme Being and that his most worthy worship is the practice of the duties of man. A solemn festival was held a month later. The Jacobins heartily approved the address and the holding of a festival, adding that the festival of the Supreme Being shall assemble the victorious citizens throughout all France to sing the hymn of virtue. Thiers, from whose history these facts were taken, states that congratulations poured into the Convention for its sublime decree from all parts of the nation.

The festival was held in a specially constructed amphitheatre and terminated with a procession. Robespierre dramatically officiated and spoke of the French people dedicated to the Supreme Being; that he was beholding a whole nation, suspending the course of its heroic labours, to lift its thoughts and its prayers to him who gave it the mission to undertake and the courage to execute it. He then set fire to the figures of Atheism, Discord and Selfishness arranged opposite the theatre.

Whatever the Supreme Being thought of these acknowledgments and aspirations or of the doubtful virtues of those making them, this event accommodates without strain, the words “and gave glory to the God of heaven”. Alas for Robespierre, he renewed the reign of terror to retain the dominance of his party. Fearing victimization, the Convention ordered his arrest and he was executed in in July 1794. With this the reign of terror ended. Altogether the executioners accounted for about 2000 priests, thousands were expelled from France and great numbers abjured the Catholic faith. It was a tremendous blow to the power and prestige of papal Rome.

The Resurrection of the Witnesses (Rev. 11:11)

“But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood upon their feet and great fear fell upon those who saw them” (11:11). The witnesses were left in that painful situation resulting from the revoking of the “Edict of Nantes” in 1685. Consideration of the great Earthquake was interposed to assist the interpretation of verses 11 and 12 and to show the vital importance of this event, which formed part of the 6th trumpet judgments.

Out of the Revolution itself there came those decrees which fulfilled the terms of the 11th verse cited above. The time period represented by the three and a half days death of the witnesses has been determined by history. It was during this period of Time that the cause of the Witnesses set aflame the fires of revolution in France. A Mr. Bicheno, Baptist pastor in England, decoded the time scale for the three and a half days in a

pamphlet issued 1789, the year of the Revolution. He believed the dead witnesses had stood up again on their feet. The time scale was 30 years for each day, making 105 years duration for the death state. This was reckoned from the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) to 1790; for it was this edict which so effectively silenced the testimony of the witnesses. Their vindication is the keynote of the 11th verse under consideration. An interesting comment by Daubuz suggested the unburied bodies would not have seen corruption at the end of the symbolic three and a half days.

Under demand for a States-General meeting, Louis XVI summoned it in 1789. Despite the king's refusal the States-General became the Constituent Assembly, favouring constitutional monarchy. Under pressure of the storming of the Bastille, the Assembly passed on August 1st "The Declaration of the Rights of Man" and on the 4th, feudalism was abolished. By these acts of legislation the suppressed Huguenots had their rights of citizenship restored. It could be said *"a breath of life from God entered them".* In July 1790, the Assembly under strong revolutionary pressure, made the decree that the property of expelled Huguenots, confiscated under the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and still unsold, should be restored to their heirs. This decree was called the "NATIONAL JUSTICE" and was faithfully executed. The words of verse 11, "*and they stood upon their feet,"* had found their fulfilment.

"Come Up Hither"

"Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, 'Come up hither!" And in the sight of their foes they went up into heaven in a cloud" (Rev. 11:12). It should be realized that the Huguenots were not that class of witness who, having "the faith and endurance of the saints," refused to retaliate with the sword. They were the French Protestants who printed and distributed the Scriptures in defiance of Rome. In fact they were a real political force in France at the time of their massacre in 1572. They were at ideological war with Catholic France and possessed militants in their ranks.

The professing saint class of witness were altogether smaller in number and dwelt in comparative obscurity without political aspirations. Though less in the glare of publicity and prohibited by their Lord from any form of retaliation, they came under the eagle eye of the Inquisition and suffered the same fate as their Protestant contemporaries. Mostly nameless as bodies of believers, profane history, and especially papal inspired history, would make no mention of them. Under the Law of Moses it was established by the mouth of two witnesses and God required both these witnesses to testify against the great Apostasy. There is repeated reference to them both throughout the 11th chapter.

There would be many descendants of the Huguenots, for whom The National Justice decree was passed, who would join the ranks of the revolutionaries. Some of these would aspire and be eligible for post-revolution rulership. Their worthy cause, s savagely suppressed by Rome, was taken up by a new set of militant protestants *who refused to let (their dead bodies) be placed in a tomb."*

How Rome would seek to cover up her dreadful misdeeds and ingratiate herself with the kings and rulers of the earth; but this was to be no longer so in Western Europe at that time. Robespierre and his co-rulers had publicly declared their belief in God as being the unseen power behind the Revolution. France's *"new heaven"* was saying in a *"loud voice"* by national decree, *"Come up hither!´* to the witnesses. Their enemies, the alarmed papal throne and the battered Catholic hierarchy of France, would see them and their cause carried up to the seat of rulership in France and integrated into the French Constitution.

Smiles, in his book "The Huguenots," made this observation:

"We think we are justified in saying that but for the persecution and expulsion of the Huguenots and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, the Revolution of 1790 most probably never would have occurred."

Such was the mighty divine judgment on Rome and the equity of divine justice contained in the 6th trumpet, known as the second “Woe”. The fate of Catholicism in France is but a foretaste of that great and mighty earthquake of the 7th bowl, seen as the climax of the 7th trumpet judgments. This will result in the fall, not of “one-tenth” but of the complete mystical city seated on the seven hills. That fall will be complete and permanent.

CHAPTER 14 - THE TEMPLE OF THE REVELATION (Revelation 11 & 15)

Wilderness Tabernacle of Moses

Israel's tabernacle (tent) of worship has been taken by the Revelator as typifying the saints in pilgrimage, during the Christian dispensation. In this spiritual "holy place" on earth, Christ officiates as High Priest over his household. He performs this office by his spiritual presence among his brethren. The writer to the Hebrews explains it thus" *"For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf* (Heb. 9:24). *"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain* (veil A.V.), *that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith . . .* (Heb. 10:19-22).

Israel's literal tabernacle was built inside a fenced-in outer court. The tent itself comprised an oblong "holy place" on the end of which was the square "holy of holies." Both were of the same width and separated from one another by a curtain or veil. Outside the "holy place" in the court, was the altar of burnt offerings. In the holy place stood the seven-branched lampstand and the table on which was "the bread of the Presence." An altar of incense, overlaid with gold, was arranged before the veil. On the opposite side of the veil, within the "most holy," was the sacred ark overlaid with gold and containing the Law tablets of stone and the sacred urn. The ark was surmounted with a cover, having the figure of a cherub at either end. It was all of beaten gold in one piece and known as "the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat."

The most important sacrifices offered under the Law of Moses involved the "mercy seat" within the holy of holies. "There, said God, I will meet with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you of all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel" (Exod. 25:22). Once a year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered a bullock as a sin offering for himself and the priesthood. Then he filled his censer with live coals from the altar of incense, entered the "most holy place" and put incense on the coals. This formed a cloud of smoke covering the mercy seat, of which God said: "I will appear on the cloud upon the mercy seat" (Lev. 16:2,12,13), The high priest then took some of the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it on the mercy seat and on the ground before the ark. For the sins of the people a he-goat was sacrificed and its blood likewise sprinkled on the mercy seat.

In addition to the annual offering, we read of the altar of incense "before the LORD." "And Aaron (the high priest) shall burn fragrant incense on it; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it . . . in the evening he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations: (Exod. 30:7,8). The altar of incense "before the LORD" was looked upon as part of the holy of holies standing opposite the mercy seat, but with the veil between. Of the high priest's annual offering and his passing through the veil into the Most Holy, the New Testament comments: "By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary (Most Holy) is not yet opened so long as the outer tent is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age)" Heb. 9:8,9)

The Spiritual Tabernacle

It is the same *"outer tent," "symbolic for the present age,"* that has been taken over into the Revelation to symbolize the saints in the spiritual wilderness. The outer court is no part of the symbology of their divine worship. *"But do not measure the court outside the temple . . . for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months"* (Rev. 11:2). Since Jesus is the one great and final offering for sin, the altar of burnt offering is no longer required. Because Jesus entered by his own blood into the Sanctuary or Most Holy, he has become the great High Priest *"after the order of MELCHIZEDEK."* The "Most

Holy" is then no longer part of an anti-typical tent traversing the wilderness of the nations; but is located with Christ in heaven.

"For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf" (Heb. 9:24). Jesus is at once the ark, the mercy seat and the High Priest, having gone through the veil (his flesh) to stand immortal before God. All that is left to symbolize worship by the saints is the "tent of witness," a spiritual holy place. The Ecclesia constitutes the seven-branch lampstand, kept alight by the oil of the Word of God. There too, as a mortal priesthood, they eat the tabernacle "Presence bread" from the anti-typical Lord's table and offer up their prayers night and day as incense upon the golden altar (Rev. 5:8, Ps 141:2).

After the days of Constantine, the lampstand in the tent of witness signified the saints who worshipped there. When John received his vision, the seven churches of Asia were the seven lampstands among which the Lord walked (Rev. 1:13, 20).

Worship in the Tent of Witness

For the saints on earth, their mortality with its weakness still presents a veil or curtain separating them from the Most Holy. However, the apostle stresses their unique position of privilege: "*We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"* (Heb. 6:19,20). Though mortality still separates, saints have access to the throne of grace and in spirit find entrance to the Most Holy in heaven. By resurrection from the dead and change to immortality, the "144,000" will enter the Most Holy in person. They fnd it in the presence of the Lord in Jerusalem, there to be made pillars in the temple of God (Rev. 3:12). This refers to their place in the holy city, the New Jerusalem, after the King and his 144,000 have subdued their pre-millennial enemies.

At the present time the *tent of witness* on earth has its *Most Holy* in heaven. The two are separated by the immensity of space, yet closely united by the all-pervading Spirit of God and His Son. When John was told to *"measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship there"* (Rev. 11:1) he was measuring the "tent of witness." In contrast John looked, *"And the TEMPLE of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues"* (Rev. 15:5,6). John saw here in vision the Most Holy in God's heaven. But when Jesus returns to earth the Most Holy will be with him in Jerusalem. Having glorified the "tent of witness" in immortality, they become constituents in the Lord's "Most Holy."

The Vindication of Saints

As the seven angels with the seven plagues emerged from the heavenly temple, John saw *"one of the four living creatures"* giving *"the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God"* (Rev.15:7). The angels must have put their plagues into the bowls of wrath handed them by the living creature. This is seen by the passage, *"Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues"* (Rev. 21:9). But why was it necessary that the seven bowls of wrath be handed to the angels by the living creature". The answer is most interesting to believers. The living creatures represent saints in glory, wielding great power and authority. So that while the saints are in their earthly tent of witness under trial, they are seen in the form of living creatures projected into future glory. Here one of them is seen to hand the bowls to God's angels.

The paradox had this apocalyptic explanation: "These (witnesses) are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes . . . They have power to shut the sky . . . and smite the earth with every plague as often as they desire" (Rev. 11:4-6). The saints, despised and downtrodden by the powers-that-be, are seen to be associated with the Lord's counsels by their prayers and afflictions. Meanwhile they are symbolically represented at the "court of judgment" by the creatures and elders in a prophetical sense. This work of witnessing overthrew the Roman pagan power and will also help to overthrow Babylon the great.

The Effective Prayers of Saints

The first example of this mystical power of prayer is illustrated, *"When the Lamb opened the seventh seal"* (Rev. 8:1). (See the chart, Fig. 4, "The Revelation at a Glance.") The 7th seal and the 7th trumpet are both accompanied with visions of Kingdom glory. In both there is also reference to the accumulated prayers of persecuted saints and the judgments they evoke. There is a leap forward in vision from the time, both of the 7th seal and the 7th trumpet to the final great 7th bowl judgment in vindication of persecuted saints:

1. When the 7th seal was opened: "there were peals of thunder, loud noises, flashes of lightning and an earthquake" (Rev. 8:5).
2. When the 7th trumpet sounded: "there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail" (Rev. 11:19)
3. When the crucial 7th BOWL was poured and a voice announced "It is done!" "And there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as had never been since men were upon the earth, so great was that earthquake" (Rev. 16:18).

All these references are to the one great earthquake of the 7th BOWL. It is the thrice-announced mighty terminal judgment of the 7th trumpet call when *"the mystery of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled"* Rev.10:7).

The Angel at the Golden Altar

When the 7th seal was opened to release the seven trumpets, "Another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God" (Rev. 8:3,4). This is a vision of Jesus in his high-priestly office, ministering in spirit at the golden altar of incense. This altar stands before the veil in the "tent of witness," the holy place or tabernacle in which the "wilderness" saints are now worshipping. The high priest, in the literal tabernacle of Israel, took the censer of coals from the golden altar into the "Most Holy". He also took incense which he placed on the coals, causing the smoke of incense to cover the mercy seat. It was from this cloud that the "Shekinah" glory of the Lord came forth to his people. Under the Law, incense was associated with prayer. David said: "Let prayer be counted as incense before thee" (Ps. 141:2). "The people were praying outside at the hour of incense" (Luke 1:10). "With golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints: (Rev. 5:8).

The angel at the altar is the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. The golden altar *"before the throne"* typifies the perfected and glorified Lamb of God. The mortal saints offer their prayers and praises on the Christ-altar in the earthly spiritual tabernacle. The coals on this altar are there as the suffering of affliction of those *in Christ,* and their prayers rise with the smoke of incense. Like the lamp oil, the incense was something provided by God (Ezek. 34:41). The lamp oil is the *Word of God* and the incense is the spirit of Christ freely dispensed with the worship of his saints. The meaning of incense is exemplified in the apostle's words: *"Since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith"* (Heb. 10:19,22). When the spirit of Christ in a believer is activated by the fire of affliction, his prayers of

supplication and thanksgiving rise more acceptably to God. The pleasing odour of the incense *"seasoned with salt, pure and holy"* (Exod. 30:35), was released with the heat of the altar coals.

During the 1260 day-years of saint witnessing, their prayers ascended copiously to the Father, because of their trials and persecutions. The words of Rev. 8:5 show that when the saints made their offering of much fervent prayer upon the golden altar, the sustaining spirit and grace of God was freely given them. It came through their High Priest as *much incense.* This caused the *smoke* of their prayers to rise above the mercy seat, from the golden censer in the hands of the Christ-angel.

The "Fire" of the 7th Trumpet

"Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth" (Rev. 8:5). The altar-angel stood by the saints, encouraging, sustaining, relieving and strengthening them. Many poured their life blood at the foot of the Christ-altar and were said to be crying out for their blood to be avenged (Rev. 6:9.10). The time of their witnessing, even to death, finally terminated and the beast no longer had power to persecute them. The long-sounding 7th trumpet turned the tables on their enemies. It was Christ who cast the altar-fire into the domain of the beast and onto his very throne. The Lord had power over this "FIRE" to kindle it into the consuming furnace of the climactic 7th bowl.

The whole of the 15th chapter is a prologue to the pouring of the seven bowls, called in verse 1 the seven plagues. Their importance is stressed by the phrase, *"which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended"* (Rev. 15:1). *"And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass, mingled with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses . . . and the Lamb"* (Rev. 15:2,3). Their song ends with the words*: "All nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed"* (15:4).

Those who Conquered the Beast and its Image

The setting of the 15th chapter refers to the tabernacle worshippers after the French Revolution. Their witnessing completed and freedom of worship established, they are said to have *"conquered the beast and its image."* The Roman beast had suffered setbacks in France and saints were rejoicing on the symbolic harp. For them the tempestuous sea had calmed, but for Rome it was "mingled with fire" as the French Revolution introduced the bowls of wrath. The seven angels emerging from the "TEMPLE" of the tent of witness with the seven plagues, were as the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. The temple in this case was the "MOST HOLY" in God's heaven and they came from the presence of the Lamb.

These seven plagues were put into the seven bowls "full of the wrath of God" (Rev. 15:6,7). The 7th trumpet programme was further reinforced by the descent of a powerful Christ-angel *"coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head . . ."* (10:1). John was told to take from his hand a little open scroll, written up with all the judgments of the seven bowls. At a point of time during the "scroll" judgments, the Lord himself will come as the rainbow angel, setting his feet on sea and land. The gathering of the "wilderness" saints from their tabernacle wanderings into the millennial "HOLY OF HOLIES," the New Jerusalem, is evidently to be achieved through an interim stage.

The *marriage supper of the Lamb* and the NEW JERUSALEM will not eventuate until Babylon the great is overthrown and destroyed by the great "earthquake," and the Lord establishes his universal dominion. From the Lord's standing on Mount Zion with his saints to the completion of the seventh bowl judgment involves a period of some 40 years. The interim temple is one in which, to use Daniel's words, *"the court shall sit in judgment."* This is the temple John saw after the seven angels received their bowls of God's wrath (15:7). *"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended* (15:8). This temple, as a court of judgment, is

the coming to reality of the symbolic vision of *one on a throne*—of the Lamb, the living creatures and the elders seated on thrones. It is established after the resurrection and before the pouring of the yet future 6th bowl. The filling of the temple with smoke is due to the presence of Christ and his saints as they execute the judgments written.

In a vision of this same interim temple John saw the ark of God's covenant. "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple . . ." (Rev.11:19). This, be it noted, is after thou hast taken thy great power and BEGUN to reign" (11:17), but prior to the "flashes of lightning . . . thunder, and earthquake and heavy hail" (11:19). The "ark of the covenant" is seen as Christ confirming his covenant with Israel and the proclamation of the eternal gospel to the nations (14:6,7). Then will follow the awful judgments of the 7th bowl which will fill the temple with the smoke of divine wrath.

As we proceed it will become clear that there will be no marriage supper, no spiritual New Jerusalem, no Ezekiel's literal temple and house of prayer for all peoples, until the 7th bowl judgments are ended. Not until then can the immortal saints begin to reign as kings and priests from the New Jerusalem. This is not to suggest that the kingdom fulfilment of John's vision (chapters 4 and 5) will last only through the judgment period. It represents the great regal power and authority vested in Christ and the saints and will exist as organized and virile administration to safeguard and compliment the great redemptive work of the New Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 15 - THE FIRST FIVE BOWLS (Revelation 16)

The first five bowls of wrath have already been poured out on the earth. We may accept their prophetic fulfilment as elaborated by previous expositors, notably by John Thomas in his "Eureka". These five plagues were directed by God against the papal beast power. They so affected the "beast" kingdom in Rome and throughout Europe as to reduce it to the status of an ecclesiastical "Woman".

The First Bowl (Rev. 16:1, 2)

"So the first angel . . . poured his bowl on the earth, and foul and evil sores came upon the men who bore the mark of the beast and worshipped its image" (16:2). This outpouring applies to civil and external wars which followed closely in the wake of the French Revolution. An insurrection in the remote French province, Vendee, was suppressed with terrible severity by the New Republic. The civil war was accompanied with much bloodshed and execution. France became an armed camp and the French Republican armies were forced to engage those of other European countries, bent on suppressing the Republic. The victories of the latter brought severe hardship and suffering on the worshippers of the beast and its image. Austria, seat of the "earth beast" emperor, invaded France in 1793 and was defeated. A coalition of papal-supporting nations, Austria, Holland, Prussia, Sardinia and Spain, with England, sent armies against France. England and Austria withdrew in 1794 leaving Holland occupied by France. Prussia was repulsed on the Rhine and Italy and Spain were invaded. The extensive slaughter and hardships imposed on the nations of the "beast" domain can well be imagined. "Foul and evil sores" fittingly symbolize the nature of this divine bowl of wrath sent to plague the papal "earth."

The Second Bowl (Rev. 16:3)

"The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a dead man, and every living thing died that was in the sea" (16:3). This bowl was poured, not on the earth, but on the SEA. Knowing that it was poured on the papal domain, we would look for any naval wars causing distress to the "beast" countries of Europe or reduction of papal power. By a peculiar twist of Napoleonic strategy, the naval power of Britain was forced to confront the sea power of countries loyal to the "Holy Roman Empire". Having conquered these nations, Napoleon designed to use their navies to invade England. The French fleet, built up by papal France, but taken over by Napoleon, was defeated by Howe of England in 1794. In 1797, Napoleon planned that the French, Spanish and Dutch navies under his control, should sweep the English fleet from the Channel. This would enable the Dutch fleet to convey his army to Ireland. In anticipation, the British fleet under Jarvis shattered the Spanish fleet at Cadiz. The same year the Dutch fleet was destroyed at Camperdown by Admiral Duncan.

Nelson gained his victory over the French fleet at the "Battle of the Nile: in 1798. Again he decimated the fleet of Denmark off Copenhagen. The last effort of Napoleon to invade England was thwarted by Nelson's final victory at Trafalgar in 1805. A probable 600 naval vessels and a host of smaller craft, with many ships of commerce, were destroyed with their manpower during these many years of naval encounters. Since the days of Drake, Raleigh and Hawkins in the 16th century, the naval power of protestant England has curbed papal ambitions. If her naval power had been destroyed by Napoleon, it would have been a decided victory for the papacy. The preservation and increase of Britain's naval power and the destruction of papal Europe's navies, was a blow to papal prestige and its overseas interests.

The Third Bowl (Rev. 16:4)

"The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of water say, 'Just art thou in these thy judgments, thou who art and wast, O Holy One. For men have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink. It is their due! (16:4-6). The rivers and fountains of Italy were figuratively turned into blood. Napoleon's army invaded Northern Italy, occupying the city of Milan and defeating the Republic of Venice. The rage of a young Napoleon was vented against a persistent Austria who sent one army after another into North Italy, only to meet with humiliating defeat. They were no match for the subtle strategy of the master military tactician of France. In 1796, Bonaparte, with an army deficient in numbers and equipment, was able to keep separated a Piedmontese and an Austrian army and defeat them one at a time. His army ravaged the fertile fields of Lombardy and Milan was occupied. Two further Austrian armies entering Italy were defeated and their regrouping received another crushing blow at Rivoli.

The fair rivers and lakes of North Italy were heavily stained with the blood of war carnage, so copiously spilled by the ruthless Napoleon. The Milanese were forced to heavy indemnity; and armed insurrection to the rear of French progress was suppressed with bloody vengeance. Farrara and Bologna were taken. A cardinal and 400 priests were killed and the papacy obtained armistice by the payment of two million francs with much food and military supplies. A further Austrian army of 80,000 was sent in to recover Lombardy. Initial encounters with the French reduced it to half and the rest were later routed. A further army was launched by Austria, but their defective strategy was taken advantage of by Napoleon and they were decimated.

Two papal envoys sought a treaty of peace at Paris. Conditions offered by Bonaparte were considered degrading and prohibitive. Pope Pius VI decided to raise his own army, while holding back heavy tribute payment to France. He assembled an army of 40,000 in the atmosphere of a crusade. He made alliance with the king of Naples for 30,000 soldiers. Napoleon's forces then entered papal territory, whereupon the papal army fled. Without resistance 3000 prisoners were taken and it ended with complete papal submission to the conqueror. Bonaparte's price for peace was the ceding to France of Avignon and the pope's resignation of his legations of Ferrara, Bologna and Romagna; the French to occup[y Ancona. In addition, an indemnity of 30 million livres in coin or its equivalent in objects of art or antiquity was levied.

The throne of Austria, still faithful to its charge of protecting the papal "beast" and its image, sent a sixth army led by the Austrian archduke, Charles, to engage the French at the Italo-German frontier. The conflict went hopelessly against Charles and to prevent Vienna from being taken he sued for peace. Napoleon granted this for a season. The truth of the divine decree was remarkably vindicated in the 4rd bowl judgment. It was in these invaded parts of Italy that Waldenses and other bodies of Christian witnesses were massacred and persecuted by the papal inquisition. *"For men have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink. It is their due!"* It was the persistent struggle of the beast to resist the avenging sword that expended the blood of many tens of thousands of the beast's armies and its worshippers. The Republic of Venice brought further wrath upon their heads by revolting, in expectancy of victory by Archduke Charles. In May 1797 the angry Napoleon declared war on Venice, adding further crimson to the waters of Italy.

Bonaparte had other worlds to conquer; but a naval defeat by Nelson at the Nile compelled his lone return to France to resume his prophetic role of plaguing the beast. Now made First Consul of the Republic, he found himself confronted by Austrian and Russian armies in the north. They were to march into Italy and deliver the papacy. The Austrians were also back in Italy and the French army there was in trouble. Napoleon led an army of 60,000 over the Swiss Alps under seemingly impossible conditions and by a deceptive strategy evaded the Austrians. He arrived in Milan in June 1800. After a series of severe encounters the Austrians were again beaten into submission with immense losses. After a two months absence Bonaparte was back in Paris.

The Fourth Bowl (Rev. 16:8,9)

"The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch men with fire; men were scorched by the fierce heat and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory" (16:8,9). The "SUN" of the Holy Roman Empire was the emperor of the "Two-horned" beast shoes throne was then occupied by Francis II in Austria. Napoleon granted a new Pope, Pius VII, liberty in France when he came to Paris to place the "Charlemange" crown on "our dearest son in Christ, Napoleon, the Emperor of the French." In 1805 he took the iron crown of Italy of whom he was now king. This could be regarded by the throne of Austria only as a studied insult, to which the papacy was evidently an unwilling party.

Being engrossed with the projected invasion of England, it surprised Napoleon that the Austrian emperor was ready with 220,000 troops to challenge his forces. This resulted from a British-Austrian-Russian coalition against France. At the head of 160,000 Napoleon marched for the Rhine. An Austrian army of 30,000 was surrounded, and surrendered. The French advanced to Vienna while Emperor Francis retired to Moravia and his nobles to Hungary. On their way to Vienna the French captured 60,000. An army of 75,000 Russians and Austrians were confronted in Moravia by a lesser number of French. The ensuing Battle of Austerlitz in December 1805 ended in overwhelming defeat of the Austro-Russian forces and 30,000 prisoners were taken in four hours.

The peace at Presburg was signed, in which Austria lost Belgium and the Milanese as well as her German territories. The German-Romanic Empire, or "earth beast", ceased to exist and Francis II could remain only as the emperor of Austria. In the process of making himself master of Europe and the setting up of new kingdoms, Napoleon roused the anger of Prussia. Their king's demand on Napoleon was immediately answered by his taking an army of 120,000 to Saxony, before Russia could act in support of her ally. At Jena, 60,000 men were lost to Germany, of whom 20,000 were killed. 150,000 prisoners were taken over a month or more by the French. Russia mustered a considerable army to protect her borders but in two battles at Eylan and Friedland in 1807, the Russians retired with a loss of 40,000. The Prussian monarchy lost half its territory and subjects to France.

A sufficient historical background has been presented to make clear how the secular "SUN" power of the "EARTH BEAST" was scorched by the plagues of the 4th bowl. The fierce heat blistered the Austrian people as well as the former Germanic partner of the "two-horned" alliance. The temporal horn of the beast was scorched to extinction. This did not prevent them from worshipping the image of the Roman beast, for they repented not to give God glory as the French revolutionary Assembly did.

The Fifth Bowl (Rev. 16:10, 11)

"The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was in darkness; men gnawed their tongues in anguish and cursed the God of heaven for their pains and sores, and did not repent of their deeds" (16:10, 11). It was at the termination of the 3rd bowl period that Bonaparte decided to turn the papal estates in Italy into a Roman Republic. In 1798 the pope's temporal power was declared to be ended. The French entered the Vatican while the pope was enthroned and arrested him. The papal ring was removed from his finger and he was taken prisoner to France, where he died in 1799. Papal territories and monasteries were taken over, papal and cardinal vestments burned and the papal library, museum and jewels ransacked.

A new pope, Pius VII, was elected in 1800; Roman worship was recognized in France and a Concordat signed in 1801. Bonaparte's policy was to use the papacy to serve his own interests as lord of Europe. We have already noted how, acting under duress, the pope was brought to Paris to crown Napoleon Emperor. He assumed the role of a modern Charlemagne whose ancient crown, sceptre and sword, he carried before him during the

ceremony. The might of the British fleet and England's influence on the continent still remained a galling challenge to Napoleon's ambitions. In 1808 he issued the following edict against Pope Pius VII"

"Whereas the temporal sovereign of Rome has refused to make war against England, and the interests of the two kingdoms of Italy and Naples ought not to be intercepted by a hostile power; and whereas the donation of Charlemagne, our illustrious predecessor and the countries which form the Holy See, was for the good of Christianity, and not for that of the enemies of our religion: We therefore decree that the duchies of Urbin, Ancona, Macerata and Camerino be forever united with the kingdom of Italy: to which kingdom all cardinal prelates and natives of these districts are commanded to return by 5th June, on pain of confiscation of goods."

In reply the pope defended and maintained the rights of the Holy See and made his protest against the threat of confiscation. This resulted in all the strategic points of ecclesiastical territories being occupied by the French army. Then followed the annexation of Parma, Placentia and Tuscony to the French Republic. After some months "the authors and instruments of the act of spoliation were under sentence of papal excommunication. Napoleon's reply was to order the Pope's arrest and he was brought to Savona in North-western Italy. The papal States received provisional government; papal abuses were removed and civil jurisprudence reformed. The Inquisition was abolished. Rome was degraded to second rank city of the new empire.

At Savona in 1811, Pope Pius VII agreed to yield his States in compliance with Napoleon's edict; also that he be permanently separated from Rome. He was removed from Savona in 1812 to Fontainbleau, near Paris. Bonaparte intended his permanent installation in the Archepiscopal palace in Paris, as the Holy See of his new empire. His thinking on thee matters is of special interest. Napoleon in 1806 said to the papal Nuncio in Dresden, who was in the cabinet of Germany's Frederick the Great:

"But if he does not do as I would have him, most assuredly I will take from him the temporal dominion of Rome . . . the Pope must be with me if he wishes to remain a sovereign . . . I want him to shut his ports against the English, and to exclude them from his states . . . he shall give them to me to defend. People have lost their heads at Rome . . . How can the pope imagine that I will consent to have between my kingdom of Italy and that of Naples, ports and fortresses which, in time of war, may be occupied by the English . . . I want to be secure in my own house, for the whole of Italy belongs to me by right of conquest . . . Either the Pope will consent, and in that case he will lose nothing, or he will refuse, and in that case I will take his states from him."

The Nuncio replied that "the Pope being the common Father of the faithful, cannot separate from some and attach himself to others: . . . nor declare himself the enemy of anyone whatever, without failing in his duties and compromising his sacred character".

It was this firm demand of Napoleon, logical enough from his stand-point, and the stubborn refusal of the pope to surrender his rights, which precipitated the great crisis of the 5th bowl. Where could we look for a more complete historical record fulfilling all the terms of the prophecy? The bowl of wrath was poured copiously on the papal throne. The kingdom of the papal beast was in darkness, even greater than when its head received "a mortal wound" from the Gothic kingdom in Rome in 476 A.D. (Rev. 13:3).

It was much more than coincidence that the fall of the French capital and "THE TREATY OF PARIS" of 1814 came 1260 years (not days) after Justinian's healing of the wound in 554 A.D. In the treaty of 1814 Napoleon renounced the thrones of France and Italy and retired to Elba. Thus ended the intensity of papal darkness; and the pope's return to Rome was sponsored by the powers of Europe. Nevertheless, divine use of Napoleon in this bowl had sealed the doom of papal secular power.

Napoleon—A Divine Instrument

The great Napoleon has been recognized in history as a man of destiny. He claimed that "The hand of God led my armies," to which he added, "and this apparently is what displeases the Pope." That Napoleon was raised up by God to vent His wrath on the papal system, is one obvious instruction of history. Whichever way he turned from that sole objective his efforts were fraught with failure. Motivated by consuming and selfish ambition, he applied his amazing genius for generalship to any power thwarting him. As a product of the French Revolution, he knew that his true opposition in Europe lay in the dominant authority of the papacy over the nations of Europe. It was not the divine will at that time, that either Russia or England should be destroyed as nations. This is because Deity had a future purpose with them. Neither was it His will that Napoleon or any other man should establish a world-wide empire after the Roman pattern. This is because the "*iron-clay*" pattern of the *image-feet* must persist until replaced by the Kingdom of God. It was the divine will that secular Rome should descend into the "abyss" and Napoleon placed it there for Him. His work completed, he became the lonely exile of St. Helena.

The Catholic WOMAN After the 5th Bowl

The Return of the pope to Rome after Bonaparte's eclipse was, in part, considered necessary for the stability of Europe. It was also a resurgence of the predominantly Catholic populations of Europe towards the worship of the "beast image" in Rome. The Congress of Vienna" in 1815 restored the papal states and gave Austria Lombardy in the north. Subsequent efforts to unify Italy were opposed by Austria and France; the latter supporting the pope's opposition to unification. Italian Garibaldi, the militant patriot, won a decisive victory in 1860 and Victor Emmanuel was acclaimed king of United Italy. Again it was due to Garibaldi's military opposition to Austria and France after 1866, that the papal states were finally annexed, with Rome, to United Italy. It was first necessary that Napoleon should break the stranglehold which centuries of papal dominance had on the nations who worshipped its image.

The Jesuits, suppressed by Pope Clement in 1773, were welcomed back with open arms by Pius VII in 1814. He revived the Jesuit order, which found a footing in protestant England, the United States and Holland. Renwick, in "The Story of the Church," remarks of the Jesuit influence:

"For centuries the Roman Church has claimed to be infallible, and there has been much debate as to where the infallibility lay. The Jesuits insisted, for their own ends, that infallibility rested on the pope alone. They persuaded Pope Pius IX in 1854 to promulgate, without consulting his Council, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary . . . In taking this line the pontiff has practically claimed infallible authority. The next step was taken at the Vatican Council of 1869-70 where, again through Jesuit influence, the doctrine of Papal Infallibility was decreed on July 18, 1870." (p.191)

These claims were opportune to boost the fallen fortunes of "Mother-Church." The "Assumption of Mary to Heaven" for worship as "Mother of God" is of more recent vintage; and a claim to have discovered "the bones of St. Peter himself" is specially adapted to the "faithful" of our enlightened age.

It is significant that after nearly a century of Vatican seclusion, the pope has emerged again for public veneration. The ecumenical pioneering of Pope John XXIII is still being pursued by his successor. The aim is to allure her solicitous daughters back to Mother Rome and by dialogue with Greek Catholicism, to reconcile age old antipathies. Rome is grappling with many and varied problems in a rapidly changing world. Today scientific achievement is enshrined and individual freedom set against all moral and legal restriction. What with questioning bishops, priests demanding freedom to marry, Catholics chafing under restrictions on birth control facilities, and the general challenge to papal authority from within the church, papal infallibility appears rather tattered. Despite all this, a subtle and very significant influence is exerted by the Vatican on international politics.

In this "enlightened" and scientific age, the papacy would have little chance of exerting a dominating or dictatorial influence over the nations. In the divine scheme of things there is one cause that could, and undoubtedly will, bring about such a development. This cause is made clear by Daniel and still more so in the Lord's revelation to John. Nothing but envy, fear and hatred by Gentile power for the growing STONE POWER in Jewish Jerusalem, could elevate ecclesiastical Rome to her destined and transient glory. The challenge from Jerusalem will be chiefly directed against world Christendom. The nations will look to Rome for counsel. Developments under the 6th bowl show that the result will be a "holy war" declared against a "Jewish usurper" and an "Antichrist" in Jerusalem. The very prospect of Jewish world supremacy will so alarm the nations, that international and religious differences will be subordinated for united action against a common enemy.

We are in a lull period of apocalyptic fulfilment which had its commencement about 1870. In this interim we have witnessed dramatic fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy: the restoration of Israel to their land, rejuvenation of their desolate soil and the development of formidable world forces that oppose them. All this is necessary in preparation for Messiah's coming to his people. The stage will then be set for those mighty events of the 6th and 7th bowls. It is most desirable for a true understanding of the Revelation that those events of Old Testament prophecy should now be considered, which will make Jerusalem the City of the Great King.

III: MESSIAH'S COMING AND ISRAEL'S REDEMPTION as found in Old Testament Prophecy and the Gospels

CHAPTER 16 - THE GOGIAN INVASION OF ISRAEL (Ezekiel 38)

Gog Identified

The role of Russia in the last days of Gentile dominion has long been regarded as the subject of the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy. Under the name of "GOG of the land of MAGOG" a mighty military power is seen to be attended by satellite nations. Under Gog's guardianship they form a confederacy which invades the restored nation of Israel from her far north. It is said of this Gogian prince or leader: *"In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored from war, the land where people were gathered from many nations upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; its people were brought out from the nations and now dwell securely, all of them. You will advance, coming on like a storm, you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you"* (Ezek. 38:8,9) .

A consideration of the names of ancient peoples enumerated in this chapter, and their location on ancient maps, strongly suggests that the invader here described is Russia (U.S.S.R.). Modern Israel, with her present population of two and a half million Jews, amply fulfils the careful description by the prophet of the victim of this northern aggressor. Indeed the description could not fit any previous period of Israel's long history.

Said God to Abraham, *"I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse"* (Gen. 12:3) .Until Gentile dominion is rooted up by Israel's Messiah, so long will the nations fail to heed God's decree. So long will they continue to suffer the fate of the great empires of history who cursed the seed of Abraham. The God of Abraham had His own good reasons for saying to Ezekiel, *"Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, . . .and prophesy against him and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold I am against you, O Gog, . . .and I will turn you about, and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you forth. . ."* (Ezek. 38:2,4). The New English Bible reads, "Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal . . ."

Russia Basically Anti-Semitic

The fundamental teaching of Marx and Communism is: NO GOD, NO BIBLE, NO CHRISTIANITY, no "chosen people"; but blind soul-less force. It is both anti-God and anti-semitic. For Russia, anti-semitism was traditional toward her three million Jews herded in ghettoes under the Czars. Today, U.S.S.R. with more humanity but with greater subtlety than Hitler, is attempting genocide on the three million Jews within her borders. They are being forced, by harsh and restrictive laws, to assimilate with the Russian people, accompanied by restriction in professional appointment. Any right of preserving their national identity is denied them. One of the chief pillars of the Marxist-Leninist theory of nations, is that there is no future for the Jewish nation, and that it must ultimately disappear. The Almighty God has sworn otherwise. Shmuel Shnitzer, in 1969, comments on the plight of Russian Jewry :

"Communism as a regime and an ideology, can at worst only take away the Jews' source of livelihood, deny their national existence . . .deprive them of freedom of expression, expel them from universities, reduce their bread ration. Jewish communists in Russia were needed to dismantle effectively every Jewish organisational framework, utterly liquidate the communities, paralyse cultural life, and overcome all attempts to create an underground cultural life. In its determination to put an end to Jewish national and cultural existence . . .the Communist inquisition strives to impose its dogma, do away with all heresy and deviation and extinguish every spark of free thought . . . Jewish masses were forced outwardly to accept the Communist

religion . . .Communism has kept the Soviet Union's Jews locked up in the country, but not allowed to live as Jews." ("Israel Magazine" monthly, Vol. 2, 1969, p.55.)

The teaching of Hebrew language, building of synagogues, training of Rabbis, public assemblies for worship, schools for Jews, printing of newspapers and contact with relatives abroad are all prohibited.

Egypt's Pharaoh, Persia's Haman and Germany's Hitler, all attempted in turn to exterminate the Jewish race. All in turn reaped the tragic reward of their folly. Russia today is the great offender and as if this is not sufficient to incur the wrath of Israel's God, whose existence they deny, they seek to destroy Israel as a nation in God's holy land. The predatory Assyrian and rapacious pagan Rome were God-denying and defying, idol-worshipping nations. They were possessed and deceived in their day by that ideology personified in Scripture as "the old serpent, the Devil and Satan".

Gog as the Latter-day Assyrian

The power that invades Israel immediately prior to the Lord's coming is not only called Gog by Ezekiel; but the Assyrian by Isaiah and by Micah in a latter day context (Isa. 30:27-31, Micah 5:2,5,7). Today there is no nation in the world called Assyria, but it is clear from these and other Old Testament passages that Christ is to destroy the *Assyrian* who is to invade Israel in the last days. God will also gather His exiled people from *Assyria* (Zech. 10:10) .He will say to the North, "GIVE UP!" Russia holds the vast majority of Europe's three and a half million Jews, whom they will not now *"give up."* It may also be shown that Isa. 27:1, taken in its context, indicates a latter day Assyria styled by the prophet: Leviathan, serpent and dragon, whom the Lord with his strong sword was to punish.

The “Strong Arm” of the Arab World

Arab armaments for offence and defence are provided in the bu1k by the Soviet Union. Her economic and military aid to the Arab States amounts to thousands of million £Stg. The approximate total of Arab military "hardware" as at mid-1970 stood at 700 military aircraft and 2500 tanks. Figures for Israel are given as 230 military planes and 1200 tanks. Israel's occupation of the east bank of the Suez Canal since her victorious Six-day War of 1967, has aimed at preventing further Egyptian build-up for war against her.

A well-advanced programme is in progress for a powerful Soviet presence in Egypt. Today, large forces of Egyptians on the West bank of the Suez face about 10,000 Israeli troops on the East bank. Israel's presence there keeps the canal closed. There now extends from Cairo to Alexandria and along the Suez west bank, some 70 or more operational missile launcher sites, each mounting eight Russian SAM 2 or the later SAM 3 surface-to-air missile launchers. These are reported to be manned by more than 15,000 Soviet military personnel and an estimated 30,000 Russians are to control this air "defence" system. Reports are that Russia is insisting on Soviet pilots for the 150 "interceptor" planes which complete the system. All of the necessary 320 pilots are probably there already.

With three Arab Israeli wars in the background (1948, 1956 and 1967), these constantly changing figures and facts present but a "still frame" of a gradual escalation toward the ultimate crisis predicted by Ezekiel. All of this is being reinforced by a powerful Russian naval presence in the Mediterranean with the establishment of naval depot on Arabian sea fronts. An extended cease-fire now reigns over the canal, while the United Nations Assembly debates the Arab-Israel peace issue, demanding Israel to hand over all occupied territories from the 1967 war, including Jerusalem. In this year 1971, Egypt threatens war on a major scale, with Israel refusing to consider peace negotiations under Egyptian demands for total withdrawal and threats of Arab-Soviet destruction. The United States, now fully alive to Russia's duplicity and ambitions in the Middle East, is providing Israel with planes, tanks and other military hardware as requested. Meanwhile, Israel confidently

proceeds to strategically develop occupied Arab territories, ignoring international demand to stop rebuilding ancient Jerusalem.

Today there is open talk of major Russian intervention in the Arab-Israel struggle. An official observer stated in "The New York Times":

"A new Arab-Israeli war within the next year or two, would be a major reverse for the Arabs. The only factor that might alter the outcome of the fighting would be Soviet participation, and the Israelis believe there would have to be a massive intervention by Russian combat forces to prevent a decisive Israeli victory."

It is such a massive move by Russia, suddenly and treacherously conceived, that was revealed by the divine Spirit to Ezekiel the prophet. Russia's centuries-old ambition to dominate the Mediterranean and the Middle East is very much alive today. To this, Communism has added a global dimension. The existence of Israel in the Middle East is regarded by Russia as a "Capitalist" impediment to what is emerging as her planned southward expansion; hence her desire, in part, for Israel's removal as a nation. While Russian strategy is demanding the re-opening of the Suez for clear naval waterway from Gibraltar to the Persian Gulf and beyond, Israel's military presence on the canal does not allow Egypt to reopen it.

CHAPTER 17 - MESSIAH'S COMING FROM EDOM (Isaiah 63 & 34)

Christ Comes With His Angels

There are some passages in our Authorised Version that appear to teach that Christ will come with his saints to sit on his throne. Moses said in blessing the Children of Israel, *"The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them*; *he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints"* (Deut. 33:2 A.V.). The R.V. and the R.S.V. both read, "*. . . he came from the ten thousands of holy ones."* God is frequently spoken of as "*the holy one"* in the Old Testament and the Lord Jesus Christ is called *"the holy one"* in both Old and New Testaments. Daniel calls the angels *"holy ones":. . . and behold, . . . a holy one, came down from heaven. The sentence is by decree of the watchers, the decisions by the word of the holy ones . . ."*(Dan. 4:13,17). So spoke Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar about his "tree" dream. Moses in Deut. 33:2 was evidently alluding to his receiving of the Law for Israel. Of this event Stephen said to the Jews, *"You have received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it" (*Acts 7:53).

It must be recognized that the Hebrew words *"qodesh," "qadosh," "qaddish" and "chasid"* may be translated "holy ones," "holiness" or "saints," The same applies to the New Testament Greek words, "*hagios"* and *"hosios."* Modern translators have given consideration to the context, to determine whether these words refer to holy angels of God or to His true mortal worshippers on earth. If the latter, they have been called *"saints,"* but if angels of God and same words have been translated "holy ones." Such a careful distinction was not always exercised by the Authorised Version translators; but the distinction is of the utmost importance. In the R.V. and the R.S.V., angels are not called saints, except for one instance in the New Testament where the context makes it clear that angelic beings are referred to; not mortal saints on earth.

Another instance is seen in Daniel 8:13, reading in the A.V., "*Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint . . ."* The context shows that it was one angel speaking to another angel, therefore the Hebrew words *"qadosh"* was translated *"holy one"* in both the R.V. and the R.S.V. In Zec. 14:5 we now read, *"The Lord your God will come and all the Holy Ones with him."* In the A.V. it reads *"saints*" and the R.V. and New English Version it is *"holy ones."* The "holy ones" are to be regarded as angels of God.

Coming to the New Testament where the Greek word "hagios" appears in the original, it reads from Jude verse14,

A.V. "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints . . ."
R.V.: "The Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones . . ."
R.S.V.: "The Lord came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment on all . . ."
N.E.B.: "I saw the Lord come with his myriads of angels."

There is one remaining passage left uncorrected in the modern versions: "So that he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints" 1 Thess. 3:13 R.S.V). The "Emphatic Diaglott: linear translation reads "holy ones;" so does Weymouth. The context makes it clear that the Greek word "hagios" should be translated "holy ones," not "saints." The saints could not be fulfilling the dual role of "coming with Jesus" and at the same time be "unblamable in holiness before the Lord at his coming." This is confirmed by the Lord's own words in Matt. 25:31-34.

The failure of the Authorised Version to preserve the distinction between saints and angelic beings, has been rectified in modern translations. It may be concluded from this analysis, that whatever is meant by the coming of Jesus Christ in his initial appearance to Israel as their deliverer (Rom. 11:26); he comes with holy angels, not with saints. If we are to accept the Greek word, *"Parousia"* (mostly used for the Lord's second coming), as meaning "presence" or "being alongside," then his initial appearing to whomsoever will be only with his holy

angels. The apostle Paul tells us that *"The Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels . . ." (*2 Thess. 1:7)

The Background of Deuteronomy 33:2

This passage already quoted must be considered against the Bible history of the Exodus. God was represented by His angel or angels in the cloud that accompanied Israel through the wilderness. At Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Paran, a little north-west of the southern end of the Dead Sea, God made the fateful decision to turn Israel back. For a further 38 years they were to wander in the wilderness. God's glory stood above the tabernacle in the cloud to reinforce the decision. He condemned the unfaithful spies and vindicated Caleb and Joshua before the rebellious congregation. The progress of the Israelites toward the promised land was not resumed until nearly 38 years later. Their wanderings were terminated somewhere near the southern end of the Dead Sea, in Edom. Here God said to them by His angel, that they had wandered around Mount Seir long enough and must now go north. He spoke to them from the glowing cloudy pillar. They would then probably have journeyed eastward through north Edom, skirting Moab on the east as Joshua led them to the promised land and to victory. Deborah's song takes up the theme: *"LORD, when thou didst go forth from Seir, when thou didst march from the region of Edom, the earth trembled, . . . yea, the clouds dropped water. The mountains quaked before the LORD* (Judges 5:4,5). Such divine favour, figuratively expressed, is alluded to in Deut. 33:2 (R.S.V.). *"The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned from Seir upon us"*..

Sinai, Paran and Seir became landmarks of Israel's mighty Exodus from Egypt. David's version is recorded in Psalm 68:17,18: "With mighty chariotry, twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands, the Lord came from Sinai into the holy place. Thou didst ascend the high mount." David is signifying that the angelic presence of God among the Children of Israel had traversed time and distance from Sinai, to find its resting place in Jerusalem and finally in the temple itself.

These manifestations of divine presence and power in Israel's history were regarded by their prophets as typifying Messianic glory and deliverance. Habakkuk envisaged the time when *"the LORD is in his holy temple,"* adding: *"In the midst of the years renew it; . . . in wrath remember mercy, God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise . . . He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations"* (Hab. 3:2-6). Teman, Seir and Mount Paran, all places in Edom, spoke to Israel of God's angelic power, which went forth with them and Joshua to conquer. The prophet is praying for a repetition of this divine favour. The guardian pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day denoted the same angelic presence which consumed the sacrifice and filled the temple of Solomon at its dedication.

Christ – The modern Joshua

The coming of God from Teman and His dawning from Seir upon Israel is prophetical of the coming of Jesus Christ to save his people. This location in Edom is his starting point for the destruction of Israel's enemies. *"Who is this that comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? 'It is I, announcing vindication, mighty to save.' Why is thy apparel red . . . ? 'I have trodden the winepress alone'"* (Isa. 63:1-3). Sinai is associated essentially with National Israel and her exodus from Egypt. Her second exodus was from Babylon; her third and final one will be from all countries of the world: *"from Assyria* (Russia), *from Egypt, . . . from Hamath and from the coastlands of the sea" (*Isa. 11:11)

Before this final ingathering a remnant was to return to the land long desolated. They are already there, two and a half million Jews. When Gog invades their land and Jerusalem is besieged, *"The deliverer will come from Zion* (will come TO ZION—Isa. 59:20), *he will banish ungodliness from Jacob:* (Rom.11:26) *"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted;. . . to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favour, and the day of vengeance of our God"* (Isa. 61:1,2) Jesus once announced these words to a downtrodden people under the Roman yoke, who looked for a Messiah to effect their deliverance. He stopped short of the words "day of vengeance." His second coming is for this DAY OF VENGEANCE. He comes first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

"For Jerusalem's sake (besieged by Gog and his hordes) I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication . . . Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your salvation comes'" (Isa. 62:1,2,11). This is why the Lord, like Joshua, comes from EDOM with the ancient glory of the Lord, from Teman and Bozrah; accompanied with myriads of angels and in answer to Habakkuk's prayer.

CHAPTER 18 - THE MIRACULOUS DESTRUCTION OF GOG'S ARMIES

Referred to by Old Testament Prophets

"But on that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, says the Lord God, my wrath will be roused . . . For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare, On that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; . . . I will summon every kind of terror against Gog, . . . every man's sword will be against his brother. With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many people that are with him, torrential rains and hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Ezek. 38:18,21,22). Chapter 39 elaborates upon the destruction of Gog's armies and the vast task of seven months burying the enemy dead in the valley of Hamon-gog.

The same event is referred to in Joel 2:20, "I will remove the northerner far from you, and drive him into a parched and desolate land, his front into the eastern sea; and his rear into the western sea; the stench and foul smell of him will rise, for he has done great things."

An event to be recognized as the same latter day invasion is contained in the final verses of Daniel's 11th chapter; also in the 12th and 14th of Zechariah's prophecy. It appears in at least two places in Isaiah's prophecy, where the invading nation is styled "the Assyrian." Compare the words of Isa. 30:30,31 with those of Ezekiel above: *"And the LORD will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and tempest and hailstones. The Assyrian will be terror-stricken at the voice of the LORD, when he smites with the rod."*

Again in Micah's prophecy: "And this (Christ-ruler of Micah 5:2) shall be peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land and treads upon our soil, . . . and they shall deliver us from the Assyrian . . . And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, . . . Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off" (Micah 5:5,9). Now the ancient Assyrian laid siege to Jerusalem in the days of king Hezekiah of Judah (2 Kings chap. 18), but a plague overtook the besieging army and destroyed 185,000 of them. This divine deliverance typifies the destruction of Ezekiel's Gog and the parallel between the two events is striking.

Gog's destruction in the "Dead Sea Scrolls"

The Qumran people, now accepted as the historical Essene Brotherhood, wrote the celebrated DEAD SEA SCROLLS probably not long before the birth of Christ. They showed special interest in the fulfilment of Ezekiel's prophecy, chapter 38, as signifying final deliverance of Israel from their enemies, and the coming of Messiah in his Kingdom. In their document, "The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness," we read such passages as:

"Of old didst Thou (God) tell us of the time when thy mighty hand would prevail . . . in that Thou didst declare (quoting Isaiah), Assyria shall fall by the sword of no human, and the sword of no man shall devour him."

Again: "When Thou (God) wreakest judgment upon Gog and upon his throng and takest vengeance upon (word missing in original scroll), that Thou wilt make war against them from heaven."

And in the same document: "When the great hand of God is raised against Belial (Satan) and against all the forces under his dominium . . . and the war-cry of Israel and the holy beings (angels) rings out, as they pursue Assyria; and when the sons of Japhet fall never to rise . . . the priests shall sound the blast of memorial." ("The Scriptures of the Dead Sea Sect." Theodor Gaster, pp.274, 275 and 283).

The ancient Assyrians were Semitic people, not Japhetic, but the modern Assyrian—Russia and her satellites—are "*sons of Japhet"* who anciently peopled Northern Europe. Russia stands as the "*Gog, of the land of Magog"*

according to Ezekiel and the *"Assyrian*" of Isaiah and Micah. Evidence will be adduced to show that Russia is also the apocalyptic latter-day *"dragon"* transported in time and place from Rome to Constantinople and from Constantinople to Moscow. John Thomas has made the interesting suggestion that Russia would probably overrun Turkey and take Constantinople (Istanbul) to complete her dragon identity.

The Avenger from Edom

The town of Bozrah is situated in Edom, about 25 miles S.S.E. of the Dead Sea. The words already quoted from Isaiah 63:1 name Bozrah as the place from whence Messiah will be *"marching in the greatness of his strength."* Since he comes from Edom with crimsoned garments, the question is posed, *"Why is thy apparel red, and thy garments like his that treads in the wine press?"* (Isa. 63:2) The answer comes: *"I have trodden the wine press alone, . . . their life blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment"* (68:3). This suggests at once that the annihilation of the invading army in Israel will be effected in Edom, before the Messiah's showing to Israel. *"For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come. I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought victory, and my wrath upheld me"* (Isa. 63:4,5).

Particular emphasis is made on the absence of any who would stand up against the invader, to save Israel from destruction: "*and from the peoples no one was with me"* (v.3) This suggests that the other Gentile nations, either because incapable or indifferent to the fate of Israel, were entirely absent from the scene of conflict. This need only be compared with the 38th chapter of Ezekiel to know that he is prophesying of the same event as does Isaiah. *"And all of them that are upon the face of the earth,* (Gog and his hordes), *shall quake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground" (*Ezek. 38:20).

Gog Meets His End in Edom

There is a prophecy concerning Edom, in the 34th chapter of Isaiah, which appears as a background to the events of his 63rd chapter; *"Draw near, O nations, to hear, and hearken, O peoples! Let the earth listen, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it. For the LORD is against all the nations, and furious against all their host . . . Their slain shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall rise; and the mountains shall flow with their blood. All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall"* (Isa. 34:1-4). It is certain that this is not confined to a remnant of Arabian people in Edom. It evidently involves those many nations of the Gogian confederacy; and Edom has been selected as the place of their final slaughter and burial.

"For my sword, . . . behold, it descends for judgment upon Edom, upon the people I have doomed . . . For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom" (Isa.34::5,6) This terrifying slaughter is in Bozrah from whence the Lord is said to come with crimsoned garments. What transpires in Edom is clearly associated with God's controversy with the nations over Zion. "For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch, and her soil into brimstone; her land shall become burning pitch. Night and day it shall not be quenched" (Isa. 34:8-10). We are further informed in this same chapter that Edom is to become a desolate wilderness (see also Joel 3:19)., as a place of smoking pitch What has been extracted from this chapter accounts for the coming of Israel's Messiah from Edom with garments figuratively stained with blood. (Isa: 63:1).

If Edom is correctly established as the burying place of Gog's host, it will be there that Ezekiel's "valley of Hamon-gog" will be named, "On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel . . . east of the sea (Dead Sea); . . . for there Gog and all his multitude will be buried; it will be called the valley of Hamon-gog" (Ezek. 39:11). All of this takes place south of where Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown by a similar kind of

earthquake (or volcano) as will finally destroy Gog. Burnt pitch has been found in this area, testifying to the fate of these cities. "Edom shall become a horror; . . . As when Sodom and Gomorrah . . . were overthrown . . . (Jer. 49:17, 18).

Ezekiel specifies the burial place as *"east of the sea"* and as being *"in Israel."* East of the Dead Sea referred to here would locate Edom. Since Edom is not now "in Israel" it poses the question whether Israel will take Edom before the Lord comes. *"Those of the Negeb* (now southern Israel) *shall possess Mount Esau* (Edom)" (Obadiah V.19). Today Edom is largely barren and forbidding. The Jordanian railway passes through it.

The end of the latter day invading armies is also prophesied by Joel 2:20 already quoted. *"The stench and foul smell of him will rise,"* says Joel and this accords remarkably with Isa. 34:3, *"Their slain shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall rise."* The fleeing hordes are fronted eastward to the Dead Sea and their rear into the western sea (Mediterranean) (Joel 2:20).

Falls upon the Mountains of Israel

Because the appalling fate of the Russian confederacy brings Messiah to Israel, while unrecognized by the world, it is not surprising to find the event written large throughout Old Testament prophecy. To get the complete story these prophecies must be pieced together. The triumphant progress of Israel's Redeemer is from Edom to Jerusalem. The progress of the "*northerner,"* Gog's army to its doom is from Jerusalem to Edom. There appears to be a sequence of earth-quakes designed to drive the invader out of Jerusalem, and pursue him along the Judean mountains S.S.W. from Jerusalem and then eastward to Edom. Three stages may be envisaged in the massive drama called "the controversy of Zion":

1. The invasion of Israel; with is mountains covered with armies and armaments. Jerusalem, defended by the forces of Israel, is besieged.
2. Jerusalem is overwhelmed by the enemy and half its population taken captive. The city is suddenly shaken by a powerful earthquake. The Mount of Olives splits in two and the invading armies flee southwards; only to be overtaken by further earthquakes. They will be assailed by abnormal rain and hail, to which plagues will be added.
3. The invader is driven southwards by the earthquakes and the elements. Behind him there will be a trail of carnage and wreckage. It would seem his only way of escape from the elements and earth convulsions will be towards Edom, and God will "drive him into a parched and desolate land." Those who survive the holocaust on the mountains of Israel comprise the bulk of Gog's army. In Edom their doom is sealed by fire from heaven. The violence of earthquake action there evidently causes vast explosions of underground petroleum products. Molten and flaming pitch will rain down on Gog's fleeing army and the "land shall become burning pitch."

Edom is the scene of Messiah's first presence and his greatest act of avengement on Israel's enemies. Ezekiel's prophecy is more concerned with stage two. He refers to "the mountains of Israel" against which the enemies gather. The mountains of Israel would apply as a specific sense to the mountains of Judea, extending from north of Jerusalem to about 40 miles south of the city.

Addressing Gog through Ezekiel, God said: "I will . . . bring you up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel . . . You shall fallu upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your hordes . . . You shall fall in the open field" (Ezek.39:2, 4, 5). Upon these mountains Gog's "great host" and "might army" are thrown into frenzied chaos by the elements let loose upon them. "On that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel: . . . and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground" (Ezek.38:19,20). Only the severest earthquake should be so described:

"And all the men (invading army and Jews) that are upon the face of the (Israel) earth, shall quake at my presence" (38:20).

Every Kind of Terror

"I will summon every kind of terror against Gog, says the Lord God;" and under this heading Ezekiel lists them: "Every man's sword will be against his brother" (Ezek. 38:21) "With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him" (v.22). "I will rain upon him . . . torrential rains and hailstones, fire and brimstone" (v.22). Ezekiel's "pestilence" can be seen as Zechariah's "plagues": "Their flesh shall rot while they are still on their feet, their eyes shall rot in their sockets, and their tongues shall rot in their mouths" (Zech. 14:12). Ezekiel's "every man's sword shall be against his brother" is seen as Zechariah's "great panic from the LORD" so that "the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other" (Zech. 14:18).

A kind of temporary madness and blindness will overtake them (Zec. 12:4). Confusion will be accentuated by semi-darkness in a prolonged daylight (Zec. 14:7); reminding us that *The LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah, brimstone and fire . . . out of heaven."* Abraham stood and beheld in the distance, *"and lo, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace"* (Gen. 19:24, 28). It is reasonable, to assume that the "*fire and brimstone"* of Ezek. 38:22 rains down on Gog's army in Edom. A yellow substance of volcanic origin (probably sulphur) is found in the Dead Sea region and was well known to the ancients. It burns readily in air. In the Edom scene Isaiah does not mention rain and hail, suggesting that these are confined to the mountains of Israel.

What Happens at Jerusalem?

This is primarily the subject of Zechariah's prophecy: "Lo I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the peoples round about; it will be against Judah also in the siege against Jerusalem" (Zec.12:2). The prophet elaborates in chapter 14: "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women ravished; half of the city shall go into exile (or captivity), but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations . . ." (Zec. 14:2, 3)

"Siege" suggests resistance and experience with Israel to date suggests how stiff that resistance would be. *"Even Judah will fight against* (at A.V.) *Jerusalem"* (v.14). If *"against"* is the correct translation, Judah will fight to retake the city. *"On that day his* (the Lord's) *feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; . . . and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah . . . Then, the LORD your God will come, and all the holy ones with him"* (Zec. 14:4, 5). We may suppose the prophet is speaking figuratively when he says the Lord's feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives. This mount is about three-quarters of a mile from the old temple site (now Mosque of Omar). It is 300 feet higher than the temple area with the north-south valley of Kidron in between. The earthquake apparently fills the Kidron valley and the Jews flee down the newly formed valley, escaping toward the northern end of the Dead Sea. *"And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains"* (Zec. 14:5 R.V.). It is evident on the other hand that the invaders will flee southwards away from the city and the split Mount of Olives.

Jerusalem lies within the known earthquake belt paralleling the equator. An earthquake at Peru in 1970 took 50,000 lives. The miraculous element of the prophecies lies in the timing and placing of a series of phenomenal earthquakes, which appear to follow the Gogian hordes from Jerusalem to Edom. This will, with the other terrors, account for the most overwhelming destruction of any army in history. Ezekiel describes Gog's armaments in terms of the conventional weapons of his day. Joel, the prophet, portrays the weapons of the "northerner" in more modern terms, expressing their novelty compared to those of his day. *"Like*

blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them . . . Fire devours before them . . . Their appearance is like the appearance of horses, and like war horses they run. As with the rumbling of chariots, they leap on the tops of the mountains . . . they burst through the weapons and are not halted" (Joel 2:2-8). This is a fairly apt description of the modern tank and rocket warfare by one who had never heard of it but saw it for the first time. It is certain that Israel's Redeemer will not allow nuclear bombs to be exploded on the heritage of his people.

Israel Recognize Their Saviour.

It has been suggested that the Lord's standing on the Mount of Olives figuratively expresses the mighty power of God, vested in His Son, even the power to split mountains. His real coming to Israel is quoted from Zec. 14:5, *"Then the LORD your God will come, and all the holy ones with him."* The weight of scriptural testimony points to the *"coming"* or *"presence"* of Jesus Christ, firstly among his own people Israel. Jacob will be in sore trouble and his need will be imperative. Old Testament prophecy shows it more than fitting that Jesus of Nazareth should appear first as "KING OF THE JEWS." He would fulfill his covenant firstly with Israel (Jer.30:7.8).

CHAPTER 19 - ISRAEL'S RECONCILIATION WITH MESSIAH

They Mourn for Him

Messiah's first contact in Jerusalem will probably be with the rulers of Israel. Addressing Jerusalem, Jesus said: *"You will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' "* (Matt. 23:39). At what more appropriate time could the Psalmist's words be applied? *"Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors! That the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!"* (Psalm 24:7,8). One of the highlights of our Lord's coming is that poignant hour for Israel when, in profound sorrow, they are reconciled to their Messiah and Saviour. Though we have said that the Revelation is not about the Jewish nation, John thought it necessary to preface his record with the manner in which Jesus would first reveal himself. "*Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, every one who pierced him: and all tribes of the earth* (Israel) *will wail on account of him"* (Rev. 1:7). This confirms Zechariah's prophecy, *"When they look upon him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him . . . the land shall mourn, each family by itself"* (Zech. 12:10, 12)

It is hardly necessary to point out that the words "every" and "all" are often used relatively in Scripture. It can be shown in a number of cases that these words are not always to be taken literally. The R.S.V. rendering of Rev. 1:7 quoted above, explains "*every eye*" as "*everyone who pierced him."* This applies to the whole nation of Israel at his return, which is held responsible for the Lord's crucifixion so long after it occurred. The soldiers who pierced him are seen as performing, in part, the will of the Jewish rulers. *"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, . . . and weep bitterly over him"* (Zec.12:10).

It is more than fitting that this solemn and sacred day of Israel's anti-typical atonement and national mourning, should be in the secluded presence of their holy Redeemer. The aftermath of joy that will accrue to Israel, caused the prophet Isaiah to burst forth into eloquent songs of praise and exultation: *"Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads"* (Isa. 35:10). The exalted Jesus, occupying the throne of David, is he who invites his gathered saints to share his throne. (Matt.25:31). He takes his throne by right of conquest and divine inheritance, amidst the utmost joy, acclamation and homage of his people.

Confirming the Covenant—Daniel's 70th Week

There has been much speculation on the missing half of Daniel's "70th week" prophecy. Some expositors regard the last half of the 70th "week of years" to be still future, based on the words of Dan.9:27. *"And he* (Messiah or 'anointed one') *shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease."* During the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry, this covenant was wrought in his life and sacrifice. The *"anointed one"* was *"cut off"* (v.26), thereby causing temple offering and sacrifice under the law to become ineffective in the sight of God. The covenant of eternal salvation then became vested in the LAMB of God. Those responding to it did so by faith and became the recipients of God's grace. Daniel's prophecy here concerned his people and their holy city. Within this context, the covenant with the MANY of Israel has not yet been confirmed. Only a token number—the "first-fruit" Israel class—accepted the Gospel. *"At the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace . . . the elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened"* (Rom.11:5,7).

The great gap of time between the Lord's resurrection and his Messianic appearance to Israel is nearly bridged. The first "half-week" of three and a half years ended with a resurrected Christ, revealed before his astounded but joyful disciples. The apostle Peter, strong with the Holy Spirit, said to the Jews: *"Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for establishing*

all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old (Acts 3:19-21). Peter was addressing the people of Israel. This is his definition of the time span bridging the end of the first half-week and the beginning of the second half-week.

A New Covenant with the House of Israel

God's programme of redemption for Israel is only at its halfway mark. The dispensation of Gentile salvation has intervened, leaving the second half-week for Israel in abeyance. *"The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, . . . I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, . . . for all shall know me, . . . For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more"* (Heb.8:8,10,12), (Jer.31:31,33). "*Your Teacher will not hide himself any more, but your eyes shall see your Teacher":* (Isa.30:20).

Along with the majestic voice of the Lord, who better qualified than the immortal apostles to bring the healing balm of Christ's redemption to Israel? At the end of a second three and a half years of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," would it be surprising to see another "Pentecost" on a grand and impressive scale? *"And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men all see visions"* (Joel 2:28). The first half-week was sad and tragic for both Israel and *"the anointed one"*; Israel's transgression, it *"put an end to sin"* by *"atoning for iniquity"* (Dan.9:24). It laid the eternal foundation for a new covenant.

The second half-week will be a joyful sequel to the first. Messiah "shall see his offspring . . . he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied" (Isa.53:10, 11). "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing: (Isa.35:10). Thus Israel will find her new heart and a new spirit.

The Coming of Elijah

Need we doubt that Elijah himself, or one in the spirit and power of Elijah, will precede the second half-week of Messiah's ministry to Israel? *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes" (*Mal.4:5). The last message of the Old Testament by Malachi exhorted Israel to *"remember the law of my servant Moses"*; followed by *"I will send you Elijah the prophet".* Both Moses and Elijah appeared in vision with the Lord in glory, on the Mount of Transfiguration. It may not be without significance that the heavens were shut up for three and a half years in the days of Elijah and then came rain in abundance. *"Be glad, O sons of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord, your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain"* (Joel 2:23). This was primarily a spiritual message to Israel. Elijah in person, resurrected early enough for a pre-adventual three and a half year ministry to Israel, could well be the "early rain" to prepare them for the wonderful second half-week of covenant fulfilment.

The Wrong Application of Daniel's Prophecy

An obvious misunderstanding of Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy is evident in the writings of some expositors. This is to be seen in the idea that a wicked "Roman" prince or Jewish Antichrist will make a seven-year covenant with restored Jewry in Jerusalem. To fill in this "latter day" interpretation, the Jews have to build a temple and after three and a half years, Antichrist breaks his covenant and sets up an "image," which he will force the Jews to worship. Thereafter the Jews will undergo severe persecution at his hands.

This misunderstanding arises mainly from the third "HE" of Daniel 9:27 as found in the Authorised Version: "And HE shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week HE shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the over-spreading of abominations HE shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." The same verse reads in the R.S.V.: "and He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week HE shall

cause sacrifice and offering to cease; and upon the wing of abominations SHALL COME ONE who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

It is to be observed that both the R.V. and the R.S.V. correct the false impression conveyed by the A.V., that the "HE" thrice mentioned in verse 27 is one and the same person. We may now proceed to show the correct identity of the two opposed characters referred to in the prophecy presented by Daniel 9:25-27, according to R.S.V. rendering.

VERSE	JESUS CHRIST	THE DESTROYER OF JERUSALEM (Roman Emperor
25	"an anointed one, a prince (Messiah A.V.)"	_____
26	"an anointed one . . . cut off."	"the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary."
27	"HE shall make a strong covenant for one week;" "for half the week HE shall cause sacrifice . . . to cease."	or "the desolator." "one who makes desolate"

The prophecy fills in precisely the three and a half years ministry and crucifixion of Jesus, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman general Titus in A.D.70. There is also the vital inference that a further half-week of three and a half years of covenant confirmation still remains unfulfilled.

Any interpretation that would have an Antichrist reigning over Israel in Jerusalem appears out of harmony with the whole course of latter day prophecy. Only Jesus Christ will build the temple of the Lord, and that after he has subdued all his enemies at the second advent. The idea of an Antichrist at Jerusalem has appeared in the writings of orthodox Christian expositors over the decades. It has been accepted in both Protestant and Catholic circles.

One of the reasons why the nations of Europe will gather their forces against Christ is because Christendom believes him to be the Antichrist. That is why he comes as a snare and a thief. We do not know just how long the forces of Gog will occupy Israel and Jerusalem. The prophecies suggest that the period will be quite brief. While Russia's motive for invasion is as anti-semitic as it is strategic, the power could not be called Antichrist. When they go to invade Israel, Christ is not there. The name *"Antichrist*" is found in 1 John 2:18, where John writes *"as you have heard that antichrist is coming . . .* " The name is reserved for the latter day head of Christendom, as John the apostle would know only too well when he wrote the Revelation for his Master.

It is also true that this error is due in part to a misapplication of Daniel 11:30-33, regarding the destruction of the second temple worship. The "abomination of desolation" there set up was the world of Antiochus Epiphanes, Greek king of Syria, who was under Roman dominance at the time. In the year 167 B.C. a pagan altar or statue was placed in the temple and normal Jewish sacrifices forbidden. Some Jews broke the Mosaic covenant by worshipping the abomination, but in 164 B.C. the Maccabees triumphed and cleansed the temple from its pollution. There is no justification for giving this prophecy a latter day interpretation.

CHAPTER 20 - THE "SIGN" OF THY COMING

Events of Revelation 11:17,18

Scriptures were cited under our last major heading, which indicated that our Lord will first appear to Israel in his messianic role. Some of those intimately informative statements of Jesus on his second appearing to the world will now be considered. "*We give thanks to thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast, that thou hast taken thy great power and begun to reign. The nations raged but thy wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints,. . . and for destroying the destroyers of the earth"* (Rev.11:17,18).

The principle of God-manifestation is here re-emphasised to show Jesus as the executor of God's purpose and the bearer of His titles. A definite sequence of events is depicted here:

1. "The nations raged"	The Assyrio-Gogian Confederacy overruns Israel
2. "Thy wrath came"	Gog's hosts exterminated. "Trampled them in my wrath" (Isa.63:3). "In my blazing wrath I declare" (Ezek.38:19)
3 "Time for the dead to be judged	The first resurrection and judgment
4. "Rewarding thy servants the prophets"	Eternal life; to live and reign with Christ. "On Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand" (Rev.14:1)
5. "Destroying the destroyers of the earth."	The nations assembled at Armageddon. The beast and false prophet taken. Babylon consumed with fire.

Events (1) and (2) announced in the past tense, had previously taken place when the loud voice in heaven spoke. Events (3), (4) and (5) were pending, since only the "time" for their taking place had arrived. It appears that the Lord was seen enthroned after event (2); for this is when he is seen as having "begun to reign." This must be between event (2) which is then past, and event (3) then future. This is the "present" setting, as seen by the twenty-four elders when they give thanks.

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail" (Rev.11:19). The ark of the covenant being made visible, would entail fulfilment of events (3) and (4); also the establishment of a new covenant in Christ, with the houses of Israel and Judah. In addition there would be the eternal Gospel proclaimed to the nations, prior to the pouring of judgments from the 7th bowl. The lightning, thunder, earthquake and hail, symbolize the execution of event (5), which is the outpouring of the 7th bowl.

The Kingdom of God in Your Midst

There are figurative and symbolic expressions of Jesus which are not readily understood. They are mostly taken from the language of the Old Testament prophets. Take for example the words of Jesus: *"Then will appear the SIGN of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"* (Matt.24:30). When the Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God was coming, he replied: *"The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is'* or '*There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you"* (Luke 17:20,21). If Jesus meant this in a then present sense, as some believe, it was only secondary to the ultimate meaning he had in mind. The coming of the actual Kingdom was the point of the

Pharisees' question and Jesus was not evading it. The false religious leaders of his day would typify the great Gentile apostasy of the last days. There will be no visible sign to them that the Kingdom of God has been set up in Jerusalem; yet it will be there unrecognized in their midst. This is because they cannot discern the signs of the times, even as the Pharisees failed to do.

The master later explained to his disciples that it will not be a matter of "'Lo, there' or 'Lo, here!'! . . .For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of man be in his day" (Luke 17:23,24). Here is a warning to saints, that they must first expect the great SIGN of the lightning flash in the international heavens. It seems to tell us that the Lord will be on Zion while the living saints are at their daily vocations throughout the world. In order to recognize the great lightning flash, the significance of the international storm clouds must first be perceived. These are building up today over the holy land and the Middle East. Lightning is the product of a storm accompanied by thunder. Both occur only when storm clouds are present.

The Psalmist's words proclaim the dramatic events foretold by Jesus: "The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; . . . Clouds and thick darkness are round about him; . . .Fire goes before him, and burns up his adversaries round about. His lightnings lighten the world; the earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the LORD of all the earth" (Ps.97:1-5). The "earth" is seen as Israel and the "mountains" as the hostile nations. Zechariah prophesies the same event: "Then the LORD will appear over them, and his arrow go forth like lightning; the Lord God will sound the trumpet, and march forth in the whirlwinds of the south (Edom). The LORD of hosts will protect them (Israel)" (Zec.9:14,15).

A SIGN in the heavens

There is a strong political significance in the lightning shining from East to West. It is the symbol of consuming power to be seen afar off. The Lord's arrows are the forked and chain lightnings in a storm of unprecedented fury. The fate of a vast army will be sealed with a display of power dwarfing the hydrogen bomb. Little wonder that the Israel "earth" sees and trembles. The amazing importance and terror of it will register in the Gentile "heavens" of the nations. What greater SIGN of the Son of man in the Jerusalem "heaven," than that of Russia's massive armies obliterated by such unprecedented but natural phenomena?

The saints will recognize the presence of the Lord in Zion. Israel will recognize a miraculous deliverance from national extinction. The world and the nations will behold and marvel, broadcast and comment, Messiah's triumphant appearance to Israel, secretly at first, like Joseph to his brethren, will cause a profound mourning by the "*tribes.*" Then Israel's gates will be opened wide to let the King of glory enter. *"He will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression"* (Isa. 59:20). He will doubtless come in the literal clouds with his holy angels; but the political significance of the clouds is ominous. The manner of his coming conceals his identity to the world. To them he comes as a *"snare*" and a *"thief,"* because the political clouds veil his identity to the world. This is to continue until his "apocalypse" to the nations nearly 40 years after he comes from Edom. *"Cloud and thick darkness are round about him."* Despite the miraculous overthrow of Gog, the world, like the Pharisees and Sadducees of old, will not believe.

The Type of Sinai to Israel

The divine manifestation to Moses and Israel at Sinai prefigured the second advent of Jesus. We would expect this to be in relation to Israel; not to the saints. The overthrow of Gog's hordes by earthquake or volcanic action in Edom has already been postulated. The scene of terror there could well resemble Sinai: *"there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast,. . . because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up . . . and the whole mountain, quaked greatly"* (Exod.19:16,18). But it is not through a literal wilderness that God will be taking his people back to the land of

promise. This is made clear by Ezekiel: *"I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you. . . .As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, . . . I will purge out the rebels from among you, . . .but they shall not enter the land of Israel"* (Ezek.20:35-38).

The burden of this prophecy is future, notwithstanding that a 'tenth' is already in the land. Mount Sinai is of little literal significance in this final "wilderness" purging which will continue for a 40 year equivalent to the Egyptian exodus. *"I will make you pass under the rod* (as when counting sheep), *and I will let you go in by number . . . For on my holy mountain . . . all of them, shall serve me in the land; . . .As a pleasing odour I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries"* (Ezek.20:37-41). It is in keeping with the pattern set by the first advent, that the Shepherd-Messiah should come first to the lost sheep of Israel, This "Aliyah" from the nations will continue until a possible further five million Jews are screened into the new Israel. *"I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, . . .I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the crippled, . . .And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David* (Messiah), *and he shall feed them"* (Ezek.34:15,16,23).

Chapter 21 - THE FIRST RESURRECTION

Sheep and Goats---Parable or Reality?

"Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection!. . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6)

Those who love the appearing and Kingdom of Jesus Christ are intensely interested as to when and how the resurrection and judgment are to take place. Will we be in our homes with newspapers, radios and televisions when Gog invades Israel and the Middle East? (Ezek. chaps. 38 & 39) In the last four chapters the reader has been presented with a considerable weight of scriptural evidence which would answer the question in the affirmative. "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne . . . and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, . . . inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: . . And they (at his left) will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:31,33,46).

A king seated upon a throne is here depicted extending an invitation to expectant mortal saints to inherit his kingdom; then they *"go away into eternal life."* The Master had just concluded the parable of the talents, as an earthly master's reward for their good or bad use. His description of the judgment with the *sheep* and the *goats* and the words which the Lord puts into their mouths, is also highly characteristic of parable. He compares the modesty of his faithful servants with the over-confidence of the unfaithful ones. He also highlights the grounds of acceptance and rejection of those called the Lord's servants. It seems that Jesus did not intend his discourse to present the literal judgment scene.

There are however literal or factual features about this "semi-parable" which must be recognized:

1. It could only be taken as a statement of fact, that the Lord comes in glory with holy angels and takes his place as king of Israel.
2. His humble servants, faithful to their charge, will be justified, rewarded with eternal life and invited to share the kingdom.
3. There will be others who will seek to justify themselves by their works (*"Lord we have done mighty works in thy name")*; but they meet with the Lord's rejection.
4. The principles of justification and the grounds of rejection are clearly demonstrated.

The Reapers are the Angels

There are other statements made by the Master that are manifestly literal descriptions of how the judgment will be conducted. The Lord's angels figure prominently in the work. The use of metaphor in Jesus' statements of things literal requires interpretation to get the complete picture. *"The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evil-doers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father"* (Matt:13:39,41-43). To complete the picture, this should be coupled with the positive statement of Jesus in Matt. 24:30,31, where the sequence of events is clearly shown:

1. The sign of the Son of man in (Jerusalem) heaven, when the *"stars fall and the "powers of heaven are shaken*" (Gog and his nations overthrown).
2. The tribes of the earth (Israel) mourn, then see the Son of man in power.
3. *"And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*.

The gathering of both good and bad is clarified in the words: *"I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn"* (Matt. 13:30). In accepting the general literality of these passages, it is not difficult to see where metaphor and symbol are used. The "*furnace of fire"* is the great tribulation that will rend the nations in eruptions of violence, culminating in the *"great earthquake."* It is the time of trouble such as never was, when Great Babylon will sink in mass rebellion and civil war, in which the whole world will be engulfed. The unworthy *"weeds"* are first gathered and the *"bundles"* suggest a culling out from communities of worshippers. Being told by the angels that there is no place in the kingdom for them, they are thrust into an ascending tempo of plague and destruction. The bitter tears of remorse will be only too evident.

The Dead are Raised

When the angels go forth, the DEAD are first made contemporary with the living. In this way the living have no advantage over the dead. Even the "unjust" dead will be made contemporary with the "unjust" living. *"The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his* (Christ's) *voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment"* (John 5:28-29). In the *resurrection of judgment"* the unjust, being raised to mortality, are sent back with the living unjust into *"the great tribulation,"* there to live out their few mortal days in the sorrow of rejection.

Those who come forth to *"a resurrection of life"* are first raised from the grave to mortality; then to join the righteous living ones. They are then perfected by sudden and miraculous bodily change to immortality. *"We who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep . . . the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"* (1 Thess. 4:15-17). Paul is here only concerned with the righteous, both dead and living at the Lord's coming.

The catching up of the just *"together in the clouds"* to meet the Lord, signifies that Jesus will already have come in the clouds, both literal and political. This will be in Jerusalem, the place of his throne where he is attended by the angels. To the saints and the elect of Israel, Jesus will have already come. To the world at large and the powers-that-be, the Lord will "still be coming" unrecognized in the clouds, with power and great glory. The "AIR" where the saints meet him, is where the Lord sits on his Davidic throne in Jerusalem. The "*prince of the power of the air"* of which Paul wrote, is then about to be cast out and the divine court is preparing to sit in judgment.

Saints Assembled to Meet Christ

We are left in no doubt that the saints are to be gathered to Christ, "*Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and OUR ASSEMBLY TO MEET HIM . . ."*(2 Thess. 2:1) Paul's *"caught up together in the clouds"* implies concealment. The saints themselves are not represented by the clouds. The gathering of the "wheat" into the Lord's barn is literally presented by Jesus as a sudden and simultaneous snatching away of the righteous from their place of living. It is to be as sudden as the flood in Noah's day and as the catastrophic destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The angelic call will be urgent and temporal possessions useless. Two men in a bed, two men in a field, two women grinding together; one taken and the other left. This is how the elect will get their call. The Lord stressed that when the righteous were suddenly withdrawn from Noah's world and Sodom, then disaster struck immediately.

The Court Shall Sit

What the Revelation informs us about the first resurrection harmonises with the Gospels and New Testament letters. *"I saw thrones and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed"* (Rev. 20:4). These

would be saints exalted in resurrection, who are to be the judges of Babylon the great. Daniel looked on the same thrones as *"the court sat in judgment"* on the papal "stout horn" (Dan. 7:9,10,26). John proceeds to show how the court came into being. "Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus . . . and who had not worshipped the beast or its image . . . They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years" *(Rev.20:4).*

These are of course the "144,000" class embracing all who are justified under the Gospel and Old Testament dispensations. They are the *"first-fruits"* to God and the Lamb. Those souls who did not worship the beast, and suffered for it, are emphasized as uniquely fit ones to judge the system which persecuted them. It is a hidden saying of Jesus that *"Where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together"* (Luke 17:37). This was in reply to the disciples' question, *"Where Lord"* or where will those snatched away be taken to? The same words of Jesus recorded in Matt. 24:28 appear as an explanation of the universality of his "coming" to believers. Like lightning that lightens up the whole canopy of the heavens, so will be the presence of the angels who go out to gather the elect from every place where they reside. To the elect it is not a case of "here or there" but it is as extensive as the lightning flash. True saints, wherever they may be selected, will mount up as eagles to be with Christ. They are there to be constituted the Cherubim and the elders on thrones of John's vision. As eagles they are there to devour the "carcass" of the ecclesiastical and temporal body politic of the Gentiles. *"One that was ancient of days took his seat; . . . A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him; a thousand thousands served him, . . . THE COURT SAT IN JUDGMENT, . . .And as I looked, the beast was slain, and its BODY destroyed and given over to be burned with fire"* (Dan. 7:9-11).

The Trumpet Shall Sound

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess.4:16). The word "first" must be taken in its context. The "living" are not to be caught away before or to precede those who are asleep in Christ; for the latter are raised FIRST. The word "first" does not mean that this is the first act of Jesus on his return from heaven. The Authorised Version reads: "With a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God." The "cry of command" is the voice of great authority and power; as when Jesus "cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out'." "And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and . . . gather his elect from the four winds" (Matt.24:31).

"Michael the archangel" could well be in charge of the angels who come to assist Christ; but the "Michael of Dan. 12:1 refers to the Lord Jesus. *"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people"*. It is inconceivable that this meant the archangel himself, while omitting any reference to Messiah. Daniel was not only representative of his people, Israel, but of the saints as well, both Jew and Gentile. They were all "Daniel's people" whom the greater MICHAEL was to deliver. There were names in the book, of those found worthy of resurrection to life, of whom Daniel was one.

Messiah's is the true "Michael" role, of which Constantine's great achievement was but a type. Constantine delivered and elevated a false Christian church to share his throne in Rome. The true Michael will deliver and elevate the Ecclesia of God, the Lord's Body, to share his throne in Jerusalem. Constantine broke the power of the pagan dragon by force of arms. The Lord Jesus will destroy the armies of the latter-day dragon, Gog, from the land of Israel and from Jerusalem, by unloosing the elements of heaven upon his armies. The Lord's *"cry of command"* will send forth his angels on their saint-gathering mission. His call will go out to Daniel's people, the saints, to gather his elect. In faith and holy expectation the saints are to go about their daily tasks, until they get their call for personal deliverance. No saint worthy of the name will be missed out.

Daniel's Figurative Resurrection

Daniel saw in his vision *"one in the likeness of the sons of men"* in resplendent glory. His appearance to Daniel (10:5,6), corresponds to that of the glorified Christ seen by John (Rev. 1:12,15). When he spoke Daniel fell on his face in deep sleep, just as John, in his vision, fell at his feet as thought dead. When he had touched Daniel and strengthened him (a sign of resurrection), he told Daniel how *"Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me,"* apparently against the prince of Persia (v13,20). He said to Daniel, "*I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince"* (v.21).

This suggests that Michael, the archangel of the Old Testament, will accompany the Lord at his appearing and that he is to be regarded by Christ as *"one of the chief princes."* The angels will figuratively sound the loud trumpet call, which signifies the awakening of the dead from their sleep. Paul declares, *"Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, . . . at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed"* (I Cor.15:51,52). Part of the mystery of God under the 7th trumpet is: *"the time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints"* (Rev.11:18). *"But that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the MYSTERY of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets should be fulfilled* (Rev.10:7).

IV: APOCALYPTIC EVENTS CONSIDERED FUTURE TO 1971

The Pouring of the 6th and 7th Bowls (Rev. 16:12, 17)

Chapter 22 THE ETERNAL GOSPEL PROCLAIMED

Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand . . . and they sing a new song before the throne . . ." (Rev.14:1,3).

This scene is the outcome of resurrection and judgment, soon after the Lord comes with all his holy angels and sits on his glorious throne. It would be shortly after Israel's mourning and reconciliation with Messiah. *"These have been redeemed from mankind as FIRST FRUITS for God and the Lamb"* (14:4). The voices of the "144,000" came from the new Jerusalem "heaven" like thunder. The saints are seen enthroned with the Lamb and equipped to carry out his stupendous programme of salvation and judgment.

An Angel Flying in Midheaven

"Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an ETERNAL GOSPEL to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water" (Rev.14:6,7). One of the vital features of the second advent is the world-wide proclamation of the eternal gospel. The Lamb and his saints are on Mount Zion for both salvation and judgment. For about 40 years the emphasis is on judgment; but the Lord will not pour out the terrible 7th bowl of wrath without due warning to the world. There will be an initial period, the calm before the storm, when the ark of God's covenant is seen within his temple (11:19). This is before the temple is filled with smoke from the glory and power of divine wrath in the 6th and 7th plagues (Rev.15:8).

Messiah having confirmed the covenant with Israel for three and a half years, she will experience a visitation of the Holy Spirit as prophesied by Joel (2:28,29). The ark of the covenant will then be revealed to the Gentiles throughout the world by the angelic proclamation. It is unlikely that this would commence until the outpouring of the Spirit on Israel.

The message of this angel, spoken in a loud voice, is powerful but conciliatory. There is no mention of judgment on Babylon at this stage; but strong warning of imminent judgment on all peoples. The urgent message is "to those who dwell on earth," and "flying in mid-heaven" suggests the nearness of the messengers to the common people. The word "angel" could cover a vast organization under the direction of the immortal saints in Jerusalem. The "loud voice" will be heard at ruler and government level throughout the world and in Rome itself. A tremendous upsurge of spiritual fervour will be experienced by the Jewish nation as foreseen in Joel's prophecy. New Peters, Johns and Pauls will no doubt assist as part of the "angel" organization to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God.

It will be the same GOSPEL as formerly preached by Jesus and the apostles: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But now the King is on David's throne, with redeemed saints and angels in attendance; universal Kingship is pending. Those accepting the gospel will look to Zion's king for personal salvation and with expectancy of world government from Jerusalem. The gospel will be preached fearlessly as Jesus and the apostles proclaimed it. False religion will be indicted. This would be in harmony with the command, "Worship him who made heaven and earth," with the warning. "the hour of his judgment has come" (Rev.14:7). The modern mass media of communication will possibly be utilized by the "angel". In an apprehensive world, such a universal drive, backed by immortal energy and wisdom, cannot fail to attract a vast multitude of believers.

First and Second Coming—An Analogy

Our understanding of the apocalyptic programme, contained in the 6th and 7th bowls, will be enhanced by a recognition of remarkable parallel between events of the first and second coming. Following the Lord's ministry of three and a half years, there came the outpouring of the Spirit on Apostles and Jewish believers at "Pentecost." The apostles then took the gospel to the Jews and spread it far and wide among the Gentiles, mainly through Christ's chosen vessel, Paul. From the time Jesus began to preach, to the overthrow of Jerusalem by Rome, was a period of 40 years. The gospel was preached among the Gentiles for some 30 years until about 64 A.D. In 66 A.D. the Jewish Zealots massacred the Roman garrison at Jerusalem and four years later the city was desolated by the Roman armies. This accorded with Jesus' words: "*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come:* (Matt.24:14).

The discourse of Jesus with his disciples on "*the sign of your coming and of the close of the age,"* has long been recognized as a double prophecy. Jesus presented the end of the Mosaic Body politic and Jerusalem, as well as the end of the Gentile age at his second coming. It is well to realize that there is a transition period of 40 years in which Gentile dominion overlaps the "setting up" of the Kingdom of God. It will be within this period that the eternal gospel will be proclaimed. This will be as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come. This "end" is the mighty Babylonian earthquake of the 7th bowl. The analogy of the first and second advents may be demonstrated in outline by the following comparison.

FIRST ADVENT	**SECOND ADVENT**
Three and a half years' ministry to Israel in founding the covenant.	Three and a half years' ministry to Israel in confirming the covenant.
Out pouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and disciples on the day of Pentecost.	Outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Jewish people when "*I* God) *am in the midst of Israel" (* Joel 2:27-29)
Thirty years' preaching to Gentile world by Paul and others.	Thirty years' proclamation of the gospel by the "flying angel".
Jewish Commonwealth and Jerusalem destroyed by the Romans.	Gentile power and Great Babylon destroyed by Christ and his saints.
The Lord's enemies were: Pilate and Herod of Rome; Jewish high priest; Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees; The Jewish laity.	The Lord's enemies will be: The beast "mouth" of Rome; The false prophet "mouth"; Catholic hierarchy and Church; Worshippers of the beast and its image

During the Lord's first advent, the common people heard him gladly and would have acclaimed him king of Israel. They cried, *"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the king of Israel!"* (John 12:13). On the other hand the Sadducees and the Pharisees who had the power, finally persuaded the people (not necessarily the same people) to demand his blood. When the common people heard Jesus gladly, the rulers in jealousy and rage gathered in council and said, *"What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on thus, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation"* (John 11:47,48). At his second coming the circumstances are of course different but the parallel is clear. The modern counterparts of Rome's Pilate, Herod, chief priest and Sanhedrin will say in effect: "What are we going to do? For this Jewish usurper performs many signs. If we let him alone he and the Jews will destroy our holy Christianity and take over the nations of Europe."

The Angelic Proclamation—A Twofold Purpose

"Jesus said, For judgment I came into the world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind" (John 9:39). It is on this same principle that the "angel" is sent by the Lamb to proclaim the eternal gospel to all peoples and nations. It is part of the Lord's lightning which lights up the whole world. It will be shown as we proceed, that this is in fact part of the 6th bowl poured on the river Euphrates. By the very act of making blind men see, the King directs the sharp sword of his mouth against Rome. The Pharisees and Sadducees were blinded into a resolve to destroy the Lord of Life. Rome will be blinded into a resolve to destroy the King of the Jews in Jerusalem.

Reference has already been made to the "*fire"* which the altar-angel took from the altar and threw on the earth. This may be identified as the gospel proclaimed by the angel. This fire caused peals of thunder, loud noises, flashes of lightning and a great earthquake (Rev.8:5). It was shown that this is the final earthquake which destroys Babylong the great and refers to the events of the 6th and 7th bowls. The Master's own words sum up the situation: *"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled! . . ."* (Luke 12:49). Whatever the pre-adventual stirrings toward the rise of ecclesiastical Rome in Western Europe, it seems certain that the beast and its woman rider will not materialize until the Lamb stands on Mount Zion. It will come initially as a reaction to Israel's triumph over the armies of Gog and the Arab nations and the "audacity" of Zion's new leader.

The world-wide spread of the gospel and what it implies will fill Rome with madness. Apart from a great multitude of believers, there is a strong inference that the loyalty of many of Rome's adherents will be deflected away from her to form a "protestant" opposition. What emanates from Jerusalem under the 6th bowl is a foretaste of the sharp sword issuing from the mouth of the King of kings on the white horse. He is called *"Faithful and True"* and in righteousness he judges and makes war. *"The Lord Jesus will slay him* (the lawless one) *with the breath of his mouth"* (2 Thess. 2:8). *"He* (Messiah) *shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth"* (Isa.11:4). His Gospel was the powerful weapon used against the rulers of Israel and against pagan Rome, to their final destruction. It will likewise play a powerful part in overthrowing Babylon the great.

Fallen, Fallen is Babylon

"Another angel, a second, followed, saying, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion" (Rev.14:8). This appears to be uttered in the form of a prophecy, a pronouncement of what is about to happen. In Rev.18:1,2 the Christ-angel makes the same pronouncement, but verses 8, 9, 15 and 21 make her fall prophetic. Other verses of chapter 18 suggest she is in the process of falling. Similarly we read in Rev.16:17, "It is done" as the 7th bowl is poured, but the events of the bowl including the fall of Babylon must be future to its pouring. After it is all over, Christ himself says to John, ÍT IS DONE" (21:6). Thus the first pronouncement was prophetic. This second angel will step up the tempo of opposition and indictment of Rome by the Lamb in Zion. It will only add to Rome's hatred and fear of the new power in Israel.

A Final Warning

"And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a LOUD VOICE, 'If any man worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark in his forehead or in his hand, he also shall drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger" (Rev.14:9,10). The second and third angels "follow" the first one, whose saving and enlightening work will still be in progress. There may be several years interval between the going out of each angel; but the confrontation between Rome and Zion is by now deep and irrevocable. The denunciations from Zion are sweeping and the warnings ominous. The beast and image worshippers are to be tormented with "fire and brimstone" in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb. There is a furnace of

tribulation pending here, which will consume Great Babylon in the flames of anarchy, revolt and destruction. It will be reminiscent of the terrifying French Revolution, but on a world-wide scale. Little wonder that Rome becomes angry and fearful and prepares for war.

It is clear that the beast and false prophet will be taking the threat to their existence most seriously, as they enter into conspiracy with Europe's kings. Zion's King is putting pressure on Rome as evidenced by the words of the 2nd Psalm, "the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed, saying, 'Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us (Ps 2:2,3) But "the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury" (Ps. 2:4,5).

Comfort and Warning for New Saints

"Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev.14:12). It is certain that a great multitude will accept the angelic message of personal salvation and believe the Kingdom of God has been planted in Jerusalem. Severe tribulation will be on all people and nations. These newly-made Christians will have turned from idols to serve the living God. For a time they will suffer dire affliction, hardship, and possible persecution from Rome. Their brethren from the first resurrection, immortal first-fruits for God and the Lamb, are with their Lord in Jerusalem. A further last-minute warning to these saints in tribulation is given: *"Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues: for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities"* (Rev.18:4,5)

CHAPTER 23 - THE SIXTH BOWL AND THE EUPHRATES (Revelation 16:12)

"The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east" (Rev. 16:12).

There were prophetical expositors in the 19th century, who under the inspiration of the protestant movement, were able to recognize in the Revelation the history and career or the vast papal system. Most of these writers saw the "great river Euphrates" as the Turkish Empire, whose "drying up" is now a matter of history. John Thomas, writing in 1868, remarked:

> "Tillinghast, a commentator who wrote over 200 years ago, and quoted in Elliot's notes, in exposition of this vial (bowl) says, 'By the river Euphrates we are to understand the Ottoman or Turkish Empire . . . The people who at the present time are of all others accounted the greatest are the Turks; who therefore, and no others, are here to be understood; especially as the Euphrates in Apocalypse IX, under the sounding of the sixth trumpet, by general consent of expositors, has reference to the Turkish power" (Eureka vol. 3, p.546).

John Thomas himself accepted this longstanding interpretation. It will be profitable to consider the fulfilment of the 6th trumpet, referred to by Tillinghast, as aiding our understanding of the 6th bowl.

The River Euphrates of the 6th Trumpet

The 6th trumpet or second woe of Rev. 9:13 was sounded by the angel to "*Release the four angels who are bound at the great River Euphrates. So the Four angels were released, who had been held ready . . ."* The description of the "troops of cavalry" invading Roman territory as plagues on mankind, which follows this quotation, can readily be accepted as the historical invasions of Eastern Rome by the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks. These progressive invasions of the Byzantine Empire extended from about 1070 to 1452 A.D., when the Turks overthrew Constantinople. A map of 11th century Europe and W. Asia shows how these Turkish hordes initially occupied the whole of the Euphrates area. Their southern border was just south of the Euphrates and they were hard against the Byzantine Empire. They were held there by God until ready to plague the idol and image worshippers of the Roman East.

Here "the great river Euphrates," as applied to the 6th trumpet, is used not so much as a symbol but as a literal geographical area occupied by a potential invading power. This is also shown by the wording of verse 9:13 quoted above, It is true that the great Turkish Empire has dried up over the past three centuries, but so have other empires. The drying up of the British Empire in the Middle East has proved necessary to enable Israel's statehood to be restored. A closer study of the 6th bowl prophecy shows that the historical remoteness of Turkey's *"drying up"* has no connection with events which are said to follow the pouring of this bowl. There is yet no valid historical fulfilment of the "*three foul spirits like frogs,"* said to issue forth following the drying up process.

The 6th Bowl a Judgment on Rome

The seven seals, seven trumpets and finally the seven bowls of God's wrath, were all intended as judgments on the Roman Empire, temporal and ecclesiastical. Such was the 6th trumpet (second woe) of Rev. 9:13-21). The last three of the seven trumpets were called "WOES" because their sounding would awaken aggressive nations and leaders to wage war on the Roman Empire to its destruction. Such were the 5th and part of the 6th *"woe"* trumpets which brought the Saracens and later the Turks, into the Eastern Roman Empire. When the Turkish invaders finally took Constantinople the Eastern Roman Empire ceased to exist. After the 4th trumpet John looked, *"And I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice, as it flew in midheaven, Woe, woe, woe to those*

who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets which the three angels are about to blow!" (Rev. 8:13)

The rest of the 6th trumpet fell heavily on the Western Papal domain and accounted for the French Revolution. Now the 7th TRUMPET was the last of the trumpets as well as the third of the "woe" trumpets. It released the seven angels with their seven plagues, which they placed in seven bowls of wrath against the papal dominion. Napoleon was indeed like an eagle in the midheaven. The final EAGLE is the King of kings and Lord or lords who comes to execute in person the 6th and 7th bowls, which complete the *third "woe" trumpet.* These can only be directed against the papal kingdom. The reader will perceive that to make the 6th bowl a plague on Turkey, while applying the other six to Rome, is to deny the overall context of the seven bowl judgments. Five have already been poured out on Rome. Moreover, the three frog-like spirits from dragon, beast and false prophet, which gather the kings of the earth to Armageddon, are clearly Roman in identity (Rev. 16:13,14). These spirits could not possibly be associated with the drying up of Turkey and such emanations are obviously future.

"The great river Euphrates" of the 6th bowl has a symbolic meaning in relation to *"Babylon the great"* and its drying up will be an essential prelude to Babylon's conquest. The mystical city is associated with the mystical river on which, like Babylon of old, the Woman is seen to sit. When powers outside Rome were introduced into the Apocalypse they were there as instruments of divine judgment on Rome. The Saracens and Turks under the 5th and 6th trumpets, having performed their destructive role on Rome, faded out of the apocalyptic orbit.

The Type of Cyrus and Ancient Babylon

The capture of ancient Babylon by Cyrus the Persian affords an excellent guide to understanding the application of the 6th bowl. Indeed it is clear that the Revelator used ancient literal Babylon, the Euphrates on which it sat and its eastern conqueror, Cyrus, all as types and symbols of his own conquest over spiritual Babylon. The drying up of the literal river Euphrates was effected by Cyrus as he besieged the mighty and idolatrous city. The river was Babylon's pride and lifeline. It flowed under one broad wall and out from under the opposite wall, while feeding an elaborate canal system within the city. The diverting of the river away from the city enabled Cyrus to march his armies under the great walls, along the river bed and through the gates of inner walls flanking the river banks. Babylon was taken in 549 B.C.

A century later the Greek general and historian, Xenophon, left the world the story of its capture. Quoting "The Story of the Bible World" by Nelson Beecher Keyes:

> "Cyrus had a deep trench dug around the city. That night (when Belshazzar saw the writing on his temple wall), the besiegers drained the Euphrates into their trench and entered the city through the dry bed of the river. Then they threw down the gates, and the city's defences were rendered worthless. The diverted river wrought much havoc, traces of which are still visible in the ruins of the inner walls. Babylon was readily subdued": (p.96).

The plague of the 6th bowl on mystical Babylon is modelled after the type of the conquest of ancient Babylon.

Cyrus—a Type of Christ

Of this Cyrus, God said, "He is my shepherd . . . saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid'" (Isa. 44:28). "Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and ungird the loins of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed" (Isa. 45:1). Cyrus performed all these things for God and for Israel. In this respect he was a true type of Christ when he comes to deliver his people, Jews and saints, from their traditional enemies.

Through Cyrus, God said, "I will accomplish all my purpose, calling a BIRD OF PREY from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country" (Isa. 46:10,11).

Xenophon said that soldiers of Cyrus "threw down the gates" facing the dried-up river, but Keyes adds: "Modern historians maintain that the city's gates were opened from within and no fighting occurred." These words accord with what is written prophetically in Isa. 45:1 quoted above. There was internal strife and sedition in Babylon: "Go out of the midst of her, my people! (Israel) . . .when a report comes in one year and afterward a report in another year, and violence is in the land, and ruler is against ruler" (Jer. 51:45,46). Leaving the gates open was evidently an act of treachery, predicted by Isaiah. "O you who dwell by many waters, rich in treasures, your end has come, the thread of your life (the Euphrates) is cut" (Jer. 51:13).

The Mystical Euphrates—a River of Humanity

John's vision of the Woman on the beast provides the clue for identifying the river Euphrates. *"Come,"* said the angel to John, *"I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who is seated upon MANY WATERS"* (Rev. 17:1). It was further revealed to John what these waters represented: *"The waters that you saw, where the harlot is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues"* (Rev.17:15). Because John saw the harlot, styled "Babylon the great," seated on a beast we may conclude that the BODY of the beast with its horns, was made up of the peoples and nations over which the harlot had spiritual dominion

John saw the harlot as a queen, sitting on the beast as its rider. He first describes the woman, then the beast and its horns. The remainder of the 17th chapter sets down developments FUTURE to the woman-on-beast scene observed by John:

1. *The ten horns WILL receive power with the beast (*v.12).
2. *The ten horns WILL make war on the Lamb* (v.14)
3. *The Lamb WILL conquer them* (v.14)
4. *The ten horns and the beast WILL hate the harlot* (v.16)
5. *They WILL make her desolate and burn her with fire* (v.16)

Item (1) takes place under the 6th bowl; while items (2) to (5) occur under the 7th bowl.

When John is told that the waters under the woman are peoples, nations and tongues, it is to inform him that both the beast and its horns *"Will hate the harlot; they will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and giving over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled"* (Rev. 17:16). The inference is plain that when the beast and the ten horns decide to rend and desolate the harlot, it will be done by the will of the many peoples who make up the beast and horn dominions. Whereas they were at first deceived by the false prophet and the woman to make war on the Lamb, they then rise up to take vengeance on the woman and destroy her. This is the third and final earthquake of the Apocalypse and the last act of judgment of the 7th bowl.

The Great Earthquake of the 7th Bowl.

It is necessary to understand the significance and nature of this earthquake to appreciate how the drying up of the water was *"to prepare the way for the kings from the east."* Items (4) and (5) are symbolized by the earthquake itself. It has already been demonstrated that an apocalyptic "earthquake" is an uprising by the common people; a revolution against the powers-that-be. It is generally set off by civil war and followed by an ideological and political change. The Revelation is concerned with three such *"earthquakes."*

1. The overthrow of paganism by Constantine (Rev. 6:12) already dealt with in some detail.

2. The French Revolution (Rev. 11:13) fully described in chapter 13 herein. It was the reaction of a populace goaded to desperation by the shocking oppression of kings and rulers, dominated by a papal hierarchy. This earthquake introduced the 7th trumpet and its seven bowls of wrath decreed against papal dominion.
3. This is the greatest of them all and the one we are now to consider. It will take place after war, called *"the battle on the great day of God the Almighty."*

The Contents of the 6th Bowl

In our chapter 9 under "Papal Triumph in the Contest," reference was made to the medieval papal "fire" which thundered from the Vatican, "*making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of men."* The tables will be turned as *"flashes of lightning"* proceed from the Jerusalem "heavens"--from the King—to fall upon the heads of the papal hierarchy and all beast worshippers. It is an extension of that lightning which appears in the east and shines in the west.

The world-wide preaching of the eternal gospel is with strong warning of impending judgments; followed by other two angels announcing Babylon's downfall. With these two there is a tacit threat, that all who persist in worshipping the beast and its image, will incur the fiery wrath of God. These virtually amount to edicts issued from Jerusalem against Rome. Papal motives will be questioned and her hypocrisy exposed in many strong utterances of the Lord in Jerusalem. Here is lightning from the east shining to the west, as the fulfilment of Paul's prediction: *"And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming"* (2 Thess. 2:8). All these things are the contents of the 6th bowl poured out on the papal *"Euphrates,"* made up of *"peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues."* To this same Euphratean "WATER"—to every nations and tribe and tongue and people—the true gospel is proclaimed.

Its Water Was Dried Up

Already demonstrated from history, the reader's attention has been drawn to those two classes of God's witnesses who were prepared to testify against papal error and wickedness. It may be anticipated that the same two bodies of witnesses will be generated among the earth's teeming millions, by this sustained and universal gospel campaigning under immortal direction. It will certainly not be based on emotional appeal and will be the very antithesis of what is called orthodox Christian theology. It will be pregnant with warnings of judgments at hand, calling on men to repent and turn to Jerusalem to give God the glory due to Him. It will be regarded by Christendom at large as heretical.

With such powerful and forthright proclamation, a strong "protestant" movement may be expected to emerge against Rome. Others moved by fear of dire judgment will cease to be beast worshippers any longer. This weight of public opinion averse to the papal hierarchy and the beast, will soon become painfully apparent to them. The alienation of so much 'WATER' away from spiritual Babylon is analogous to the huge crowds which Jesus drew after him during his ministry. Rome's reaction will be similar to that of the Pharisees and Sadducees. "*The common people heard him* (Jesus) *gladly."* The people at one stage would have taken Jesus by force and made him a king. Similarly, there will be many throughout the world, willing to acknowledge the King in Zion, while not necessarily realizing he is the Christ.

The history of mankind shows just how difficult it is to unseat spiritual wickedness in high places. Jesus spoke the truth in a way that left all other sincere men guilty in some degree of compromise and expediency. The Pharisees and scribes claimed to sit in Moses' seat and they had the backing of the Jewish Sanhedrin. The Sadducees monopolized the high priesthood by the patronage of Rome. They were backed by armed force and the people feared them. Moreover, tradition was on their side. Jesus provoked them to bitter enmity by

fearless denunciation of their evil ways. He relentlessly tore away their mask of piety, there to reveal their evil motives and hypocrisy. *"For judgment I came into this world . . . that those who see may become blind"* (John 9:39). The words of Jesus and his attitude towards them prompted them into the evil deed which he knew lurked in their hearts. On the side of Jesus was his miraculous power of healing, the example of his life and precept, his unmatchable thought and utterance, and the confidence of the common people in his Messianic authority. His final triumph over them resulted from his total disregard for his own life, and his unquenchable faith in God to vindicate His truth and purpose.

Spiritual wickedness in the high places of Great Babylon will be at its very zenith in her long history. As they once said of her, so will it be said again: *"Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"* The *"great city, which has dominion over the kings of the earth,"* has long presented her high broad walls against the efforts of sincere men to storm her citadels of deceit and corruption. Her organization is so vast and her traditions so entrenched, that all human efforts of sincere men to storm her citadels of deceit and corruption. Her organization is so vast and her traditions so entrenched, that all human efforts to expose her and repudiate her extravagant claims have been ineffective and futile.

At this great mountain of power yet to develop in Europe, the hidden but infinite power of the STONE KINGDOM in Jerusalem will be directed. Rome will be goaded into militant confrontation with the LAMB; just as Goliath was provoked into contest with David, who, with sling and stone brought the proud giant to his destruction. As we proceed it will become evident how the diversion of Babylon's *"Euphratean water,"* with the bitter opposition and deception it evokes, will leave Babylon vulnerable to the wrath of the people. When the King of the East and his associate kings reveal their identity to the nations, there will be no doubt as to how the 6th bowl *"prepared the way"* for taking and destroying the mystical city.

CHAPTER 24 - THE DEMONIC SPIRITS OF THE SIXTH BOWL (Revelation 16:13,14)

The 6th bowl was poured on the river Euphrates *"to prepare the way for the kings from the east."* The identity of these kings and how their way is to be prepared, will be made clear by consideration of the unclean spirits. *"And I saw, issuing from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet, three foul spirits like frogs; for they are demonic spirits performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty"* (Rev. 16:13,14).

A Provocation to Conspire

The issuing of the three foul spirits is a reaction to the drying up of the Euphratean *"water."* It is a fair inference that what is to be poured from the 6th bowl will provoke from the dragon, beast and false prophet, the foul spirits of accusation and incitement to war. *"They are demonic spirits performing signs."* Just how the "two-horned" beast "*worked great signs, even making fire come down from heaven. . . ."* (Rev. 13:13), has already been assessed from medieval history. It was seen how the *"fire"* and the *"signs"* symbolized the pope's audacious claims of authority over kings and commoners and the amazing deceptions he practiced on the peoples of Europe. So specious and insidious are these latter day spirits and the "signs" they perform, that the "kings of the whole world" will be moved against the LAMB in Jerusalem.

The parallel case of the Lord's first advent is instructive. There were crowds of ordinary people who recognized Jesus, some as the Saviour of men but mostly as a Messiah to deliver them from the Roman yoke. Despite this, the rulers had the power which the people feared. They exerted their authority and stirred up the people, calling on the power of Herod and Rome to support them. A somewhat similar situation will exist when the kings of Europe and beyond are deceived and incited to prepare for war against Jerusalem and its king. He will in all probability be dubbed usurper and antichrist. "*Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion to make them believe what is false"* (2 Thess. 2:11).

The Nature of the Challenge

How is it possible that Orthodox Christianity would make war on the Christ of God? This is a valid question, but one to which history and Scripture provide the answer. Christendom will be found at war against the returned Christ for the very same reason that caused the rulers of Israel to crucify him. Jesus said to the Jews and their leaders: *"You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky; but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"* (Luke 12:56). Paul, the apostle, speaking as an ex-Pharisee, said: *"For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning him"* (Acts 13:27). There were nevertheless sincere and devout hearts in Israel prepared to recognize and accept Jesus on his intrinsic value; though they may not have understood he came to suffer and not to reign. They knew the writings of their prophets sufficiently to say, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of God."*

The fact is that Christendom has long discarded the doctrine of Christ's personal second coming. Such a coming has been categorically denied by prominent church leaders even to the point of ridicule in some instances. If seriously believed in at all, it is left to a few minor sects to associate it with Israel's national redemption. Because the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees were so wise and righteous in their own eyes, so disdainful of any spiritual wisdom not their own, God, through Jesus, actually veiled His Son's identity from them. Jesus himself left them guessing. His whole demeanour and what he said was offensive to them and their evil motives took their logical course. This man was a menace to their spiritual and national prestige and to their place in the Roman world.

Now this is the man whom the Jews will acclaim as their new and undisputed leader. He will champion their cause as a nation and a people among the nations. Ordinary people, including Gentiles, will suddenly come out of obscurity to become counsellors and directors in his new government. His emphasis will be on true religion and in vital opposition to what is false. His gospel will be proclaimed around the world, as directing all to Jerusalem for worship. His attitude towards false religious values and the violation of God's moral and ethical laws in the name of religion, will be uncompromising. The "holy places" and "things sacred" which Constantine and his successors planted in and around Jerusalem, to arouse the piety of the "faithful," will be adjudged unholy by the new Jewish king. He will proceed to cleanse the land of its idols. He will be anathema to the proud Roman pontiff and his sacred college, being regarded as menacing the security and peace of Europe and a challenge to the restored "head of the beast." All he does and says will antagonize them, but being aware of some latent power in him they dare not ignore him.

The Three Mouths

The dragon, beast and false prophet MOUTHS, from whence issue the demonic spirits, are probably named apocalyptically in a studied sequence of ascending order of importance. Since some space will be devoted to their identity, they may be stated here to be in the order given:

1. Russia, after her overwhelming overthrow on the mountains of Israel, probably restored to her Greek Catholic religion and in holy alliance with Rome.
2. A modern version of the Roman Empire yet to arise in Europe. Possibly an amalgamation of several western European powers under a powerful dictator pledged to uphold Catholic worship, not unlike a modern Constantine.
3. The papacy under virile leadership; with all of the old ambition to promote and expand the spiritual influence and direction of Rome for the security and peace of the world. This "mouth" will of course be speaking as the voice of the WOMAN—Babylon the great—seated on the beast.

Since the woman is called *"mother of harlots and of earth's abominations ,"* it can well be imagined that ecumenical Catholicism and World Council of Churches, or its equivalent, could by that time have effected reconciliation. The once rebellious daughters might well have returned to the bosom of Mother Church with protestantism but a memory. Such is the modern trend. Also the overtures of Rome to Greek Catholicism and its reciprocal response, could by then have effected a mutual alliance, in which the "Holy See" would be acknowledged as supreme.

Whatever the name *"Mother of harlots"* is intended to convey, it appears that orthodox Christianity, as a whole, will be found united in common cause against what they will come to regard as the power of the Antichrist. The *"angel"* with the eternal gospel will persuade many people, no doubt including organized religious bodies, from joining in the anti-Jerusalem crusade. The false prophet will have the final say in the councils of Europe and his will be the strongest and loudest voice of the three. This is because it is the false prophet, who, in the presence of the beast, will *"work the signs"* by which the image worshippers are deceived (Rev. 19:20).

Three Foul Spirits Like Frogs

It must be borne in mind that the objective of these spirits is *"to assemble them* (the kings of the whole world) *for battle on the great day of God the Almighty"* (Rev. 16:14). This is not accomplished in the matter of a few years. It will be shown that the alliance between these kings and the beast will last for 30 years in opposition to the Lamb. It is in the days (30 years) of these kings that the God of heaven sets up a kingdom (Dan. 2:44). It will be toward the end of this 30-year period that the Battle will be fought at Armageddon. The kings will early be persuaded into a firm alliance with the beast by the propaganda from the mouths of the triple

coalition. As the challenge of the STONE POWER mounts, so the tempo of the foul spirits will develop into a frenzied crescendo of indictment and calumniation.

The demonstrations of power in Jerusalem will be such that Europe will not be under-estimating its potential. From Old Testament prophecy and in particular the 3rd chapter of Joel, it is clear that the Jews in Israel and throughout the world will acquit themselves with might and prevail over their enemies. Joel's *"Armageddon"* prophecy is predicted as it will affect the nation of Israel. The Lord said to him: *"Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare war, stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords . . . let the weak say, I am a warrior."* A perusal of the chapter shows the kings gathered. *"And the LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem"* (Joel 3:9,10,16).

The issue is primarily one of religion and for Rome, despotic religious survival. Babylon the great will ride high in Europe because of the unique nature of the challenge. Shall a Jewish leader or the Jewish nation dare to challenge European Christianity and assert that men and nations must turn to Jerusalem for true worship and not to Rome *"Why do the nations conspire* ('rage' A.V.), *and the peoples plot in vain?"* (Ps 2:1). *"The nations raged but thy wrath came"* (Rev.11:18). The firm and powerful voice speaking from Jerusalem warns of impending destruction on ecclesiastical Babylon. It appeals to all lovers of truth, *"Come out of her my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues"* (Rev. 18:4)

The demonic propaganda broadcast from the headquarters of Rome secular, Rome episcopal and the dragon, will be foul and lying. As the frog plague permeated the homes of Pharoah's Egypt into every corner, even their beds, so their incitement to holy war will be heard throughout Europe and by *"the kings of the whole world."* Writers have suggested France as the source or instigator of these spirits, on account of the triple-frog standard of the ancient French king, Clovis. While not ruling out French implication, especially if the beast power is France, it is clear that the spirits emanate from three separate headquarters in Europe. The mouth of the dragon could be speaking from Moscow and naturally the false prophet from Rome.

"For they are demonic spirits" suggests a frenzied and insane obsession for the destruction of the opposition in the East. *"And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"* (Rev. 17:6). This is not the wine of delusion in the cup she extends to her worshippers. Rather is it a recurrence of that self-intoxication of the inquisition days, when Rome sated her thirst with the blood of her innocent victims. There was the manifest contradiction of a professing Christian church, torturing and burning Christians and Jews at the stake. Rome's obsession, to destroy the demon of heresy within her victims, has been dubbed as a form of insanity by some writers. Cardinal Newman, primarily of holy orders in the Church of England, joined the Catholic Church in 1845, but eleven years prior to this he wrote the following deliberation, which appeared in his work, "The Development of Christian Doctrine: (p.1):

> "The spirit of old Rome has arisen again in the former place, and has evidenced its identity by its works. It has possessed the church there planted, as an evil spirit might seize the demons of ancient times, and make her speak words which are not her own. In the corrupt papal system we have the very cruelty in the unsparing sacrifice of the happiness and virtue of individuals, to a phantom of public expediency in the forced celibacy within, and its persecutions without; its craft in its falsehoods, its deceitful deeds and lying wonders; and its grasping ambition, in the very structure of its polity, in its assumption of universal dominion, old Rome is still alive; nowhere has its eagles lighted, but it still claims sovereignty under another pretext. The Roman Church I will not blame, but pity—she is, as I have said, spellbound, as if by an evil spirit; she is in thraldom.

The potency of the Woman's cup of deception is exemplified in the subsequent conversion of this scholarly son of the Reformation, to the very system he here condemns. The Revelator makes no such excuse for Rome's wicked behaviour; but in the above quotation there is an apt description of the spirit which will

dominate the woman in her final elevation for judgment. It is not a befuddled drunkenness, but the same desire for revenge and extermination, which in the days of her corrupted power, caused her to *"drink"* the *"blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus."* Mingled with this might well be a certain fearful premonition, such as seized Belshazzar when he saw the writing on the wall. *"Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, making all the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine, therefore the nations went mad"* (Jer. 51:7). Such testimony should suffice to show the demonic nature of the three foul spirits yet to issue from three seats of power in Europe.

That They May Believe What is False

There are no prejudices so deep, no hatred so ingrained, or cruelty unrestrained, as when found in those who practice false religion. Such is the long history of the Woman who is to sit on the Beast and has long sat on the seven hills. Today we live in an age of propaganda, scientifically produced and applied. The remarkable inventions of communication: radio, television, newspapers, books and magazines churned out by the multi-million and other mass media, have triggered off the technique called brain-washing. Today it is a science which under the hands of unscrupulous rulers and agents, can promote mob demonstration and violence on a scale unprecedented in human history. It can be used and is being used to pressurize and intimidate the opposition. Nazism and Communism are perhaps the outstanding examples of corrupted propaganda in our times, as demonstrating how people can be made to believe a lie.

Rome has ever been a master of propaganda, none the less potent in achieving results by reason of its subtlety. There will be whipping up of all the anti-semitism that has smouldered and repetitively burst into flame over the long centuries of Israel's dispersion. Behind all this, as well as openly practising it, has been the papal system and those Jew-exterminators and tormentors, of whom Hitler was chief.

The Way for the Kings from the East

Having considered Cyrus and his conquest of ancient Babylon, there should be no difficulty in recognizing the latter day "kings from the east." The kings who took ancient Babylon in 539 B.C. were Cyrus the Persian and Darius the Mede. In addition were lesser kings, helping them. *"The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it"* (Jer. 51:11). Again it was said of Cyrus, *Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step"* (Isa. 41:2). Cyrus was the Lord's "anointed" to reign over the kingdom of Babylon. In this conquest he typified Christ, who with his saints are the *"kings from the east"* of Rev. 16:12. They conquer and destroy mystical Babylon. To accomplish this they first *"dry up"* or divert much of the *"water"* of humanity under the city away from it and in opposition to it. As Cyrus marched his army into the ancient city and took it with a minimum of opposition; so will the way be cleared for the King of kings to enter the city with his *"army"* and take it from within

The first step to this end is to sow the Gospel opposition among Rome's adherents. The insane antagonism engendered from the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet prepares more than ever for Babylon's downfall. The "cold war" set in motion by the demonic frog-like spirits will reverberate around the world. It will place the righteous cause of Zion's King in the glare of world publicity. Any persecution by Rome of the new Christians and those supporting their cause would only serve to accentuate, as a world issue, the emerging struggle between Jerusalem and Rome. When the ten kings of Europe and beyond gather their armies with the beast and "prepare war" against the Lamb, their strategy will leave them vulnerable to the Lamb's consuming power.

The effects of the 6th bowl are truly *"to prepare the way"* for taking mystical Babylon. World observers at the time may well see a presumptuous Jewish leader in Jerusalem, rashly antagonizing Europe into armed conflict over a religious ideological issue. This is the action of the 6th bowl after it is poured. It may be seen as the

Lord drawing the bowstring to shoot the fatal arrow against Babylon. Firstly it is a world deluded by a great deception, but when world reaction comes it will be violent and explosive. This will be all too evident after the battle of the great day of God the Almighty. When the beast and the false prophet are taken into captivity and their armies banished, the break-up of the city is as good as accomplished. When the Lord reveals his identity to the world as in Rev. 18:1, it becomes a signal for the reactionary leaders of the beast-and-horns dominion to stir their peoples to terrible revenge on the system which deceived them. "So," said the angel, "*shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence"* (18:21).

This dreadful last earthquake is the *"lake of fire"* into which the false prophet and the beast, together with the vast system they represent, are violently cast. The fire is thrown into the *"lake"* or *"waters"* on which the woman sat when the eternal gospel is proclaimed and the Lord speaks from Jerusalem. Coals will be kindled to flame as the demonic spirits rage throughout the world. When Babylon is revealed for what she is the fire will become a raging furnace. Only this would account for the destructive scene indicated by the Angel's words to John. *"The ten horns . . . and the beast will hate the harlot; they will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire"* (Rev. 17:16).

CHAPTER 25 - THE APOCALYPTIC DRAGON

More Than a Sin Principle

The introduction of the DRAGON into the final scene of the apocalyptic drama at once creates a problem of identity. That "great red dragon . . . that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan . . . (Rev. 13:3, 9), has long been identified by expositors as the pagan Roman Empire. "He was thrown down to the earth" which John expresses another way by stating; "There was no longer any place for them (the dragon and his angels) in heaven" (Rev. 12:8-9). This "heaven" was the throne of the emperor and his government. The overthrow of the dragon was the swift and decisive victories of the "Christian" man-child, Constantine, over his imperial dragon rivals.

Because this dragon power is called "the Devil and Satan" we should avoid the common error of generalizing the apocalyptic dragon into the sinful nature of man or merely wickedness in high places. The dragon certainly involves this principle, but so do the beast and the false prophet; yet nowhere are these designated "Devil and Satan" in the Revelation. The serpent's seed was to bruise the heel of the woman's (Eve's) seed (Gen. 3:15). This early prophecy was fulfilled in the crucifixion of Jesus by the pagan Roman Empire and the vassal Jewish state. In turn God said of the woman's seed, that it would bruise the head of the serpent. Scripture reveals that the ancient serpent in Eden became a symbol of that evil rebellion in men and nations against God. Of the Jewish rulers Jesus said, "you are of your father the devil . . . He was a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44). Jesus meant that they were, by disposition, the serpent's seed. It was those same Jewish rulers, and their false religious system, that were bruised in the head by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Commonwealth in 70 A.D. In the days of Jesus' mortality he prophesied their overthrow By the same token, the serpent's Gentile seed, the Roman empire in its final phase or phases, is to be destroyed by the immortal Jesus. As the woman's seed through Mary, he will mortally bruise its head.

The Dragon—A Specific Power

Without doubt Jesus came to destroy that power of sin in the human soul, which accomplishes man's destruction in the grave. In the Revelation, however, Christ is dealing with a two-phased aspect of the fourth Gentile dominion, against the background of "Gentile times." There is ample New Testament evidence to show that pagan Rome was known to the early church as the Devil or Satan. When John recorded what he saw of the great dragon, and added the words: "who is called the Devil and Satan," he was using names familiarly applied by the Lord's servants to pagan Rome.

Peter wrote to the "exiles in dispersion" in an area from Asia Minor to Cappadocia: "Your adversary the Devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Peter was warning Christians to beware of the Roman authorities. Hence Jesus to the Pergamum ecclesia wrote: "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is," and of "Antipas my witness . . . killed among you, where Satan dwells" (Rev. 2:13). It is now well known that Roman government administration of Asia province was centred at Pergamum; and its temple was there dedicated to the pagan cult of emperor worship. To Smyrna, Jesus said, "Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison" (Rev. 2:10).

Paul predicted "The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan . . . with all power and with pretended signs and wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). The fulfilment of this prophecy is too prominent in history to be mistaken. This "SATAN" as pagan Rome, would "restrain," by its persecution of the Church, the development of "the lawless one." When the pagan Satan was put out of the way by Constantine, then the papal "lawless one" was revealed. Yet it was to be by "the activity of Satan that the lawless one would gain his power. This is ever so true to history in the rise of the papal system.

Constantine—Man of Destiny

The first apocalyptic earthquake occurred under the 6th seal (Rev. 6:12, 17) and is elaborated in Revelation chapter 12. Constantine was a unique personality. He played the dual role of a Christian "Michael" and a pagan "Satan." R.H.Barrow, in his work "The Romans," wrote:

"So momentous and so sudden a reversal of policy as came about in A.D. 313 cannot be explained as the inevitable and almost predictable result proceeding from sufficient causes. The historian tracing the cause of things and assessing the nature of men's thoughts, is suddenly startled by an event for which he is totally unprepared. The change was brought about by one man, Constantine, whose character refuses to fit into the pattern of the age, whose convictions were uniquely his own, whose very language is new and unexpected."

"Here was a Roman Emperor who had identified himself with Christianity, the Christian Church and the Christian Creed, who was convinced of a mission from which he could not escape, laid by the Christian God upon him as His servant, who devoted patience and energy to the cause for unity within the church as an essential condition of the unity and prosperity of the Roman state . . . by the end of Constantine's reign it (Christianity) had penetrated into the innermost parts of the empire, and up to the highest levels."

"At first it laid stress on the immediate return of Christ, and its language was the language of 'apocalypse'; later it took a longer view, and reasoned defence and explanation of its doctrines, brought the Gospel to the educated; and attack—the best means of defence—assaulted the foundations of paganism . . . Henceforth the Christian Church was armed with all the panoply which Greco-Roman civilization could furnish for the next period of its history. (Penguin p.b. pp.188-191).

Gibbon, less complimentary to the person of Constantine, but entirely consistent with Barrow, comments:

"The reigning emperor, though he had usurped the sceptre by treason and murder, immediately assumed the sacred character of vice-regent for the Deity . . . The piety of Constantine was admitted as an unexceptionable proof of the justice of his arms; and his use of victory confirmed the opinion of the Christians, that their hero was inspired and conducted by the Lord of Hosts: ("Decline and Fall . . .," Low's abridgment, Pelican p.b. pp.288,290).

Gibbon informs us how Constantine erected "in the midst of Rome his own statue, bearing a cross in his right hand, with an inscription which referred the victory of his arms, and the deliverance of Rome, to the virtue of that salutary sign, the true symbol of force and courage. The same symbol sanctified the arms of the soldiers of Constantine; the cross glittered on their helmets, was engraved on their shields, was interwoven into their banners; and the consecrated emblems . . . adorned the person of the emperor himself." "The senate and people, exulting in their own deliverance from an odious tyrant (Galerius), acknowledged that the victory of Constantine surpassed the powers of man." ("Decline and Fall . . .," Low's abridgment, pp.(292,293.)

Constantine may be likened to Cyrus of Persia – Babylon's conqueror – whom God called His "anointed," to subdue kings before Him and to let His people go. In similar manner, Constantine, as God's "Michael," was commissioned to break the pagan persecutor and free the Christian Church. An important element of this "Michael" role was the deliverance of the many true Christians, who survived the severe persecution of Diocletian.

Both Constantine and Cyrus, as conquerors and liberators, were types of Christ. There the types end, for the first "Christian" emperor was the apostate "son" of the pseudo-Christian "woman"; which had already apostatized from many important elements of the true faith. The Ecclesia of Christ fled from the enervating rays of the pagan Sun into the "wilderness." Any virtue left in the false woman was soon perverted by the lust for power and contention.

Constantine—Pagan or Christian?

The question puzzling to historians and to Bible students alike, is just how pagan and how Christian was Constantine? Gibbon's comments are of special interest:

"Whatever symptoms of Christian piety might transpire in the discourses or actions of Constantine, he persevered till he was forty years of age in the practice of the established religion (paganism); . . .His liberality restored and enriched the temples of the gods; the medals which issued from his imperial mint are impressed with the figures and attributes of Jupiter and Apollo, of Mars and Hercules . . . But the devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the Sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology . . . The altars of Apollo were crowned with the votive offerings of Constantine; and the credulous multitude were taught to believe that the emperor was permitted to behold with mortal eyes the visible majesty of their tutelary deity; . . . The Sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine." ("Decline and Fall . . ." Low's abridgement, pp.285,286).

The words of Rev. 12:1, "a woman clothed with the sun" take on a greater significance than the mere words imply. Rather was the Christian woman clothed in the garb of a pagan god, befitting the throne of Rome.

What was evident in the life of Constantine was a consuming ambition that would brook no opposition. As Gibbon adds,

"The character of the Roman tyrant disgraced the purple and human nature . . . His vanity was gratified by the flattering assurance that he had been chosen by heaven to reign over the earth: success had justified his divine title to the throne, and that title was founded on the truth of the Christian revelation . . . The gratitude of the Church had exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron, who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world." ("Decline and Fall . . ." Low's abridgement, pp.289,295,298.)

A Dragon-Christian Role

History, we well as the conclusions of historians, confirm the remarkable fulfilment of the 12th chapter and the first two verses of the 13th chapter of the Revelation. It was as if "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14 A.V.) in the person of Constantine. By his "activity" came the "lawless one" with all power and with pretended signs and wonders." We can see in Constantine "the dragon who gave to the 'Sea Beast' and its mouth of blasphemy, his power and his throne and great authority" (Rev. 13:2). The Bishop of Rome as the "mouth" received the power, throne and authority by progressive stages; but it was initiated by Constantine. Eastern emperors who followed continued to elevate the power of the Church and its Roman Bishop. Of these emperors, Theodosius the Great, Justinian and Phocas were outstanding examples. The title of Pope was officially confirmed for the Bishop of Rome in 451 A.D.

It would not be prophetically correct to assign to Constantine such titles as "Man of Lawlessness" (or sin) and "son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3). In certain respects he would appear to be so; but it is more in harmony with Paul's prediction and that of Rev. 13:2, that Constantine and other emperors mentioned constituted the dragon, who gave its authority to the Roman bishop as the beast mouth. Constantine's divided religious convictions gave him a dual role to play in God's purpose.

The Dragon Moves East

The building of the Eastern Capital of Constantinople by the first "Christian" emperor and his residence there in 330 A.D, was a decided step in yielding authority to Rome's bishop. The apostle John's standing "upon the sand of the sea" Rev. 13:1) as rendered in the Authorised Version, has been corrected in the Revised Version,

Revised Standard Version and other versions. It is not John who stands there but the dragon. "And he (the dragon) stood on the sand of the sea" (Rev.12:17 R.S.V.). Weymouth's Version reads: "And he took up a position on the sands of the seashore." This could well refer to the building of Constantinople on the Black Sea, as the seat of the Eastern emperors, including Constantine himself. History confirms that these Eastern emperors did yield their authority to the papal system, so identifying Eastern Rome as the dragon.

When emperors in Rome ceased to exist in 476 A.D., the "dragon" emperors in Constantinople were found in a luxurious palace, with purple garments and robes of silk, embroidered with the figures of dragons. They were called Caesar and Augustus and, says Gibbon: "Assumed and obstinately retained the vain title of Emperor of the Romans."

After 759 the Eastern Roman dragon had no jurisdiction over Western Rome; and being overrun by the Turks in 1453, ceased to exist as an empire. In the 7th century the Eastern Empire became known as the Byzantine Empire, as signifying the Grecian peoples under its domain. The name stems from the old Greek city formerly on the site of Constantinople. Firstly of one Catholic faith with the West, there developed an early rivalry between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome on who was to be universal bishop. Conflict over church organization and doctrinal divergences on the trinity developed into open schism. This was accentuated by papal claims to episcopal supremacy. The break came in 1054, after the Eastern Church was excommunicated by Pope Leo IX. The Eastern Orthodox Church, often called the Greek Church, became the religion of the "dragon" centred in Constantinople.

The Latter-Day Dragon

Since the Apocalypse demands the existence of a "dragon" power at the time of the second advent, and Eastern Rome ceased to exist in 1453, where shall we look for such a power today? The answer, according to the historical and prophetical evidence, points to the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics USSR). Today, Russia has a population of 260 million. The fourth world (Roman) empire, in a divided and greatly expanded form, was to persist until its forcible replacement by the Kingdom of God. Up to date this fourth empire has existed for more than 2000 years. In relation to Nebuchadnezzar's dream image, we stand today at a point of time corresponding to the iron-clay feet, well toward the front where the toes are yet to materialize. The Roman Empire at its prime is said to have had a population of 120 million. These were to "mingle themselves with the seed of men" to form a divided empire. If that were limited to Europe alone it would comprise today about 650 million people.

After Rome divided into East and West and passed through its iron-legs phase, the dream image started to stand upon its feet. There the empire spread and divided as the "clay" tribes mingled with the "iron" Romans. Western Rome "mingled with the seed of men" earlier and more completely than did Eastern Rome. The latter empire shrunk due to the inroads of Saracen and Turk, until its termination in the 15th century.

Russia Takes the Dragon Role

It is historically true that Eastern Rome passed on its culture, religion, trade and commerce to the developing Russian nation. In the 9th century A.D. the Danes and Swedes, having colonized the present day Russian shore of the Baltic, proceeded to penetrate the great rivers of Russia. They erected principalities at Novgorod and Kiev, in the heart of Slav territory and established a stronghold on the Black Sea. To the north-east of the Black Sea the Kazars had established trade links with Constantinople. Trade relations with treaties of commerce were arranged between Kiev and the Eastern Roman empire then known as Byzantine. In 988 the Duke of Muscovy, ruling from Kiev, was named Vladimar of the Scandinavian House of Rurick. In that year he was baptized into the Greek Catholic faith and married Anna, sister to the then Eastern Roman Emperor, Basil II.

A close alliance was thereby formed between the emerging Russian power and the Byzantine Empire. Through this union Kiev was declared by Vladimar to be a Christian State. The Patriarch of Constantinople appointed a "Metropolitan" over the Russian Church, which acknowledged its head in the Byzantine capital. It was from the Principalities of Kiev and Muscovy that the new Russia emerged with Moscow as its capital: after having liberated Eastern Russia from the Tartar invaders. Ivan IV, known as "the terrible," was the first Czar (Csar), a title derived from the Latin "Caesar," thereby assuming the role of the then extinct Eastern Roman Empire. Russia's adoption of the Byzantine two-headed eagle as its military standard serves to complete the picture of the close tie-up between Eastern Rome and Russia.

Fifty years of Communist rule has fashioned the U.S.S.R. into the world's greatest military land power. She has split Europe into a clearly defined East and West and gathered within her orbit a brood of satellite nations. To them she has become "a guard" (Ezek. 38:7); making them conform to the Communist political line—by force if necessary. In communism, Russia has reverted to the basic "dragon" standard of anti-God. It is as such that she could fully be expected to invade in order to set up her red ensign upon the mountains of Israel.

'From the Mouth of the Dragon" (Rev. 16:13)

The issuing of a demonic spirit from the dragon "mouth," as considered in the previous chapter, would come some years after Russia's defeat on the mountains of Israel. Her military might, having been destroyed by the STONE of ISRAEL, she would naturally ally herself with the West against the developing 'STONE KINGDOM." Smarting under overwhelming defeat, the dragon will be found in vociferous opposition to the new "dictator" in Jerusalem.

If the initial dragon-binding act of Revelation 20:1 be the destruction of Russia's military might in the Arabah, it would be reasonable to expect that the truly "dragon" ideology of communism would also be dislodged in Russia. Such overwhelming defeat and the rapid rise of the beast and papacy in the West, could well bring a reactionary upsurge of the old religion in Russia*. Greek Catholicism (Russian Orthodox) is by no means dead in the Soviet Union. Though Scripture is silent on this point, we may reasonably infer that the false prophet and dragon mouths are in ecumenical alliance when the foul spirits are emitted. This could result from a reversion by Russia and her satellite nations to their respective Catholic faiths. The prophetic metallic image is standing today in Europe with one foot planted in the East and the other in the West. The ten "toe" kingdoms must be on both feet when they oppose the STONE KINGDOM, but their organization and direction comes from the West.

CHAPTER 26 - THE GOGIAN INVASION AND ARMAGEDDON, IDENTICAL OR SEPARATE EVENTS?

The Old Testament prophets unite in predicting a large scale invasion of the partially restored nation of Israel. This invasion is to be crushed by a celestial deliverer whose weapons of war are acts of God. Their deliverer is to reveal himself to Israel as the once crucified Jesus (Zec. 12:3-5, 10), and will be accepted by them as their long awaited Messiah and heir to the vacant throne of David.

The invasion predicted in the Old Testament is either one and the same event as that described in the 16th, 17th and 19th chapters of the Revelation (commonly called Armageddon), or it occurs prior to or after the Armageddon conflict. If there be two separate conflicts of such magnitude as described, both involving the presence of Christ, it may well be asked: Why would one of them be omitted from the Revelation?

The Two Conflicts of Daniel's Prophecy

Old Testament prophecy concentrated on Israel's world, and the fate of Gentile nations as they affected Israel's national existence. Israel's long night of captivity and scattering and her ultimate redemption under Messiah are clearly foretold. The only prophecy of the Old Testament differing from this pattern is that of Daniel. In his day Israel's sovereignty ceased and Gentile dominion over Israel commenced. "Seven times" punishment for Israel and "seven times" of Gentile supremacy over them had their common starting point.

God's redemption took on a new and wider dimension, as He showed to Daniel the trials and ultimate triumph of "*the people of the saints of the Most High;*" the cutting off of Messiah with the cessation of the daily sacrifices; the bringing in of everlasting righteousness and the resurrection of the dead. The ISRAEL-GENTILE struggle was to continue until after Messiah's sacrifice and up to the destruction of Israel's commonwealth in A.D.70. The intervening events filled Daniel with foreboding; but it was revealed to him in considerable detail, what would befall his people over this stormy period. Thereafter Daniel's prophecy leaves a great time-gap, being the long span of Israel's captivity. It terminates with Israel's deliverance by their great Prince "MICHAEL" from the hand of their latter day invader, styled by Daniel, "King of the North".

While this Israel-Gentile struggle was revealed to Daniel to its ultimate end, he had other visions which foretold another kind of conflict with Gentile power. This may be called the SAINTS-GENTILE struggle. The righteous Daniel was the saint who initiated this long struggle when he entered the lion's den rather than deny his God.

In Daniel's visions of chapter 7, he used the language of the Apocalypse seven centuries before John wrote it. There would come a development in the fourth world empire and a blasphemous horn would arise, persecuting the "*saints of the Most High.*" This struggle was to last over a very long period, until "*one that was ancient of days"* came and destroyed the *"stout horn."* Those same saints were to inherit the kingdom of their persecutors. Daniel presents us with two separate conflicts—the ISRAEL-GENTILE and the SAINTS-GENTILE. They could alternatively be called the (National-Israel) and the (Spiritual-Israel)-Gentile conflicts. At the end of Gentile times, when the STONE power is about to smite the image on its feet, both controversies would converge on Jerusalem.

Having recognized these two separate conflicts in Daniel's prophecy, we may now proceed to show that Jesus, in his Revelation, took up the SAINTS-GENTILE conflict from Daniel's prophecy as being applicable to the Christian dispensation.

The Apocalyptic Theme

A consideration of the essential theme of the Revelation will demonstrate why it has no reference to national Israel. The Apocalypse is addressed by Jesus to "*his servants.*" These are referred to variously throughout the book as servants, saints and martyrs, "*those who keep the testimony of Jesus,*" the Bride, and prophetically—kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. Nowhere is it addressed to Jews, either individually or as a nation. In the recurring vision of the redeemed around the throne, there must be included all true servants of God from Adam onwards, whether Jew or Gentile. This granted, the Revelation is intended to inform true Christians of their destined conflict in a Gentile world and the ultimate triumph of their cause through Christ at his appearing and Kingdom.

The stage is Europe, set against the backdrop of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image. The scenery changes depict progressive phases of the ever-changing Roman Empire. The opening chapters addressed to the Gentile Christian ecclesias of Asia Minor, nominate both literally and representatively, those servants who were to receive the message. The theme of the divine drama staged within the Roman Empire, is broadly an ideological war of protracted duration between God's Son and the fourth Gentile Empire, God's army comprises the saints in the "wilderness" of the nations and their captain is the exalted Christ in heaven, "*Spiritual wickedness in high places*" is seen to ascend the throne of Rome and is there directed by "*the prince of the power of the air.*" This "prince" is a man assuming God-like titles and functions, who by prolonged succession holds the stage throughout the apocalyptic drama. To use the apt title of the "Dead Sea Scroll" it is "The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness."

The Saints Wage Spiritual Warfare

The war drama of the Apocalypse is a continuation of that war initiated by the Son of God, when he allowed himself to be nailed to a Roman cross. In prospect he "saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." The Satan here was pagan Rome. From the spirit of the Lamb's great sacrificial act there arose, under the direction of the Christ apostles, a spiritually militant army called Christians. Armed with the panoply of God, their weapons were not carnal but spiritual. This army, the Body-corporate of the exalted Christ, multiplied throughout the Roman Empire and carried their spiritual warfare up to the throne of the Caesars. Their chief weapon against pagan persecution was their testimony of Jesus, the living Christ; and their own life blood after their Master's example.

Declension then developed within the ranks of the "Sons of Light". A false church was born, preaching the Christ of contention and wielding the carnal weapons of debate, strife and ambition for power. It was this kind of Christianity that attracted the patronage of a Roman Caesar, who set it on the imperial throne of his empire. Thereafter the war of righteousness was to be fought against a powerful apostate Christian church, whose leader made himself as God upon earth, to be worshipped. By his extravagant titles he usurped the place of the risen Christ in Christian worship.

Made War on the Saints

As the "*lawless ones*," backed by the Roman state, grew in power and authority, he "*was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.*" Setting himself above all earthly emperors, kings and governments, he deceived and coerced them into forcing their subject peoples to worship his image. It appeared a one-sided contest; the Gentile saints matching their defenceless, but fearless testimony and life blood against the naked sword, the fire stake and torture rack of papal inquisition. Nevertheless, their Captain in heaven in whom these saints trusted, who possessed all power and authority, set the bounds of Antichrist's power. Many papal moves for unlimited power were checkmated and judgments poured on him and his corrupt "angels".

It was a holding war to relieve the beleaguered saints, that they should not faint nor yield their testimony in the face of fierce persecution. At each major development a vision of future victory and glory was there set down for their encouragement and endurance. The Master's message to his servants was not to resist by force: "*Here is the faith and endurance of the saints."* It was a long dark night for the persecuted ecclesia in the wilderness; but not for all the time and in every place where it existed.

Then the light of knowledge began to dawn. From within the ranks of the persecuting ecclesiastical power, there gradually grew doubts and challenge. Then came active opposition to the inhuman intolerance, blasphemous claims and mercenary exploitation of the masses in the name of religion. Sore plagues were poured upon the beast and its image as the oppressed multitude revolted and the Lord's "eagle," Napoleon, began to fly in the "*mid-heaven."* These plagues finally transformed the fearsome beast into a 'woman' and there was no more power left in the "*image*" to kill men.

A Break in the Apocalyptic Programme

This summary of the apocalyptic contest has taken up the saint-conflict period of more than seventeen centuries. It has carried through to the end of the 5th bowl (Rev. 16:10), without textual evidence that National-Israel is involved in the apocalyptic drama. One definite and one possible reference to Israel should be noted: Rev. 1:7 shows the reconciliation of the Jews to their Messiah when he comes from heaven to earth. Rev. 10:4 could be a veiled reference to present-day wars of Jewish liberation. Neither reference forms part of the apocalyptic programme.

We are living in a time break, already a century old, during which there is little recognizable fulfilment of apocalyptic prophecy. The papal Sea-beast is still in the "*abyss*" or "*bottomless pit*" of Rev. 17:8 from which he is to emerge in a modified form. Despite present stirrings, this will not transpire until the Lord stands on Zion. The last century has been one of remarkable fulfilment for national Israel, in which Old Testament prophecy has sprung to life for her restoration. Two world wars and three Arab-Israel wars have achieved wonderful things for Israel; and has prepared Russia for her major role in the Israel-Gentile conflict. The grand climax of Old Testament prophecy is the Lord's coming with holy angels, to deliver and be united with his people Israel. The stage will then be set for the mighty events of the 6th and 7th bowls which mark the closing phase of the Saint-Gentile conflict.

In this "abyss" interval, dating from 1870, the world has witnessed the remarkable industrial and scientific revolution, the widespread dissemination of knowledge and world-wide distribution of the Scriptures. More precious still is the freedom to search out and practice true Christianity without let or hindrance. All of this constitutes a divine preparation for the coming new order of ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT.

Israel's Grand Heritage in the Old Testament

The Old Testament elaborates in impressive detail the national and spiritual redemption of God's nation, Israel. Their regathering, purging and restoration to the promised land; their wars of survival against the Arab nations, their dramatic messianic deliverance from their strongest and most numerous enemy; their restored kingdom around Messiah's throne, their might to prevail against all their enemies; their elevation above all the nations; their spiritual healing under the new covenant and their house of prayer for all peoples—all these and more are revealed concerning them in the Old Testament. These things were confirmed in the Gospels, the book of Acts and the Apostles' letters.

Any reiteration of these Old Testament prophecies in the Revelation to John, having been disclosed to inspired writers, would not constitute a revelation. Also their intrusion into the context of the apocalyptic drama would be confusing and irrelevant for those to whom the Revelation is addressed.

How the Apocalyptic Events Affect Israel

Though the national Jew is not accounted for in the Revelation, it would be wrong to conclude that its prophetical fulfilment has not, or will not affect the Jew. It is an undeniable fact of history, that persecution of the Jews during their long dispersion was inspired and sustained by the Catholic hierarchy and the popes. Ecclesiastical Rome saw herself as divinely commissioned to fulfil the role of Israel's persecutor and the Lord's avenger, justifying her terrible deeds by quoting Bible prophecies of divine judgments on the Jews. Such persecution was undoubtedly moderated by the apocalyptic judgments on the papal system.

The outpouring of the 6th and 7th bowls following the Gogian overthrow, is seen as the final phase of the Saint-Gentile conflict. There is no hint in the Revelation that Israel will take part in this judgment; though she is nationally exalted with Messiah during this time. The three foul spirits will be strongly anti-semitic but this aspect is disclosed in Joel's prophecy. Attention has already been drawn to Armageddon battle foretold in Joel's 3rd chapter. It was revealed to him as it affects Israel; but in the Revelation as it affects the saints. In Joel it follows the outpouring of the Spirit on Israel and this is preceded by Gog's overthrow (Joel 2:20).

This study points to two separate conflicts, each to be resolved by the Lord in a way befitting the divine objectives in each case, and the parties concerned. The forces of Gentile evil are twofold, under separate heads. The people of God who need deliverance are of two classes—national Jewry and saints (both Jew and Gentile). The Assyrio-Gogian Confederacy cannot be reconciled with the Beast and Babylon of the Revelation; nor can the manner, circumstances and location of their respective overthrows. The overwhelming burden of evidence points to two separate conflicts separated by time. The STONE OF ISRAEL will break first the FEET and afterwards the TOES of the dream image, before the whole image collapses to its complete destruction.

CHAPTER 27 - THE DREAM IMAGE STANDS UPON ITS FEET

The metallic image of Daniel's prophecy may be regarded as God's master plan, to which all other prophecies must be referred for alignment. Today the image is standing on its feet. It has actually taken the kingdoms of men some 2500 years to build this image and as God presented it, it was started at the top. The image would remain suspended in mid-air until it got its feet to stand on.

Successive Empires "Coexist"

Imagine a time-line as a horizontal stretched string, moving down from the top of the image. Above the descending time-string would be the metals of the image forming: gold, silver, brass and iron; and below the string—nothing. About the 5th century A.D. the feet began to form and the clay began to mingle with the iron but not to fuse with it. Our time-string, having reached the ground, would move horizontally as the feet grew in length; only stopping when the tips of the toes were reached. That is how Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream; It stood before him. It was as if he had been transported forward in time by 2500 years or more to see a completed image.

There stood successive empires, nations, peoples, languages, cultures, lands, emperors, kings, religions, priestcrafts, laws and leaders, armies and conquests. Though from a human standpoint, there must surely have been a lot of good in it, it was esteemed by God as a monument to human folly, wickedness and aggression. It was but worthy of destruction by a heavenly-prepared stone descending with terrific impact upon its feet. "As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces; then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, altogether were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found" (Dan. 2:34-35).

But all the empires represented from the head down to the ankles and most of the feet, have long since disappeared into history. We may conclude, therefore, that beside their own characteristics, the feet and toe nations inherit and imbibe the territories, races, languages, cultures, religions and civilizations of all the kingdoms preceding them. The histories, idolatries, cruelty, tyranny, injustice, pride, rebellion against the God of heaven, perversion of truth, immorality and persecution of God's people, both Jew and saint, were taken over, perpetuated and added to by each successive empire and kingdom.

The Two Babylons

Hislop has ably demonstrated in "The Two Babylons," how the ritual and doctrine of Catholicism are largely based on the pagan religion. This in turn was handed down from the Assyrian and Babylonian idolatries and superstitions. "That old serpent, the Devil and Satan," that deceived the whole world, was rampant in all four Gentile empires. It was the spirit of sensual idol worship; worshipping the creature and the created instead of the Creator. Pagan religion consisted mainly of serpent and fire worship. Fire came from the Sun god, Apollo, which was equivalent to Bel of the Babylonians and Baal of the Canaanites and other nations. Constantine, though professing Christianity, was devoted to Apollo and received "Christian" baptism just before his death. The pseudo-Christian woman was seen "clothed with the sun . . . and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (Rev. 12:1).

It has been suggested that these stars radiated the beams of light depicted on the emblem of Apollo as sprouting from the sun-disc. Hislop comments on pagan and Catholic worship:

“The Epiduarian snake that the Romans worshipped along with the fire, was looked upon as a divine representation of Æscalupius, the child of THE SUN . . . To symbolize this relationship the head of the image of Æscalupius was generally encircled with rays. The Pope thus encircles the heads of the pretended images of Christ . . . Thus speaks Virgil of Latinus:

“And now, in pomp, the peaceful kings appear, Four steeds the chariot of Latinus bear, Twelve golden beams around his temples play, To mark his lineage from the god of day.”

“The ‘golden beams’ around the heads of pictures and images called by the name of Christ, were intended to show the Pagans that they might safely worship them, as the images of their well-known divinities, though called by a different name.” (The Two Babylons, pp.236,237.)

There can be little doubt that being ‘clothed with the sun” and “a crown of twelve stars” symbolizes the paganising of Christianity, as the price paid for an emperor’s patronage.

The modern Golden Head

Another feature of the great image, as it stands before the world upon its feet and toes, concerns modern Babylon. Because the wisdom of the Spirit has called the woman on the beast “Babylon the great,” we might with good reason see her and the false prophet as the golden head of the image. Though her place in time is associated with the ten toe kingdoms, it could be said of her, as of Nebuchadnezzar, “You are this head of gold.” Such in effect she will be, with her false prophet, in directing the beast and the ten kingdoms against Christ.

There is strong hint of this in the seven times of Nebuchadnezzar’s madness. For 2520 days his kingdom “departed” from him, as a great tree, hewn down to the stump and banded with brass and iron. When his reason returned so did his kingdom, with his counsellors and lords in splendour, “and still more greatness” (Dan. chap. 4). The long-term prophetical import appears as the binding up of old Babylon in the brazen Greek and iron Roman kingdoms for two and a half millennia. Babylon would then come again in added glory, not as ancient Babylon restored; but as mystical “Babylon the great”. Then she will say, “A queen I sit, I am no widow, mourning I shall never see;” “Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, So shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and shall be found no more” (Rev. 18:7, 21).

Assyria and Babylon Both Seen as Types

Attention has already been drawn to the name “Assyrian” being applied by Old Testament prophets to a latter day invader of Israel; and this would occur at Messiah’s return. The Deity in His wisdom, has used both the ancient powers of Assyria and Babylon to typify the two belligerent segments of the latter-day Roman Empire. A careful study of the two ancient powers and their relationship to one another, will further help to identify the events at “the end of the days.”

In his visions of the 7th chapter, Daniel saw the lion as representing both the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires. As the former, the lion was couchant with eagle’s wings. As the latter, its wings were plucked and it stood upright. “and the mind of a man was given to it.” (7:4). The up-standing lion is identified with Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon and the proud monarch whom God humbled. There were two great cities, Nineveh on the Tigris River and Babylon on the Euphrates. When Nineveh was in the ascendency, the empire was Assyrian. The city of Babylon held second place but was worthy of an Assyrian viceroy. Assyria paid her dues to the Babylonian gods and maintained and nurtured her. But the same Babylon plotted with the Medes and other kings against Assyria. They all besieged and overthrew Ninevah and other Assyrian cities; then the kingdom was no longer Assyrian but Babylonian. It was the proud, idolatrous and superstitious king

Nebuchadnezzar, who lifted himself up as a man to defy the God of Israel. While on the roof of his royal palace he said: “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?” (Dan. 4:30).A great deal may be learned from types in the Bible, where the anti-type can be clearly recognized. A type must not be confused with a proto-type and should never be pressed too far. The anti-typical Assyria and Babylon need no searching out, for God has named them for us. The following facts are evident from the history of ancient Assyria and Babylon:

1. The Assyrian Empire came first and the Babylonian followed and replaced it.
2. Both empires occupied closely the same territory with the same peoples.
3. Each in turn invaded Israel and were overthrown by divine decree.

From historical fact No.1, the anti-typical Assyrian, if it be Russia, would stand up first and be overthrown before the anti-typical Babylon. Today the Assyrio-Russian power has the initiative. Like Assyria of old she is deeply involved in the Middle East and is openly anti-semitic in her policy. In the West there is today no “beast” power sponsoring the Catholic system to a position of supreme ecclesiastical authority. The ancient types serve to confirm that there are two latter-day powers to be broken by the hand of Christ, before “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.” There is also the confirmation that the “Assyrian” will be the first of the two powers to be broken.

East and West In Turn Dominate Europe

Historical fact No. 2, applied to the latter day situation, suggests that Communism may become the dominating force in Europe for a set time. This raises the question of the iron curtain extending to the west coast of Europe. The most likely alternative is an EAST-west or MOSCOW-Rome axis in which Moscow would hold the ascendency by treaty with the Western powers and ecclesiastical Rome. Whatever the position yet to develop, it could be prefigured by the Nineveh-Babylon relationship of old.

When the Assyrio-Russian army is destroyed by Christ, Russia as a military power will be basically expended and broken. She is evidently to have enemies active to the north and east. This would result in shifting the military centre of gravity from Moscow to the West: with the rise of a “beast” dictatorship aided by papal influence. The prophecy seems to call for a Western ascendency spreading itself over the whole of Europe as a ROME-Moscow axis. Communism, as an international force, is now some 50 years old and is regarded generally as a permanent institution in world politics. Today, the growing strength and antagonism of extreme communist China, is turning Russia toward the West in case of future hostilities with China. At the same time Russia is engaged in a southward expansionist drive to the Middle East and against Israel. Whatever the political and international forces to bring it about, the prophecies of Old and New Testaments call for this rapprochement between East and West, when Europe sets its face against God’s Israel and her Messiah.

Assyria and Babylon—Feet and Toes

When applied to the dream image, the modern Assyrian phase is found in the ball of the feet, on which we may say the image is now standing. When Gog meets his fate in Israel, the feet-phase is finished and the toe-phase is initiated. Since there are two feet the toes will emerge, not from the West only, but from the whole of Europe. From this point on, the Kingdom of God will be set up “IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS the God of heaven will set up a kingdom” (Dan. 2:44). These “toe” kings are of course the ten “horn” kings of Rev. 17:12, who “receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.”

While the beast is panoplied with these “horn” kingdoms and subjected to the persuasive ecclesiastical dominance of the woman riding it, the “setting up” of the Stone Kingdom is promoted and accelerated. Messiah occupies the restored throne of David, receiving the loyalty, acclamation, penance and gratitude of his people, Israel. The saints too are there being organized and initiated into the divine tribunal

comprehended in the four living creatures and the elders. This is the symbolic chariot in which the Lord rides above the Gentile "heavens." The eternal gospel is being proclaimed around the globe and as "the Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem, the (Gentile) heavens and the earth shake" (Joel 3:16). Meanwhile the holy land is being cleansed of its idols and Jerusalem declared to be the city of the great King.

Part of this "setting up" is the ingathering of the Jews with demands on Russia and other nations to "let my people go." The King's influence will be spreading in the Middle East and the Arab nations will start to pay him homage. "And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest . . . Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries and all your enemies shall be cut off" (Micah 5:8-9). The power of Israel under their new King will play a prominent part in the "setting up" of the STONE KINGDOM, much to the alarm and anger of Europe and world powers generally. Events will move fast in Jerusalem and Israel, menacingly fast for the Babylonian Woman and the Beast carrying her. Lebanon, Syria and present western Jordan must be included in the new Israel. This is part of the setting up of the "STONE" to fill the earth and will involve early territorial expansion.

Gog is not only the modern Assyrian but the modern apocalyptic dragon as well. It is an interesting analogy, that as Constantine conquered the Roman dragon and set the apostate Church on the Roman throne, so will the true "Michael" vanquish the modern dragon from Jerusalem and set up the true woman, his BRIDE, in the Jerusalem "heaven". The "toe" kingdoms of the image (the ten horns of Rev. 17:12) are to last for 30 years with the beast; which are "the days of those kings" in which "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom . . ." (Dan. 2:44). Now if Jesus destroyed these kingdoms at his actual coming, they would not be there while he sets up his kingdom. Having set it up during their lifetime, he is then to "break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end" (Dan.2:44). This he accomplishes at ARMAGEDDON.

CHAPTER 28 - THE BEAST THAT CARRIES THE WOMAN (Revelation 17:3, 8-11)

Apocalyptic Identity of the Beast

Pagan Rome is not known as a beast in the Revelation, but as a dragon. There is but one apocalyptic Roman beast—the SEA BEAST of Rev. 13:1. The two-horned earth-beast of Rev.13:11 was not Roman for the secular power was vested in a French king and later in a German emperor. "Beast" in the Revelation is confined to a nominally Christian power.

The Roman "Sea Beast" has passed through two phases and will appear in its third and final one. Its first phase was initiated with Emperor Constantine in 312 A.D.; and continued with an emperor till 476. In this year Rome was invaded and Gothic kings reigned for 60 years. This was the deadly wound for the emperor head of Rome. This "mortal wound" was healed by Eastern Roman Emperor, Justinian, in 554. He banished the Goths from Rome and gave the pope power and authority, both as secular and ecclesiastical governor in Rome. In 759 A.D. the pope had severed all ties with Eastern Rome and in doing so, assumed the rights of an emperor. In other words he took on the role of the Roman Beast and was apocalyptically designated as such, until he went into the "abyss" in 1870.

"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns" (Rev.17:3). Its heads and horns at once give the beast Roman identity, matching up with the "Sea Beast" which dominated medieval history. Instead of it "rising out of the sea" John views this one "in the wilderness." Though the beast is obviously Roman in character it need not be centred in Rome. It was in the woods and swamps of Germany that the barbaric tribes harassed and bogged down the Roman legions. To the civilized Romans and Greeks of John's day, these northern confines may well have been called the "wilderness". Whatever the significance of the term, there will be, at a time still future, a revival of the Roman Empire in Europe. It might happen in France, Italy or Germany and almost certainly under a strong dictator assuming the role of a Caesar. There is no such power at this time bearing the stamp of ancient Rome.

"The Beast that was, and is not and is to come"

"The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is to ascend from the bottomless pit ('abyss' New English Bible) and go to perdition" (Rev.17:8). There is a clue to this enigmatical expression in Rev. 11:7, "And when they (the two witnesses) have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit will make war upon them . . . and kill them." In chapter 13 "The Two Witnesses", it was shown that this context concerned events prior to the French Revolution. The angel who spoke to John in that vision, having the whole Revelation in mind, could designate the beast of that time as "the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit." This was a development future to when the witnesses completed their testimony. Weymouth's translation renders the verse as, "the wild beast that IS TO ARISE out of the bottomless pit . . ." Since the beast was in existence at the time of the killing of the witnesses, it would need to descend into the bottomless pit in order to ascend out of it.

The apocalyptic description of the beast may be interpreted as follows:

"the beast . . . you saw WAS:	Before the French Revolution the beast was truly in existence; but soon afterwards started its descent into the abyss. This was precipitated by the Napoleonic wars and completed in 1870.
"and IS NOT . . ."	The "beast" has been in the "abyss" for a century and in 1971 shows little sign of emerging; but papal ecumenical activity is very pronounced.

"ÍS TO ASCEND"	This ASCENT from the abyss is evidently not to take place until Christ comes. His presence brings it out as the expression of papal opposition to Zion's king and Europe's fear of the New Israel.
"and go to perdition"	This happens at Armageddon—on the great day of God the Almighty (Rev. 19:20) and in the great earthquake which follows.

The New English Bible (1970) has it: "The beast you have seen is he who once was alive, and is alive no longer, but is yet to ascend out of the abyss before going into perdition" (Rev.17:8). "And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will marvel to behold the beast, because it was and is not and is to come" (Rev.17:8). The world will truly marvel when it is confronted with a formidable restored Roman power in Europe. It will confound all the theories of the historians and international commentators, who think of the "decline and fall" of Rome as ancient history; but either do not know or choose to ignore the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Head of the Beast

"The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while" (Rev.17:9,10). The seven hills on which the city of Rome now stands have both an historical and prophetical significance. We could say today that the woman, which is the Vatican and the Roman Church, sits on the literal seven hills. It is also true that the traditional background of the woman is the history of the Roman Empire, which has seen seven different forms of government. These are called "kings" in the Apocalypse. When John received his vision, the first five heads or forms of Roman government had passed away and were of historic interest only. Julius Caesar represented the "dictator" fifth form of government but Caesar Augustus was the first Emperor of Rome. He commenced the line of emperors called the 6th head of the beast. This emperor head continued in unbroken line until the 7th Gothic "king" head took over in 476 A.D.

If we could have stood with John and the angel who showed him these things, we would have readily understood that the five heads had fallen; the 6th "emperor" head was then in existence and a further short-lived 7th head was later expected. It came in 476, but having disappeared, Rome reverted to the 6th imperial head but under papal rulership. It was because John "marvelled greatly" (17:6), that the angel spoke to him of the situation as it then existed. Then the angel transports John into the future again, surveying the beast in vision with the woman seated on it. He then informs John: "As for the beast that was and is not, it is an EIGHTH but it belongs to the SEVEN, and it goes to perdition" (Rev.17:11). The beast they were viewing had actually ascended from the abyss and stood before them. The beast "that was and is not" is a kind of qualifying title; just as Jesus was called, "Who is and who was and who is to come." To which of the seven heads does this beast belong? It had seven heads but the question concerns the number of its current head when the vision is fulfilled.

The first five heads may be ruled out as having expired before the birth of Christ. The 7th (Gothic) head was to "remain only a little while," and its short life of 60 years fulfilled this prophecy. By the process of elimination there is left the 6th head only and it has already been established:

1. That the Papal head was a continuation of the 6th Roman emperor head after its mortal wound was healed.
2. This same papal beast was called, prior to the French Revolution, "The beast that ascends (is to arise) from the bottomless pit."
3. It was the same papal 6th head that went into the abyss in 1870.

The conclusion is that the beast which emerges from the abyss and on which the woman sits, is the beast with the 6th head.

Why the 6th Restored Head is the EIGHTH

John's visions of the 17th chapter indicate an important difference between the beast that ascends from the abyss and the one that goes into it. What comes out is still a Roman imperial beast, holding forth the traditions of the old Roman Empire, so identifying it with the 6th head. The Roman Catholic Church and papacy, emerging as part of the former beast, are seen to be a separate entity to the new one with its 6th head. Though separate from the beast they exert great spiritual influence over its international policy. On the other hand the military power of the beast elevates and sustains Church and papacy in its high position of ecclesiastical power. Instead of the beast "mouth" being papal, the beast has its own secular "mouth" issuing its foul spirit under papal influence.

While the emergent beast is the 6th head, the differences noted are important enough to make it an EIGHTH. Constantine was in the line of the 6th head and such a dictator may be looked for to champion the cause of the Catholic Church and its hierarchy, finding common cause with her false prophet.

There will be a dangerous enemy in Zion, whose challenge to the Woman and the Beast unite them in the one policy. The Woman is "carried" by the Beast, whose secular might can guarantee her security and defend her interests by force if necessary. As rider of the Beast she will exert her powers of spiritual deception upon its thinking. It is significant that the same 6th head which crucified the Lord, is the one which stands up to destroy him when he returns in power and glory. The same 6th head has so far been twice eclipsed and once restored. Its final appearance will be its third. We might consider, as a further application of the beast number, 666 that this 6th head will have experienced three separate phases during the course of its dreadful multi-phased career.

"Blasphemous Names"

"And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns" (Rev.17:3). The "Sea Beast" of Rev. 13:1 had "a blasphemous name" upon its heads. Now we are told that the seven heads of the ascendant beast of Rev. 17:3 "are seven hills on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings . . ." (Rev. 17:9-10). If the "seven hills" interpretation is applied to the incipient Sea-beast of chapter 13, then "a blasphemous name upon its heads" (13:1) would represent the Roman Catholic system planted on the seven hills of Rome and dominating the kings of Europe. Moreover the Sea-beast "was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words" (13:5). This was the papal mouth.

In the case of the "wilderness" beast (17:3), it was said to be "full of blasphemous names" without any reference to the heads. This would signify strong Catholic identity and indoctrination infused into every aspect of rulership pertaining to the beast power. It suggests the same kind of Catholic papal influence in rulership which dominated France before the Revolution. In view of the "holy crusade" that will be whipped up in Europe against the King in Jerusalem, the religious activity of the Catholic hierarchy throughout Europe and beyond will be very intensive. Apocalyptic and other New Testament evidence strongly suggests that nearly all the denominations and sects of Christendom will be deceived by Rome into supporting the papal drive against Jerusalem. Their identification with the misguided papal ideology will but swell the blasphemous names of which the beast is said to be full.

The Ten Horns

When John is first confronted with the beast and the woman riding it, the TEN HORNS he saw on the beast were still prophetical. They were not then supporting the beast but they would be. The woman and the ascendant beast, apart from the horns, are a necessary development for the pouring of the 6th bowl. The "mouths" of the dragon, beast and false prophet—that is to say, their vocal leaders, official mouthpieces, governing headquarters and propaganda machines, must be there to react to the "pouring" of the 6th bowl. The ten kings and their agreement to support the beast to war against the Lamb, is the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER 29 - THE WOMAN WHO SITS ON THE BEAST (Revelation 17:1-7)

The 16th chapter of the Revelation closes with a summary of the dramatic events of judgment under the 7th bowl, when it is poured into the air. Its repercussions are global. As yet, the events described here and in the 17th chapter cannot be found in history.

A Woman Elevated for Judgment

The greatest act of divine judgment ever executed will be the permanent destruction of the Babylonian system of Christianity. It has now been in existence for nearly seventeen centuries and has spread its spurious religious ideology over vast areas of the earth's habitable. The thinking, devotions and behaviour of nearly a third of the world's population are today subject to or affected by this ideology. A system of this nature could not be destroyed by war alone. The great change must come from the heart of the people and in line with human experience it involves revolution. An amazing vision opened up to the apostle John after he is addressed by the angel: "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who is seated upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the dwellers on earth have become drunk" (Rev.17:1-2). Here is the stage, set by God to effect His devastating judgment on the mystical City of Babylon. For this purpose He will lift her up to a position of ecclesiastical affluence unprecedented in her long struggle for world dominion.

Stripped of secular authority for so long, and impotent to compel men to worship her image, the Vatican will avidly grasp at partnership with a powerful dictator in Europe. What better for papal prestige than a revived Christian Roman Empire after the pattern of Constantine's. Nor can the import of the seven heads and ten horns be ignored, as defining the kind of beast that is to carry the Woman in triumph. As indicative of the smouldering ambitions of papal Rome, the following comment is extracted from the Memoirs of Kaiser Wilhelm II, on the occasion of his visit to Pope Leo XIII:

"It was of interest to me that the Pope said to me on that occasion that Germany must become the sword of the Catholic Church. I remarked that the old Roman Empire of the German nation no longer existed, and that conditions had changed. But he stuck to his words." (The Kaiser's Memoirs," p.211).

The papal concordat with Hitler and the latter's declared determination to re-establish the "Holy Roman Empire" (with papal backing) has been documented by writers and commentators.

Identifying the Woman

When Constantine elected to enthrone the Christian Church in his empire, it was symbolized as a WOMAN. This same woman was gradually transformed into the Sea-beast with the papal mouth. While the Catholic system wielded temporal power it was never called a "woman" by the Revelator, neither was it styled

"Babylon the great." As a woman she commenced her amazing career and as a woman she will terminate it. Though temporal power will be her lot no more, her spiritual influence and counsel will become directive to the "eighth" head of the beast that carries her.

Today, the sophisticated Woman sits upon the seven hills still diffusing her wine of false doctrine, deception and superstition to the nations and peoples under her sway. Despite her problems in a modern and scientific world, the Vatican with its supreme visible head exerts a mysterious but potent influence on the world of politics and international relations. "And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast . . . The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication" (Rev. 17:3-4). It needs little imagination or knowledge of Roman and European history, to recognize in this description of the woman and her dress, the Roman Catholic

Church. As a woman mounted on the beast, there is introduced a new phase of papal grandeur not previously symbolized in the Apocalypse.

The nature and character of the woman are vividly portrayed in her dress and the posture and gesture of her person. John said, "When I saw her I marvelled greatly." Here indeed was a mystery wrapped up in symbol. But to each successive generation of saints the woman's dress and adornment would need no interpretation. Its viable significance was there in the growth and accumulation of ritual pomp and glory of ecclesiastical Rome; in the scarlet and purple robes of pope and papal hierarchy and the precious ritual adornments of their persons. The symbology materialized in the fabulous wealth of Rome, in the architectural grandeur and magnificence of St. Peters and the great cathedrals of Europe; in the papal jewels, the gold and silver and precious stones, blended with purple and scarlet. The proliferation of this wealth adorned her idolatrous shrine and gilded her coronations, congresses, conclaves and processions. Can the evidence of books and films be either ignored or mistaken, which display the "woman arrayed" in purple and scarlet and "bedecked" with gold and jewels and pearls?

The "many waters" on which the woman was seen to be seated, symbolized the peoples, multitudes, languages and tongues (Rev. 17:15). Today, Catholicism is spread over some 600 million people, well out-numbering the total of all "protestant" denominations. Denuded of temporal power but still exerting strong political influence. Mother Rome has spread her spiritual tentacles throughout the globe.

"Babylon the Great"

"And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth's abominations" (Rev. 17:5). The name of mystery on the woman's forehead signifies that God used the ancient city of Babylon as a type. "The Two Babylons" by Hislop, already referred to, is an exhaustive treatise on the striking similarity between the idolatrous beliefs and practices of ancient Babylon and those of the Catholic Church. Only a divine revelation could have shown John, in the first century, such accurate description of this great pseudo-Christian system of the 20th century. This prophecy stood in the Lamb's book for two centuries before the "mystery of iniquity" emerged from the womb of the Christian Church. It took at least another 1000 years of growth ere its startling history proved the uncanny accuracy of the apocalyptic prediction. With the Revelation in one hand and the history of ecclesiastical Rome in the other, one may look to Rome and around the world and see the unmistakable proof of fulfilment.

If the reader cares to peruse the 50th and 51st chapters of Jeremiah and the 47th of Isaiah, the inspired assessment and prophecies on ancient Babylon will prove instructive. Her spiritual corruption is condemned and her utter destruction foretold. She is portrayed there as a woman sitting on many waters; a gold cup in her hand; rich in treasures and making the nations drunk with her wine. She called herself "the mistress of kingdoms" but the Lord called her a "destroying mountain," full of pride and fornication and sorceries. Then her waters were to be dried up, the city taken on every side and the broad walls were to fall. These judgments were then written in a book, a stone was tied to it and cast into the river Euphrates by the prophet, with the words: "Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the evil I am bringing upon her" (Jer. 51:64).

The Revelator lifted this phraseology about old Babylon out of the Old Testament, almost word for word in some cases, to apply them to the then unborn Mystical Babylon. When John read the name on the Woman's forehead, he would immediately discern the divine estimate of her character and thinking. It was the pride and presumption of ancient Babylon, repeated in all her idolatrous corruption, which John saw stamped on the directing hierarchy of the "woman." Hers was a Christianity blended with pagan ritual and superstition, added to by a further sixteen centuries of spiritual sorceries, incantations and material wealth.

The Wine of Her Impure Passion

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion" (Rev.14:8), "with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the dwellers on earth have become drunk" (Rev.17:2). These and other quotations refer obviously to spiritual fornication committed with earth's kings. Like Babylon of old, Episcopal Rome became "The mistress of kingdoms." It commenced with Sylvester, bishop of Rome, and Constantine. The Christianity of Jesus and the Apostles was never intended to be shared with the State, but rather to be opposed to it. The pattern of Christian testimony was set when its founder claimed before Pilate, divinely decreed kingship and was nailed to a Roman cross by Roman soldiers. Pure Christianity could never be palatable to earthly kings. A compromised Christianity, designed to pander to their vanity, credulity and superstition, proved to be most attractive.

When Roman emperors, Constantine, Justinian, Theodosius and Phocas successively clothed the Holy See with authority and power, they backed the use of this papal power to enslave and destroy the souls of their subjects. When the German emperors in the two-horned partnership were less co-operative than their Frankish kingly predecessors, the pope was powerful enough to challenge their authority and gradually to usurp it. Spanish, French, English and other kings of Europe were mostly partners or pawns to papal intrigue.

Jesus came first and foremost to save mankind from death, by their acceptance of his sacrifice in the manner of his appointment. His second coming as Messiah of Israel and King of the world is for the same objective; but all opposition from earthly power must be broken. The corrupted Babylonian woman, entrenched in the world as a vast spiritual city, is the chief obstacle to the salvation of human souls. This is the situation prevailing when the twenty-four elders announce the time "for destroying the destroyers of the earth" (Rev. 11:18). This judgment is committed to the Lamb, the Lord's Christ, "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thess. 1:7,8). Great Babylon will disintegrate in the fierce heat of divine judgment and only then will the universal Kingdom of God radiate in glory from Jerusalem.

The role of Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King has been usurped over the long centuries by a false Christ, who "takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God." The peoples, nations, multitudes and tongues on which John saw the woman seated, have been deluded into believing what is false, viz. that the Roman Catholic Church is the true temple of God; that its head, claiming to sit in the apostle Peter's chair, is the Vicar of Christ and the High Priest of Christendom; also that he is speaking infallibly for God to all men. The vast multitude, symbolized by the many waters, have damned their own souls over the ages by bowing to this image, and drinking from the woman's golden cup "the wine of her impure passion." For centuries she forced all the nations of Europe to drink it. This spiritual wine in the cup has been distilled and matured over the centuries of her ascendency and decline. Her spiritual harlotry with earth's kings springs from her impure passion, as "the mistress of kingdoms," "to mount up to heaven in the sight of men." These kings were as paramours, who courted the woman's favour, supported her claims of divinity, placed their civil authority at her command and forced their subject peoples to drink her wine of falsehood and deception.

"Mother of Harlots and Earth's Abominations"

These are the days of ecumenical dialogue between Mother Rome and her once protestant daughters. Except for Northern Ireland, "protestant" is almost a dead name throughout Christendom. The national council of churches is working hard to explore and exploit common areas of agreement with Rome. The ecumenical atmosphere is favourable to progressive reconciliation between Catholic and non-Catholic Christendom. The Catholic Church and the denominations are now freely spoken of as a Mother-daughters relationship. That Rome will have "daughters," who are to stand with her in opposition to the Lamb in Jerusalem, appears as a

strong inference in the name on the woman's forehead. Non-Catholic Christendom is as blind to the signs of the times as Mother Church and even more skeptical about the return of Jesus in person to this earth. They would be just as liable to regard "a Jewish Messiah" as "Antichrist".

The world will be altogether too faithless and disinterested to recognize a returned Christ. Paul warns "that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail . . . and there will be no escape" (1 Thess. 5:2, 3). "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens (powers-that-be) will pass away with a loud noise" (2 Pet. 3:10). Supposing a pious Jew stood up in Jerusalem; made demands on the Gentile world on behalf of the Jewish nation and the dispersed sons of Jacob; indicted the religion and ways of Christendom; and above all announced the impending overthrow of world governments and the Catholic system; then proceeded to break up the Christian and Moslem "holy places" to cleanse the land of its idol—would he be accepted as the returned Christ? Jesus, on his return, will do all these things and more, in accordance with the prophecies and the Bible's answer is in the negative.

One can but hope as well as pray, that the many sincere people scattered throughout Christendom will be sufficiently warned and informed to escape the fatal error espoused by Orthodoxy. An immature awareness of the second advent is discernible among smaller "non-conformist" groups. It would be to such that the "angelic" proclamation of the eternal gospel, with its urgent warning, will make its timely appeal. But the warning is already there to all who discern the name on the woman's forehead, "Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth's abominations" (Rev. 17:5).

The False Prophet

Paul's "Lawless One," the "son of perdition," is seen as the central actor on the apocalyptic stage. He was typified by Nebuchadnezzar of ancient Babylon, who ruled over the kings of the earth and exalted himself to the heavens, saying: "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; . . . I will make myself like the Most High" (Isa. 14:13, 14). Nebuchadnezzar was God's "sign" man, foreshadowing that "stout horn" with the audacious eyes and mouth, who was to arise out of the divided Roman empire some twelve centuries later. Like Nebuchadnezzar, he too would exalt himself "against every so-called god . . . proclaiming himself to be God" (2 Thess. 2:4); and like the ancient king he built himself a mighty spiritual city named by God. "Babylon the great".

John was told that the seven stars in the Lord's right hand "are the angels of the seven churches," to whom the Lord addressed his seven letters. This implies that these "angels" were the elders or bishops of the ecclesias. It was above the bishops of all the contemporary churches within the Roman Empire that the bishop of Rome set himself, claiming divine authority for his self-appointment.

This spiritual king of ecclesiastical Babylon is a representative man by reason of succession. The long list of about 350 "SUPREME PONTIFFS" who have occupied "St. Peter's chair," is there by virtue of their mortality, but God deals with them all as a MAN. So in this succession of men is vested the blasphemous title "POPE" meaning Father, being addressed as "Father of the Prince of kings", "Pontiff of the World", and "Vicar of Jesus Christ on the Earth". These and others like them are declared by the Revelator to be "names of blasphemy." God-like titles and claims such as these are used to preserve a perpetual role of exaltation and authority vested in a MAN. But as God said to the prince of Tyre, "You have said, 'I am a god' . . . you are but a man and no god." The Divine Spirit, in pending judgment, has spelled out a list of counter titles against this Roman Pontiff. This list includes "the man of lawlessness," "son of perdition," "stout horn,l" "wild beast," "mouth of a lion," "image of the beast," and "Antichrist."

The derogatory title, “FALSE PROPHET”, is the last on the list, bestowed by God upon this one claiming to speak for Him to all men. God alone can make a man a prophet. Moses, Elijah and other prophets were made to stand before the Lord, receiving their appointment from Him. Only a false prophet would dare to take the office upon himself. Each title and claim of the Roman Pontiff is therefore “a name of blasphemy.” It denotes prerogative and function which has never been committed to him by The Almighty. The False Prophet will unwittingly confront the Prince of the prophets when the King of glory comes with all his holy angels. When Christ occupies his throne in Jerusalem then will the false prophet assume his role, showing “signs and wonders.”

In company with the “dragon” and the “beast”, the false prophet’s mouth pours out specious propaganda against the new occupant of David’s throne. “For they are demonic spirits performing signs . . .” (Rev.16:14). The medieval papal beast also “worked great signs” (13:13) by thundering its edicts from Rome to convince the world of its divine authority. The controversy between Rome and Jerusalem is basically about religion and for the false prophet, one of religious survival; hence the title given him by the Revelator. Any doubt that the false prophet is the pope of Rome is dispelled by reference to Rev. 19:20. “And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had worked the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image.”

The formula “the mark of the beast and those who worship its image,” stems from the medieval “Sea Beast” and the “image” it set up in Europe. This has already been expounded under the heading “An Image for the Beast”. What the “earth dwellers” worshipped in the Middle Ages is still the object of their devotions. What they will yet worship in the final phase of papal ascendency is that which is worshipped today, without the dread of an inquisition. The “image” embraces the vain papal claims and dogmas forged during its long history.

The papal presence in the “Holy Roman Empire” deceived the “earth dwellers” into making an image of himself and the “sea beast” and worshipping it. It will be the papal false prophet who deceived the future earth dwellers into making war on the LAMB. The beast that is worshipped is not the one from whose mouth comes one of the unclean spirits and is “captured” at Armageddon. This future beast is secular and will be deceived by the false prophet. Supported by his sacred college of Cardinals and the “Pontificial family”, the pope is the head of the Babylonian Woman and therefore the apocalyptic false prophet.

The Latter Day “Lawless One”

There is a latter day fulfilment to Paul’s prediction: “for the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed” (2 Thess. 2:7-8). Constantine put the Roman dragon “out of the way” and the “lawless one” in the form of the papal system was revealed to the world. Christ, in the true “Michael” role, will put the Russian dragon out of the way by destroying him in Israel and Edom. Today, the “mystery of lawlessness” is already at work, especially among the “Common Market” countries of Europe and in world ecumenical activity. It is nevertheless restrained in Europe by Russian Communism. When Russia’s military might is broken, we may expect communism to go with it; since this is the dragon ideology that will be bound. With the dragon “out of the way” the lawless one will again be revealed. There is high probability that Russia’s defeat will bring an upsurge of reactionary forces from within the “iron curtain”, back to orthodox Christianity and the West. The “lawless one” has to assume the spiritual lordship of all Europe.

In opposition to the Kings of kings, the secular beast in Europe will champion the cause of the Babylonian Woman and establish the “false prophet” high in the Gentile “heavens”. Thereafter the King of kings assumes his “CYRUS“ role and initiates his conquest of the great mystical city of Babylon.

“His Appearing and His Coming”

“The Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming” (2 Thess. 2:8). In these words Paul wraps up all the events of the 6th and 7th bowls. The Lord makes his initial appearing to Israel after God’s destruction. This is vividly dramatized in Rev. 10:1. ”Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow (for national and spiritual Israel) over his head.” Shortly after this initial appearing, John would have looked in vision. “and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand . . . And I heard a voice from Heaven (Jerusalem) like the sound of many waters . . . “ (Rev. 14:12,

The presence of the Lord on Mount Zion may be regarded as the “appearing” of which Paul speaks. It introduces the proclamation in “mid-heaven” of the eternal gospel, as fire cast onto the earth. Not only is it a warning call to salvation, but it initiates the pouring of the 6th bowl on the river Euphrates. Its effect is, with papal and beast reaction, to progressively turn the “waters” of humanity under Great Babylon into a “lake of fire.”

The Lord’s “coming,” which Paul says will destroy the “lawless one,” is a prolonged coming “in the clouds of heaven” lasting about 40 years; during which time he is “wrapped in a cloud” of concealed identity. Into this same political cloud the saints are to be caught up (1 Thess. 4:17). Then the Lamb will slay the “lawless one” “with the breath of his mouth” and the mighty events of the 6th and 7th bowls. The divine court will sit in judgment for 40 years, but the subject of this duration will be treated separately.

The hidden identity of Jesus to Christendom and the nations is due to the thief-like manner of his Apocalypse; and the general Gentile prejudice and unbelief concerning it. It will follow the same pattern as his first advent in this respect. His presence in Jerusalem will be as offensive to Christendom and the nations as it was to the Pharisees and Sadducees. Israel, now in unbelief, will hail her deliverer as “son of David,” “Son of God” and “Messiah.” This in itself will be offensive to false prophet and beast alike, whose antipathy to Jews will be stirred up by Israel’s messianic enthusiasm. Unthinkable, that Christ should show himself to Israel and not to Christendom. The Jews will ask, “Who is the King of glory?” It is probably Jesus who replies, “The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O Gates! . . . that the King of glory may come in” (Ps.24:8,9). Could it be Gentile scepticism that poses the question which follows, “Who IS this King of glory?” To which Jew and saint may well reply: “The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!” (24:10).

The Lord, “mighty in battle” on behalf of the Jew as against the Gentile, is unlikely to appeal to or convince the heads of Europe that this is the Christ. The Son of God comes as the great judge of men and nations and as previously, he will be entirely non-conformist. Only as such can he change the present evil order and “ring in the Christ that is to be.”

CHAPTER 30 - KINGS FOR ONE HOUR (Revelation 17:12,14)

Jesus said, "I thank thee, Father . . . that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes . . ." (Luke 10:21). God's prophetic time scales are not apparent to the world. "And none of the wicked shall understand; but those who are wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:10).

This kind of wisdom is not the philosophical or scientific variety which boasts in human achievement. Rather is it the kind of wisdom that belonged to Daniel, to John the Baptist and those humble men of faith who surrounded the Master. These and such like men loved his appearing and Kingdom. It is likely that if Jesus had made the Revelation a literal disclosure instead of a symbolic one, it would have ended up in pagan or papal fires. Gibbon's historical evidence indicates that the survival of the book was due to its enigmatical nature in the eyes of the Catholic Church. Belief in the kingdom of God, ruled from Jerusalem by a returned Christ, was finally regarded as heretical by the Catholic hierarchy. The precise time of the Master's return is purposely withheld by God from all men. Many predictions have been made, mostly on the basis of Daniel's 1260, 1290 and 1335 days. Some are foolish and others are interesting, but commencing dates cannot be determined with any degree of certainty.

Prophetical Time Units

In the broad sweep of prophecy God has used a "time cycle" of 360 divisions, each division representing a solar year in actual time, but one day in symbolic time. It is an arbitrary time unit, a rounded figure, approximating a year of days, yet signifying a precise span of solar years. That a prophetical "TIME" in Scripture contains 360 days may be established as follows: "The woman (the ecclesia of saints) fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for 1260 days" (Rev. 12:6). Again: "But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time" (Rev.12:14). Because the same event and the same time period is referred to in each citation, we may equate three and a half times with 1260 days. Hence the TIME equals 360 days.

Concerning the authority of the Catholic "Sea Beast" to persecute and make war on the saints, it is revealed: "And the beast was given a mouth uttering . . . blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months" (Rev.13:5). "And they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months" (Rev.11:2). The "trample over" of Rev.11:2 must coincide with the time period spoken of by Daniel: "and they (the saints) shall be given into his (the papal horn's) hand for a time, two times, and half a time" (Dan.7:25). By equating the 42 months of Rev.11:2 with the three and a half times of Dan.7:25, a month is seen to equal 30 days on God's basic time scale. Moreover, by putting both equations together: 31/2 times = 1260 days = 42 months. The 30 days for a month may also be derived from Rev.11:3, where the 1260 days witnessing in sackcloth is coincident with the 42 months "trample over" of v.2. A "TIME" is seen to be neither a solar nor a lunar year, but a period of twelve 30-days months. Like the dial of a clock it had twelve main divisions, but each of these in turn was divided into 30 parts, each part symbolising a solar year.

The Day-for-a-Year Principle

This basic prophetical time scale was first defined by God to Ezekiel as a "sign" to the House of Israel. "For I assign to you a number of days . . . equal to the number of the years of their (Israel's) punishment . . . you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; forty days I assign you, a day for each year" (Ezek.4:5-6) God had already decreed for Israel, that beyond her punishment while a nation, there would ensue a further punishment for disobedience of seven "times" duration. "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you SEVEN TIMES MORE for your sins" (Lev.26:18, see vv. 21, 24, 28 A.V.). The R.S.V. uses the term "sevenfold" and the N.E.B. reads "seven times over".

That the Babylonian captivity is the starting point for these seven times, is confirmed by the entry of three Jews, typifying the captive house of Israel, into the fiery furnace of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar "ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated." Gentile supremacy over Israel was to coincide with the SEVEN TIMES of Israel's fiery trial. Hence the "times of the Gentiles," which Jesus said would be fulfilled when Jerusalem ceased to be trodden down (Luke 21:24). The outworking of these "times" is against those who oppose the day-for-a-year principle, for this would limit Israel's extended punishment to seven years. From 606 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar carried captive Jews to Babylon, seven "times" of years (2520) brought World War I. Three years later in 1917, Jerusalem was liberated. Thirty years later saw the Jewish State and fifty years later, the whole of Jerusalem in Jewish hands.

Papal Rome's authority to persecute saints was set down as three and a half times (1260 days). In history they proved to be 1260 years, from 312 A.D. to 1572 A.D. Other starting points can be taken, such as the decree of Phocas in 607 A.D.; but the duration can only be measured in "times" of years, not days. Though no civil unit of duration called a "time" existed in Israel, it is firmly established as God's symbolic unit by Daniel and the Revelator in the term "time, times and half a time" or "a time, two times and half a time."

Not without significance, angular movement is measured in degrees, 360 of which units make up the compass and the revolution or cycle of the earth before the sun. The number 360 is divisible by every numeral up to 10, with the exception of seven. But seven is the number of cycles marking out the Jewish-Gentile time span. Expositors have juggled with solar and lunar years and with diverse calendars to make history fit into Bible times. The results are rather confusing and not very rewarding. A "TIME" is not another kind of year but a divine "time-stick" or clock for measuring solar years.

The "HOUR" Period of Revelation 17:12

Having established God's basic unit for prophetic times, the HOUR period must be considered as having a vital message on second advent fulfilment. "And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast" (17:12). Presumably this "one hour" is identical with "the hour of her judgment" referred to in the following citations: "Fear God and give him glory, for THE HOUR of his judgment has come" (Rev.14:7). "Thou mighty city, Babylon! In ONE HOUR has thy judgment come" (Rev.18:10). "In ONE HOUR all this wealth has been laid waste" (Rev.18:17). The Woman appears sitting on the Beast for an unspecified time, prior to the ten "horn" kingdoms yielding their power to the beast. The actual judgment hour may be assumed to commence from when the horns become integral units with the "beast" power. What is the actual time intended by this symbolic hour?

The Jewish day was reckoned from nominal sunrise to sunset, corresponding with our day period from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Their day was divided into 12 hours. "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" (John 11:9). On the "day for a year" reckoning an hour would equal only 30 literal days. This period would appear as outside the bounds of reality for all of those dramatic events of the 6th and 7th bowls. Though divinely possible it is highly improbable when God is dealing with men and nations. The programme involves the eternal gospel being proclaimed, a sustained propaganda drive by demonic spirits emanating from the triple-mouthed coalition; the counselling together of the nations for their great decision, intensive war preparation and mustering of armies and the actual BATTLE AT ARMAGEDDON followed by the great "EARTHQUAKE" of peoples and tongues, whereby Babylon is engulfed. Moreover it is "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will (through Christ) set up a kingdom" (Dan.2:44).

This "setting up" of God's Kingdom involved the judgments of the 6th and 7th bowls. The "days of those kings" obviously coincide with their HOUR of confederacy with the beast and the subsequent uniting of their peoples to destroy Babylon. Since the feet of the image have taken some fifteen centuries to run their course, so a

reasonable duration of years must be attributed to the "toe" kingdoms, which are identical with "the horns of the beast." It is therefore logical that we look for another time scale; but one closely related to the "day for a year principle." On this principle ONE HOUR would represent 30 days, and if these 30 days be regarded as 30 years, we would be reckoning on "a day for 360 years" time cycle. In other words the ratio of actual to symbolic time has been increased by a multiple of 360. Have we historic proof that such a time scale has worked out in other prophecies of the Revelation?

John Thomas, in "Eureka," Vol.2, p.346, has explained and confirmed from Gibbon's historical testimony, the fulfilment of Rev.8:1 reading: "When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for ABOUT HALF AN HOUR." the 6TH seal (Rev.6:12), when opened, released a great earthquake; the sun became black and the moon was like blood. These events symbolically portrayed, brought the destruction of paganism by Constantine in accordance with Revelation chapter 12. Out of the stormy scene of civil war and commotion there came years of peace to the conquering Constantine and his empire. "Silence" as against the thunder of war and the noise of "earthquake," reigned in the Roman secular heavens. This silence was broken after "ABOUT HALF AN HOUR" by the angel blowing his trumpet to bring "hail and fire on the earth" (Rev.8:7). This introduced the trumpets of war and invasion, which broke up the Western Empire into separate states.

Now if our time interpretation be correct for the ONE HOUR of Revelation chapter 17, then this silence of peace should have lasted "about" 15 years in the case of Rev. 8:1. The following evidence is from Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" (p.274):

"The tranquillity of the last fourteen years of his (Constantine's) reign was scarcely interrupted by the contemptible insurrection of a camel driver in the island of Cyprus, or by the active part which the policy of Constantine engaged him to assume in the wars of the Goths and Sarmatians . . . and the ambassadors of Ethiopia, Persia and the most remote countries of India, congratulated the peace and prosperity of his government.

On the death of the Emperor in 337 A.D., there ensued a period of intrigue, violence and murder in the House of Constantine, as his sons contended for his throne. The empire became divided between the three brothers. This 14 years of peace is correctly defined on "a day for 360 years" time scale as 'ABOUT HALF AN HOUR."

All the evidence available indicates the "HOUR" of Revelation chapters 17 and 18 to be a period of 30 years. This would be preceded by a possible seven years, during which the Beast, the Woman and the false prophet assume place and power in Europe, working up their world-wide campaign against Jerusalem's king. Add several years at the end of the "hour" period to cover the "earthquake" duration and the 40 years judgment and "setting up" is completed. The Lamb then takes his universal throne "and the time came when the saints received the kingdom" (Dan.7:22). So will be fulfilled the Davidic anti-type – Christ, a man of war for 40 years; then as Solomon, a man of peace to build the temple of the Lord.

From the books of Isaiah and Micah, it may be gathered that this initial 40 years will also see the completed ingathering and vindication of the Jewish people. "As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt I will show them (Israel) marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed . . . they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God" (Mic. 7:15-17). Because Christ likened his second coming to the "days of Noah," the 40 days of flood rain are not without significance in relation to the 40 years of fiery judgments on the world of Great Babylon (2 Pet. 3:5-7). It is interesting that the men of Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls) set down the duration of "The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness" as 40 years after the Gogian invasion; and called this the period of "Messianic Travail." (Gaster's "Scripture of the Dead Sea Sect," pp.259 ,263.)

Sequence of Events – 6th and 7th Bowl Judgments

A careful study of all the events associated with the 6th and 7th bowls, suggests the following progressive stages in the Lamb's mighty conquest of the city, Babylon the great.

1. The preaching from Jerusalem and around the world of the eternal gospel to every nation, tongue and people, commanding worship of the one true God while warning of impending judgments.
2. The drying up of Babylon's waters, as seen in the conversion or alienation from Rome, of many of her peoples and multitudes on which the woman sits.
3. While the Lord utters his voice from Jerusalem, there issues vicious and inciting propaganda against the new king of Israel and his people, by the publicity media of dragon, beast and false prophet.
4. The pressure is on the governments of European nations and beyond Europe, and in counsel they make an alliance-pact with the beast in opposition to the Lamb and his associates and the Jewish people. Europe becomes an arsenal and an armed camp (Joel 3:9-10). The gospel preaching continues.
5. The "harvest" or mortal believers is taken from the Babylonian "waters" into the sheltering presence of the Lamb.
6. The "Beast" and "horn" leaders gather their vast forces and invade the Holy Land. The wine press is trodden at Armageddon and the beast and false prophet captured.
7. At this point the Lamb reveals his identity to the governments and peoples of the "horn" powers and the beast (Rev.18:1).
8. The greatest "earthquake" of all time occurs. Under new leadership, the peoples of Europe rise, along with nations throughout the world, against the woman and "burn her with fire." In this "lake of fire" the beast 8th head and the false prophet perish.
9. The physical and material destruction of Catholicism throughout the world will be followed by ideological warfare from Jerusalem. The King of kings on the white horse wields the sharp sword of his mouth against any remaining beast and image worshippers. All false Christian worship and doctrine will be eradicated.

The Ten "Horn" Kings on the "Wilderness Beast"

John saw in his vision the woman, the beast and the horns as if they were all coexistent. From the explanation of Rev.17:12-14, quoted above and under previous headings, it is clear that the horns seen on the beast had not then yielded their power to it. This would make the life of the beast and the woman rider longer than the symbolic "hour" period, during which the horns give their power to it.

These ten nations are representative of the whole extent of Europe, as indicated by the toes on both feet of the image. Because "the rulers take counsel together against the LORD" (Ps 2:2), and have "one mind" to confederate with the beast, they are to be viewed as free agents. They are nevertheless respectful of the beast's superior and aggressive war potential and will be hard pressed, by their religious affiliations with the woman and her false prophet, to unite against Jerusalem. The foul spirits would undoubtedly call for a "united nations" assembly of Europe, and possibly all nations, in the name of peace and security. It is fairly certain that the exploits, demands and warnings of the new Jewish leader will be taken as threatening the religious, national and social structure of Europe and the world. The cry of "peace and security" of 1 Thess. 5:2-3 appears to have real application here.

The ten kings (nations) decide in conference to merge with the beast against the common enemy and to work under its direction. By so doing they "set themselves . . . against the Lord and against his anointed," and "they will make war on the Lamb." Plainly there is fear displayed in their weighty decision and their elaborate preparations for war. They consider the Jewish nation under its "acclaimed Messiah" and his associates as a force to be reckoned with. "He who sits in the heavens (the developing Kingdom of God) laughs; the LORD has

them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill" (Psalm 2:4-5).

The woman, beast and kings will be as ignorant of the identity of this new Jewish leader, as were Pharaoh and his counsellors of the divine spirit which wrought in Moses to precipitate Pharaoh to his doom, "Lo, I am coming like a thief!" (Rev.16:15). "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Luke 21:35 A.V.). They will see a bold leader in Israel, under whose direction, inspiration and authority, Christendom's holy places are being destroyed. Monasteries and shrines will be included and "holy" orders confiscated (Zec.13:2). The blame for all this will fall upon the new leader of Jerusalem's Christianity and on the Jew throughout the world. The cry of the false prophet, the beast and the nations of Europe will be: "Let us burst their bonds and cast their cords from us" (Ps.2:3).

Not to be Confused with the "Horns" of Dan. 7:7

The ten horns seen on the "wilderness" beast of Rev. 17:3,8 are a future development, but those on Daniel's fourth beast have long been established. Daniel"s vision dealt with that development of the fourth world empire which yielded the stout papal horn. In it was fulfilled the "image" prophecy of Dan. 2:41-43, that the Roman civilization would be diluted with the tribal nations of Europe. If precisely ten nations emerged from the Western Roman Empire, some receded and disappeared and others rose to prominence in the course of history. Divided Rome was still regarded by God as the Roman Empire.

That these "horn nations" took on Roman identity is remarkably attested by history and historians. To quote Barrow in "The Romans":

"Rome has never died: By sheer force of character . . . she left an impression on the new nations of Europe which arose from her empire . . . The Barbarian invasions were neither catastrophic and sudden, nor destructive or disruptive. Rome never fell, she turned into something else. Rome superseded . . . passed into even greater supremacy as an idea . . . "

The imperial iron of Rome has largely been perpetuated in the Papal system, which built a mighty empire of religion on a Roman gallows, whereon the Prince of life was slain. It is ironical that this same Roman system of religion will spearhead world opposition to the Son of God returned in power and glory.

The iron-clay feet of the dream image symbolize the history of the divided Roman Empire and we may say that the image is today standing on the ball of its feet. Although the metatarsal bones are concealed within the feet, the toes they are to carry have not yet formed. They are nations, probably existing in Europe, but as yet unidentified until the Lord comes. The ten toes, yet to grow on the feet, coincide with the ten horns of Rev.17:12-15. The ten horns of Daniel's fourth beast coincide with the ten crowned horns on the Apocalyptic "sea beast" of Rev. 13:1. These sea-beast horns date from about 476 A.D.

Preparation for Armageddon as Seen by Joel

The setting of Joel's 3rd chapter coincides with that of the conflict at Armageddon. It is given there as it will affect Israel. The Spirit shows Joel the proclamation going forth to the nations: "Prepare war, stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am a warrior" (Joel 3:9-10). This decree and proclamation is by command of the beast. Such a feverish build-up for war could well emerge from a protracted "cold war." This is implied in the "flashes of lightning and loud noises" as "the LORD roars from Zion" and "speaks to them in his wrath." The demonic spirits will not cease to pour out their vilification until the aggression pact is translated into making war on the Lamb.

The identity of Joel's prophecy with that of the Revelation is remarkably established. There is the preparation for war, the gathering of nations to a valley of judgment in Israel, the reaping of a harvest, treading of the wine press, God's warriors (the saints) "brought down," God sits to judge the nations (the court sits in judgment), the sun and moon (beast and the woman) are darkened, the stars (horn powers) withdraw their shining, the Lord roars from Zion and the "heavens and the earth shake." Also "the LORD is a refuge to his people" (saints from the gospel proclamation) and "a stronghold to the people of Israel," These are all references to Joel 3:9-17. They accord with the apocalyptic programme of the 6th and 7th bowls, except for the mention of Israel.

CHAPTER 31 THE GREAT TRIBULATION (Revelation 7:14)

Medieval Saint Persecution

A number of writers over the years have attempted to show a final severe persecution of the saints, at the hands of an antichrist, prior to or at the Lord's coming.

Considerable historical testimony has already been cited and matched up with Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, showing the long span of papal persecution on the saints. When the Sea beast was given its mouth. "it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months . . . also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them" (Rev. 13:5-7). And from the prophet Daniel, "As I looked, this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High . . ." (Dan. 7:21-22). "And shall wear out the saints of the Most High . . . and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times and half a time" (Dan. 7:25). "Authority was given it" not over the saints only, but "over every tribe and people and tongue and nation" (Rev.13:7). There are three notable stages of this fulfilment, already dealt with in some detail:

1. Constantine 312 A,D, to 1572 = 1260 years
2. Justinian's decree 554 A.D. to 1814 = 1260 years
3. Phocas' decree 607 A.D. to 1867 = 1260 years

The final dates correspond with:

1. The slaying of the "witnesses" by the massacre of the Huguenots on Bartholomew's Day in France, so fulfilling Rev. 11:1-7.
2. The pope carried prisoner to France by Napoleon, returns to Rome humiliated and greatly shorn of temporal power and prestige.
3. Papal States absorbed into the kingdom of Italy and the pope lost all temporal authority.

There are two stages of increase in power and authority and two stages of reduced authority shown in the history of these datings. There is now no power to persecute or to force any to fall down before the "image," although hundreds of millions still worship it. Now in the "abyss," the Beast is to make its spectacular ascendency; but "The court shall sit in judgment and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end" (Dan. 7:26)

No More Persecution for the "144,000"

The sealing of the 144,000 "first-fruit" saints took place in part under the 7th seal (Rev. 7:1-8). But the 7th seal contained the seven trumpets and the seven bowls; therefore the sealing process included all true believers, right up to the first resurrection. Those souls "under the altar" who suffered under pagan Rome, were told "to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete" (Rev. 6:9-11). They too are included with the 144,000. This symbolic number likewise includes all of the Old Testament worthies and righteous ones, together with apostles and believers both Jew and Gentile, whose names are written in the book. The sealing of 12,000 from each tribe of Israel, is but symbolic of spiritual Israel in its completeness. All true Jews and Gentiles in the Spirit are included.

Those who accept the "great tribulation" as a future saint persecution, generally regard the 13th chapter of the Revelation as having a future fulfilment. The 42 months is taken as a literal period of three and a half years, in which Antichrist severely persecutes true Christian believers. In view of the abundant historical evidence set forth by expositors, and which we have already verified in some depth from independent sources, there appears little room for a future interpretation of chapter 13. Attention has been drawn to a long-standing

misconception that Antichrist is to reign in Jerusalem for three and a half years. The prophecies considered draw the opposite picture: that Antichrist will be installed as ever in Rome and Christ himself in Jerusalem.

The judgment on Rome has already "sat" in part by the fulfilment of the first five bowls. The protestant reformation and its resultant freedom of thought has largely vanquished the superstitions and credulity, which for centuries accepted Rome's authority without challenge. We live in an age when any kind of Christian belief and faith is discredited. Science is extolled and exalted as having the solution to all world problems. Liberty has run riot. Communism is firmly entrenched in Europe.

The future development of a Roman secular beast in Europe, carrying ecclesiastical Rome on its back, will come as a wonder and a shock to many who will no doubt live to see it. But Rome will be there, before the court of divine judgment sitting in Jerusalem. Religion, TRUE or FALSE will become the burning question, because at last there is power on the side of truth. Only the fear and hatred of that court of justice in Jerusalem will cause the nations to elevate the Babylonian woman to great prominence. That is why those who do not understand the purpose of God "will marvel to behold the beast, because it was and is not and is to come" (Rev.17:8). The marvel to them is that Rome, being so historically dead, has revived as a militant power.

Those Scriptures have already been considered which indicate that the Lord, with his "144,000" appears on Mount Zion very soon after Israel's deliverance from the great invader. They must be there for the pouring of the 6th and 7th bowls. This would rule out any persecution of the 144,000 after the Lord comes to Zion. Any persecution on these "first-fruit" saints could only occur between now and the Lord's coming to Israel. This appears most unlikely in view of Rome's many present problems including the power of Communism in Europe and the wide scepticism where religion and papal claims are concerned. The two witnesses completed their testimony in 1572, and after the French Revolution were seen by John standing by a sea of glass. The glass was mingled with fire, not for them but for the papacy. Whilst they sang a song of victory over the beast, the seven angels came to pour out the seven plagues from the bowls upon the beast (Rev. 15:2-6).

Jesus warned his disciples of world trouble just prior to his coming. There would be distress of nations in perplexity, men fainting for fear and foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of heaven would be shaken. Then the Son of man would come in a cloud in power and glory. As for his disciples, they were to lift up their heads when they saw all this, because their redemption was near (Luke 21:25-36). There was no hint of persecution for them at this time. Rather was his warning against dissipation, drunkenness and cares of this life. This is the world as we find it today, given to wantonness and pleasures. The wantonness will certainly increase, and distress with perplexity will be greatly accentuated ere the Lord comes.

"The Great Tribulation" Post-Adventual

Our consideration so far concerns those found worthy to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. As products of the first resurrection, there were many among them called "souls under the altar . . . who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God" (Rev. 20:4). This happened in the dark ages a long time ago. The available evidence seems to preclude any more persecution for saints of the first resurrection.

Only once throughout the Revelation does the term "the great tribulation" occur. "After this . . . behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9). "Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?" The elder who put the question to John answered it: "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation: they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (7:14).

Whoever this “great multitude” class may be, they came out of the great tribulation. It may be shown that ”the great tribulation” occurs after the first resurrection and is associated with the time leading up to and during the terrible “earthquake” and plagues which destroy Babylon the great. The “first-fruit” saints are with the Lamb in glory while the world is undergoing this great tribulation. It would then follow that the GREAT MULTITUDE class are those who find redemption through the “angelic” proclamation in mid-heaven (Rev. 14:6). These do not “live and reign with Christ a thousand years,” but will be rewarded at the second resurrection at the close of the Millennium. Under our next heading, “The Harvest Reaped,” the identity of the great multitude” is treated in detail.

A true appraisal of the 7th bowl judgments defines the great tribulation as God’s retribution on the whole world and all peoples. It will fall most severely on the worshippers of the beast and its image, and results from the Lord being revealed in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God (2 Thess. 1:7-8). The tribulation will increase in tempo from the time the Lord takes his throne in Jerusalem, to the end of the revolutionary earthquake which makes Babylon “a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul and hateful bird: (Rev. 18:2). The great tribulation springs from God’s plagues on Babylon and those who support her. “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10).

This figurative language is Peter’s way of saying what Jesus revealed more specifically: that the people of the ten “horn” kingdoms and the beast will hate the harlot, making her desolate and “burning her with ‘fire’.” Read the gruesome historical description of the French Revolution, visualize it on a world wide scale, and this will give some idea of what the great tribulation means. The angel who had power over this “fire” said to another angel, “Put in your sickle . . . So the angel swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God” (Rev.14:18-19).

Daniel’s “time of trouble” undoubtedly takes in the great tribulation. It dates from the “standing up” of Michael. “At that time (when Christ delivers Israel) shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time; but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book” (Dan. 12:1). This deliverance not only applies to Israel’s national salvation from her enemies, but to saints also, and particularly those of Daniel’s people, Israel. During 40 years of intense trouble the Messiah will gather Jews of true spirit to Israel. “I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD, those who are left in Israel” (Zephaniah 3:12). “And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem, will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem” (Isa. 4:3).

THE GREAT TRIBULATION may therefore be regarded as concurrent with the 40 years from Gog’s destruction to Babylon’s overthrow. It has a very severe ending of several years duration, while the harlot city is being consumed by the wrath of the people. The “harvest angel” does his reaping before the great winepress is trodden (Rev. 14:14-16). This reaping appears as “the great multitude” being brought out of the great tribulation” The world during this time will be a veritable “LAKE OF FIRE,” into which the woman, the beast ”mouth”(and head) and the false prophet are cast for eternal destruction.

Future Saint Persecution Unlikely

It is certain that the extreme severity of the great tribulation will be upon all peoples and the slain of the Lord will be from one end of the earth to the other. The only passage suggesting a persecution of those saints brought in by the eternal gospel being proclaimed, is found in Rev. 17:6, “And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” In our chapter 24 it was shown how this verse could be applied to the insane and vindictive spirit moving the harlot against the Lord and his associates in

Jerusalem. This blood-drunkenness is finally summed up by the words: “And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth” (Rev. 18:24). This is historically comprehensive of all the righteous blood that cried from the ground against the arch-destroyer of the ages. If the words of Rev. 17:6 do signify saint persecution, then they could apply only to those mortal ones converted by the proclaiming angel of Rev. 14:6.

When the perspective of the final scene is considered and the reason for Rome’s short-lived grandeur is seen as specifically for judgment, it appears unlikely that she would be allowed to mount another inquisition. As Babylon the great her role and aim is to raise a holy war against the Lamb in Jerusalem, the same whom Pilate once crucified. She will certainly bend all her energies to this end. Notwithstanding, we dare not rule out such a persecution. To be alive in the world at this time will be a sufficient ordeal in itself; and the Lord will not leave his saints there to endure the final affliction. The last call is “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues” (Rev. 18:4).

CHAPTER 32 THE HARVEST REAPED (Revelation 14:14-16)

The Eternal Gospel

The effect of the eternal GOSPEL being preached in all the world, has been considered as the Lamb's all-important initiation of Millennial Redemption. Fitting indeed, that a thousand years of soul-harvesting should commence with a virile and multitudinous ecclesia saved out of the great tribulation. Could we expect anything less than a first century Pentecost and its subsequent thousands of added souls; or the dynamic and indefatigable preachers who blazed the saving gospel throughout the Roman Empire? The ark of God's covenant was seen in His "temple" in those days.

The Lamb is seen enthroned in Jerusalem. "God's temple in heaven (Jerusalem) was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple" (Rev. 11:19). Another greater Pentecost will come to Israel, dwarfing the former one. Yet another, but mightier sounding of the gospel will go forth to a world of more than 3,600 million souls. Like the two-edged sword this proclamation has a double purpose. Designed to effect the salvation of "a great multitude," it is also the gospel "FIRE" thrown from the Christ-angel's censer on the earth (Rev. 8:5). Over a period this will turn the many waters under Babylon into a "lake of fire" that will consume her.

'Out of the Great Tribulation"

John records his vision in the 7th chapter of *"a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb"* (Rev. 7:9-10).

Seemingly unaware of the vast redemptive purpose behind the angel's gospel proclamation, expositors have sought to explain this *"great multitude"* as an apocalyptic elaboration of the sealing of the 144,000. Such an interpretation is not in harmony with the context, which portrays this great multitude as a distinctly separate group from the "sealed" ones. This is seen in the words of the elder to John in verses 13 and 14 of the chapter. Neither does the Apocalypse set out to so explain its symbology in literal terms. That the "tribes of Israel" here symbolized the nominal Christian Church of Constantine, from which the true saints were selected, there can be little doubt. Paul said, *"For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon THE ISRAEL OF GOD"* (Gal. 6:15-16)

The sealing in the foreheads of the 144,000 has a special significance for the *"first-fruit"* class who will *"live and reign"* with Christ. "*You also who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it"* (Eph. 1:13-14). God's seal upon them is His guarantee that He will keep His promise of eternal life and kingdom glory with Christ. Jesus wrote to the ecclesia at Philadelphia: *"Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not . . . I will make them come and bow down before your feet . . . and I will write on him the name of my God . . . and my own new name*" (Rev. 3:9,12). The "sealing" from the tribes is seen to have taken place after deliverance of the "total" Church by Constantine. The sealed ones were taken out of it to become the "Philadelphia" Ecclesia or the "Israel of God." The same 144,000 were later seen by John, standing on Mount Zion with the Lamb. His name and his Father's name was seen on their foreheads (14:1).

The "144,000" are there described as "first fruits to God and the Lamb" but there is a HARVEST to be reaped for the Millennium. "The great multitude which no man could number" are taken out of the world, in keeping with the infinite mercy of God, prior to Armageddon and the great earthquake. They are seen in vision, projected into the Kingdom age as the initial ingathering of the millennial harvest. *"Then one of the elders*

addressed me, saying, Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come? . . . And he said to me, these are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev.7:13-14).

There is a special reason why post-adventual believers are introduced in chapter 7, along with post-Constantinian saints. The latter were part of the "first-fruit" 144,000 "sealed" from the apostatized Christian Church, after Constantine's conquest over the pagan Roman dragon. Likewise the great multitude of "harvest" saints will emerge from apostate Christendom after the Lord vanquishes the modern Gogian dragon.

A Spiritual Feast of Tabernacles

"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev. 7:15-17).

From the great tribulation of the 6th bowl period, and probably just prior to the pouring of the devastating 7th bowl, this picture presents a vast multitude of mortal believers. They constitute the privileged ecclesia made ready to greet the millennial dawn; but conscious of the severe trials from which they have been delivered. The feast of tabernacles under the law of Moses is applied spiritually to this vast body of saints. The feast was one of thanksgiving to the Lord, when all Israel brought their harvest fruits before Him in token of their filled storehouses and overflowing winepresses. *"And you shall take the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of leafy trees You shall dwell in booths* (leafy tents) *for seven days that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of Egypt"* (Lev. 23:39-43). It was essentially a feast of rejoicing after deliverance and victory.

In the apocalyptic scene it is a harvest of human souls ingathered from the peoples of great Babylon; but now clothed with white robes of righteousness. They appear with palm branches in their hands like the Israelites; an emblem of victory out of tribulation. Palm branches were used by the multitude in hailing Jesus with *"Hosanna"* and *"king of Israel"* (John 12:13). Instead of the restful leafy booths in Israel, *"he who sits upon the throne* (in Jerusalem) *will shelter them with his presence"* or as the Revised Version has it, *"spread his tabernacle over them"* (Rev. 7:15). They will hunger and thirst no more in a spiritually barren wilderness. The papal "sun" can no longer strike them for it is about to be darkened forever. The scorching heat of tribulation is no more, *"For the Lamb . . . will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water"* (7:17). All of their tears are wiped away as they cry with a loud voice, *"Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!* (7:10).

Zechariah predicted the time when *"everyone that survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of booths"* (Zec. 14:16). This will be incumbent on the nations; but the Revelation presents a spiritual feast of booths for the new millennial Ecclesia. Unlike the Jewish and Gentile ecclesia of the first century, their Saviour, Redeemer and Lord resides in Jerusalem, not in Heaven. Though not privileged "to live and reign with Christ a thousand years," the "sheltering presence" of their King is with his saints for the millennial duration.

"The Harvest of the Earth is Fully Ripe"

Never will the gospel of Jesus Christ have gone forth with such power and authority as when the "angel" flies in mid-heaven, proclaiming it with loud voice. The 14th chapter of the Revelation presents three successive angels or messengers from Jerusalem, of whom the *"gospel"* angel is the first. A warning crescendo of imminent judgment on great Babylon and her image worshippers is contained in their proclamations. The

Rome axis will react to all this with the three foul and demonic spirits. The agnostic, atheist, humanist and free thinker will have to decide, either to fear and worship the true God or perish with Babylon the great. The ark of God's covenant is seen and His grace and mercy through the Lamb are universally proclaimed. With the final dire warning against confirmed image worshippers there goes an exhortation to those saints who have obeyed the angel's call: *"Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus"* (Rev. 14:12). Another message of encouragement is directed to these saints when the demonic spirits go forth: *"Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!"* (Rev. 16:15).

At this stage it is unlikely that these newly made saints are fully aware of the identity of the King in Jerusalem. To the world of that time he is still "coming in the clouds" but neither recognized nor believed in. The warning to keep wide awake and retain their garments is because of the deception and "*signs*" performed on men and nations by the demonic spirits. The mighty work of saving a great multitude from destruction will evidently continue throughout the world, until the nations are ready to assemble to Armageddon. At the same time it will have drained away much "water" from Babylon's "Euphrates". This all demonstrates the latter day reality of Jesus' words, *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come"* (Matt.24:14). It is a grand repetition of Paul's great work: *"Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world"* (Rom. 10:18). After Paul's preaching the end came to the Mosaic order and the Jewish Commonwealth. When the apocalyptic *"angel"* completes his work *"the end"* will come to great Babylon and the Gentile dominion

The 14th chapter of the Revelation is devoted mainly to this universal gospel campaign. Opening with the Lamb and his immortal saints on Mount Zion, the chapter closes with the reaping of the vintage of the earth and the treading of the wine-press of destruction. The sowing of the gospel is followed by harvest ingathering and the winepress judgment follows. The nature of the great harvest which ushers in millennial redemption, is thus depicted: *"Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand"* (Rev. 14:14). This description is appropriate to Christ the enthroned King. The cloud is the symbol of hidden glory. Thick and dark clouds express the Lord's hidden presence in anger and judgment. A white cloud suggests partly hidden glory, with the sunshine of divine favour filtering through.

"And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat upon the cloud, Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe" (Rev. 14:15). "Another angel . . . with a loud voice" could well refer to the proclaiming angel of 14:6; having then completed the preaching of the eternal gospel from the mid-heaven. The work of witnessing now completed and "the harvest . . . fully ripe" the angel announces to the King that all is ready for the reaping. This implies the gathering out of the nations of "a great multitude" who heard the tidings and heeded the warning. The wine-press of God is about to be trodden and the great shepherd will not leave his sheep to suffer the terrible plagues which are about to consume Babylon in a LAKE OF FIRE. "So he who sat upon the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" (Rev. 14:16).

"The great multitude" of Rev. 7:9, emerging from *"the great tribulation"* and standing before the Lamb, provides an adequate explanation of this harvest reaping. The Lamb himself is fittingly the reaper of his harvest. The words, "sheltering them with his presence," suggests that the Lamb will gather them somewhere adjacent to Jerusalem, where they can be sustained physically and spiritually while the great wine-press is being trodden. The *"great multitude"* of Rev. 19:6 are these same mortal saints after the tribulation has past, but this chapter is treated separately. That some of this great multitude will die "in the Lord" during the 30 years or more of gospel preaching is certain.

A special promise is given them when a heavenly voice tells John: *"Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!"* (Rev. 14:13). They will find their reward at the close of the millennial age.

As in the Days of Noah

Babylon's fall appears as the cataclysm likened by the Lord to Sodom and the deluge of Noah. The Master's words apply to *"the great multitude"* with even greater urgency than to the "144,000" saints: *"but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom fire and brimstone rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be on the day when the Son of man is revealed"* (Luke 17:29-30). Of the Sodom event we read, *the angels urged Lot, saying, Arise, take your wife and . . . daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city, But he lingered; so the men* (angels) *seized* (them) . . . *by the hand, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him forth and set him outside the city"* (Gen. 19:15-16). The Son of man is REVEALED TO THE WORLD immediately following Armageddon, but prior to the fall of Babylon (Rev. 18:1). The harvest having been gathered, the stage is set for the treading of the great wine-press of God.

CHAPTER 33 THE WINE PRESS OF THE SEVENTH BOWL (Revelation 14:17,18; 19:15)

"And another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has power over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, Put in your sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe" (Rev. 14:17-18).

The "Angel" Having Power Over Fire

The angel with the sickle is representative of that invincible power within the Stone Kingdom, whose charge is to smite the image on its iron-clay toes. This angel may be equated to the four living creatures, the chariot on which the Lord rides the "*new heavens."* He is seen to emerge from the interim spiritual temple in the Jerusalem heaven; the one where the ark of the covenant is previously seen (11:19). At the time of his emergence it will be filled with smoke (15:8). The first act of war is seen literally as the assembling of the earth's kings "*at the place which is called in Hebrew ARMAGEDDON."* The events of the 6th bowl are thereby completed.

The angel with the sharp sickle is directed by another angel. He came from the altar in the temple. This points at once to Christ himself: *"The Lord revealed . . . in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance . . . "* The same "angel," having power over fire, is seen (Rev. 8:3) standing with a golden censer, offering the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar (refer our chapter 14). *"Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, loud noises, flashes of lightning and an earthquake"* (Rev. 8:5).

The complete vindication of persecuted saints is to be effected by this fire thrown on the earth. The thunder, lightning and earthquake are the final 7th bowl judgments which include the treading of the great wine-press. It is the 7th bowl emerging from the 7th trumpet, which in turn was bound up in the 7th seal. The same altar-angel of Rev. 8:5 who has power over fire, *"come out from the altar"* (14:18) to direct that same FIRE of judgment to the wine-press of God.

The Wine-Press of Joel's Prophecy

The wine-press is a symbolism depicting the nations assembled *"for battle on the great day of God the Almighty"* (Rev. 16:14). The grapes of divine wrath, into which the angel thrusts his sickle, are the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies. This is remarkably confirmed by the prophet Joel. Having prophesied the overthrow of Gog and his hosts (Joel 2:20), he proceeds to show the blessings that will accrue to Israel and their land. He defines the nature of their spiritual regeneration and the outpouring of God's spirit upon them. The prelude to Armageddon is then prophesied, but Joel calls the place, the valley of decision, and the valley of Jehoshaphat.

"Hasten and come, all you nations round about, gather yourselves there. Bring down thy warriors (saints) *O LORD. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the nations round about. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the wine press is full . . . for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near . . . And the LORD roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem"* (Joel 3:11-16).

In this chapter Joel depicts the final judgments of God on Rome, as a retribution for the evils perpetrated by them upon the Jewish nation (Joel 3:1-3). The same judgment is seen in the Apocalypse as a retribution for Roman persecution of the saints in all ages and for her crucifixion of the Lord of Life. It is God's final answer to Caesar's Pilate and to his question, What is truth?

The King on the White Horse

The battle of ARMAGEDDON will still be a matter of prophecy when the Woman takes her seat on the Beast: "*They* (the beast and ten horns) *will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings"* (Rev.17:14). John describes this mighty epic of the ages in the 19th chapter, with a mingling of symbol, metaphor and literality. *Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war"* (Rev. 19:11). This is a declaration of divine integrity reflected in the Son of God. The white horse is the symbol of righteous warfare. *"He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God"* (19:13). The *"Word made flesh"* dwelt among the Jews as a suffering servant. The *WORD made SPIRIT* now stands before the Gentile nations as their infallible judge.

Why is his robe dipped in blood prior to treading the wine-press? For it says: *"From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations . . . he WILL tread the wine-press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty:* (Rev. 19:15). The fact is that he will have trodden another wine-press several decades previously, when he destroys the armies of God on the mountains of Israel. The prophet Isaiah described the staining thus: *"Why is thy apparel red, and thy garments like his that treads in the wine press?* To which the Lord replies, *"I trod them in my anger . . . their life blood is sprinkled upon my garments and I have stained all my raiment.* (Isa. 63:2-3). *The LORD is a man of war" (*Exod. 15:3), and will remain so until *"the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."*

Ánd the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen white and pure, followed him on white horses" (Rev. 19:14) These are the saints operating in association with Christ. They are centred in Jerusalem and constitute the four living creatures, the cherubim of Ezekiel's and David's visions. They too are set for warfare, both secular and ideological, since they are seated on white horses following their King. Their white garments of righteousness are not seen to be stained with blood, for they were not with their Lord when he destroyed Gog. They are with him when he treads the wine-press at Armageddon.

King of Kings

"On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). This magnificent title of imperial majesty and power is the very antithesis of his other major title, "The LAMB." His sacrificial experience which gave him the latter title, made him worthy to be called *"King of kings and Lord of lords."* The kings and lords are the saints who share that part of the title with their King, saying: *"Worthy art thou . . . for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God . . . and hast made them a kingdom and priests . . . and they shall reign on earth"* (Rev. 5:9-10). The title is one of God-manifestation, whose secrets are known only to its recipient and his Father who bestowed it (19:12). This title makes him God's righteous avenger on His enemies; that is why he wears the blood-stained robe of vengeance with the title inscribed upon it.

The name is likewise inscribed on his thigh as the place where the royal scepter is worn. *"Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty. In your majesty ride forth victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend the right"* (Ps. 45:3-4). Paul instructed Timothy that Jesus' confession before Pilate, that he was born into the world to be a king, *"will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who . . . dwells in unapproachable light . . . "* (1 Tim. 6:15-16). For this reason Jesus bears God's own title on earth. When the Beast and earth's kings made war on the Lamb he will conquer them, *"for he is Lord of lords and King of kinds, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful"* (Rev. 17:14). "KING of kings and LORD of lords" may justly be regarded as the OMEGA title of Jesus.

Gathering the Clusters of the Vine

The Beast and his kings will be the aggressors, *"they will make war on the Lamb."*

They mass their armies in the Middle East and if "Armageddon" be the plain or valley of Megiddo, the location would be in Israel to the west of the Sea of Galilee. This is inferred by the name being in the Hebrew tongue. The prophet Joel calls the place "*the valley of Jehoshaphat"* meaning *"Yahweh has judgment."* Evidently unaware and incapable of recognizing the power they are up against, they are drawn into the snare like Pharaoh into the Red Sea. *"Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? . . . the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury"* (Ps. 2:1,4-5). *"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who sits upon the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet . . . These were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone"* (Rev. 19:19-20)

The interpretation of symbol and figure used here need present no difficulty. The beast and kings have been identified. Their forces assemble after great preparation as a modern army would do. A comparison of Joel 3:11-14 with Rev. 19:18-19 presents a vast army complete with modern armaments; but allowed by the Lamb in Jerusalem to establish a bridge-head into the Holy Land. Preparatory to the intended occupation of Jerusalem it would appear that the ancient battle ground of Megiddo is selected as the beast's G.H.Q. Catastrophe from the Lord then overtakes them. The King needs no modern military hardware of destruction, since the elements of nature, so mighty to destroy, are at his instant command.

The Sword of His Mouth

Christ and his saints will not wage war seated on literal white horses; nor does a literal sword proceed out of his mouth. This symbolism demonstrates the invincibility of the Lord's avenging arm. The King's robe is not literally dipped in blood and when blood flows from the symbolic wine press it is not actually as high as a horse's bridle (Rev. 14:20). The A.V. and N.E.B. read *"horses' bridles,"* referring to the white horses on which Jesus and the saints are symbolically seated. So much blood could only symbolize the slaying of a vast multitude. *"And the rest were slain by the sword of him who sits upon the horse, the sword that issues from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh"* (Rev.19:21). "The rest" who were slain would apply to the hordes of beast and image worshippers who will perish in the *"great earthquake,"* when the mighty city falls. The sword of the Lord's mouth was with the angel who proclaimed the eternal gospel and with the two angels which followed. It issued from the King's own mouth before the beast and its horns went to war with him.

Immediately after Armageddon the Lamb reveals his true identity to the world (Rev. 18:1). His miraculous exhibition of power and his mighty voice of authority, will convince the common people and their governments of his real identity. The *Sword of His Mouth"* will then become active and *"sharp in the heart of the king's enemies."* There will be no holding back of the people's wrath on their deceivers. They must come under new leadership replacing the *"beast mouth"* dictator taken captive. He too, with the false prophet, will be subject to the wrath of the people symbolized by the *"Lake of Fire."* It is in this and a still broader aspect that we may apply the words of Paul: *"The Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming"* (2 Thess. 2:8). The "HIM" to be slain would refer to the "*lawless one"* or false prophet and to the entire system for which he stands.

The Great Supper of God

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty

men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men . . ." (Rev. 19:17-18). It is probably correct to identify these *"birds"* as the saints, organized as the cherubim, who will have been proclaiming the eternal gospel around the world. Their initial work will be finished for a time, seeing that the *"harvest"* or their labours will have been reaped by the Son of man with the sharp sickle (Rev. 14:14). This would be prior to the treading of the wine-press.

The proclaiming *"angel"* was seen *"flying in midheaven"* (14:6), and now these saints are presented, being called in as *"birds"* of prey to devour as in a banquet, the *"flesh"* of all their enemies. The *"angel"* standing in the SUN may well be the Lord himself (cf. 18:1). The words of Jesus come to mind, *"Where the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together"* (Luke 17:37). The secular power of the fourth beast dominion, with his military might, stands between Christ with his saints and their promised heritage. The kingdom of the world cannot become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ until the armies of the beast and the kings are destroyed. The invitation to *"the birds that fly in midheaven"* is in immediate anticipation of this destruction. *"But . . . his dominion shall be taken away . . . and destroyed . . . And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"* (Dan 7:26-27). *"The great supper of God"* and the *"flesh"* devoured symbolize the taking over by the saints of world dominion.

CHAPTER 34 THE SEVENTH BOWL AND ITS GREAT EARTHQUAKE (Revelation 16:17-21; 17:15-17: Ch 18)

The Stage Set for its Pouring

The gathering of the "horn" kingdoms to Armageddon is the final act of the 6th bowl, preparing the way for the pouring of the 7th bowl. *"The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a great voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!* (Rev. 16:17). Each bowl contained a plague (21:9) and "*into the air"* denotes a plague on the HEAVENS of Papal and Roman dominion. Jesus said, *"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars . . . for the powers of the heavens will be shaken . . . Heaven and earth will pass away . . . "* (Luke 21:25-26,33). Although literal signs in the literal heavens will no doubt be evident, the Lord's words are basically figurative and applicable to the international scene.

Peter's words bear similar testimony: *"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up"* (2 Pet. 3:10). This is unmistakably symbolical and figurative. *"It is done"* is a prophetic declaration that the 7th bowl judgments effect the dissolution of Gentile dominion and the establishment of Christ's NEW HEAVEN in Jerusalem.

The universal throne cannot be established until the 7th bowl is fully expended and the NEW JERUSALEM replaces the temple of the great assize. In the scene presented the work of the 6th bowl is complete. The "*angel"* flying in midheaven has returned from his great mission and the harvest has been reaped. The gospel "FIRE" will have been spread throughout the world, creating in its wake the potential of Babylon's destruction in the *"many waters"* whereon she sat. This same *"gospel fire,"* fanned by the *"breath of his* (the Lord's) *lips"* from Jerusalem, will have evoked the foul and demonic spirits. The ten nations, deceived by these spirits, will decide in counsel to join the Beast, and their armies are made ready to march against the supposed "Antichrist."

"Flashes of Lightning"

The pouring of the 7th bowl sets off a "chain-reaction." *"And there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as had never been since men were on the earth . . ."*(Rev. 16:18). Similar words are familiar to us from Rev. 8:5 and 11:19, where these mighty events were projected forward in time from the 7th seal and the 7th trumpet to the pouring of the 7th bowl. Then the terrible reality of the events will be emphasized in the words of the Lamb, *"It is done"*; a dramatic announcement of *"the great day of God the Almighty."*

There were flashes of lightning" – a symbolized expression of the King's will and authority uttered universally in warnings, demands, edicts and pronouncements of judgment. In the final tempo these will be directed relentlessly upon the heads of the false prophet and the Beast. The LORD is seen *"burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke; his lips are full of indignation and his tongue is like a devouring fire . . . And the LORD will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his ARM to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire"* (Isa. 30: 27-30). Though embracing in its context the destruction of Gog, this passage is indicative of the mood of the King riding the *"heavens"* in judgment. When the Vatican usurped divine authority, he made his medieval *"fire"* come down *"from heaven in the sight of men."* The tables will be turned as *"the LORD roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem."* John saw this lightning flashing from the Lord's throne (Rev. 4:5). All of this is seen by the Beast and kings as *"bonds"* and "*cords"* to be burst and cast away (Ps. 2:3). They will suffer the indignity no longer. The "cold war" between the triple-mouth coalition and the King of kings will no longer contain the inevitable conflict.

“Loud Noises, Peals of Thunder”

Noise is frequently associated with war in the Old Testament and appears to indicate the marshalling of an army to battle. The Cherubim of Ezekiel’s visions came from the midst of *“a great cloud, with . . . fire flashing forth continually . . .And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings . . . like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of a host”* (Ezek. 1:4,24). The New English Bible reads: *“I heard too the noise of their wings . . . like the noise of a crowd or the noise of an armed camp.“* “Noises” will also emanate from the Beast and the kings as they prepare for war. Of this same gathering to battle, Joel says, *“Prepare war . . . Beat your plowshares into swords . . . Hasten and come all you nations round about”* (Joel 3:9-11). “Noises” could likewise symbolize the assembly of nations in counsel—a United Nations of Europe—making momentous decisions. *“The rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed”* (Ps. 2:2)

The “*noises”* are followed by *“peals of thunder.”* Thunder, in the Old Testament is associated with the voice of the Almighty, uttered in wrath against His enemies. Of Israel, Isaiah wrote, *“You will be visited by the LORD of hosts with thunder and with earthquake and great noise . . . And the multitude of all the nations . . . shall be like a dream . . . that fight against Mount Zion”* (Isa. 29:6-8). The “*peals of thunder”* follow the lightning as in nature and symbolize the destructive forces let loose on the beast and his armies by the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The last five verses of the 16th chapter of the Revelation are intended to summarise the events of the 7th bowl by the symbology of the mighty forces of nature. Yet the very symbols used become the Lord’s literal weapons of warfare. The THUNDER stands for the *“battle on the great day of God the Almighty”* and the devastating victory over the forces of evil assembled at Armageddon. It has already been shown (chapter 30) how the ten “horn” nations will join forces with the Beast against the LAMB over a period of 30 years. This period terminates with the treading of THE WINE-PRESS AT ARMAGEDDON, already covered at length in the preceding chapter.

The Cause of the Mighty Earthquake

The outcome of the conflict at Armageddon will prove beyond all doubt to the rulers of the “kings” and “beast” governments that they are up against an irresistible power. Indeed they are now leaderless, because the dictator-mouth of the Beast and the Episcopal false prophet are prisoners of the King of kings who will decide their fate. Probably all the lesser leaders of the aggression will either have been destroyed or taken captive. Their armies will have suffered terrifying slaughter and miraculous defeat at the hands of the white horse-rider. The lightnings have been shown to be the sword of the Lord’s mouth prior to the battle. This is confirmed by the Psalmist’s words, *“Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury”* (Ps 2:5). The phrase *“terrify them in his fury”* refers to their utter defeat in battle. Although the blood flowing from the wine-press is figurative, it indicates a tremendous loss of life suffered by the armies of the beast and horn nations.

At some point in the actual *“thunder”* of battle, when they are humiliated and their armed might broken to pieces, the Lord will again use the sword of his mouth against them. In doing so he will make himself known to them and to the world. The 2nd Psalm makes this clear. He will say to them: *“I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill”* (v6). This is somewhat confusing, since Jesus is the *“king”* and the *”I”* would make God the speaker, The New English Bible reads: *“Of me he* (God) *says, I have set my king on Zion.”* This makes Jesus the speaker, not God; but it was God who made the decree. This is made clear in the 7th verse of the R.S.V., *“I* (Jesus Christ) *will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron . . .”* (Ps.2:7-9).

This 2nd Psalm presents the King of kings, revealing his identity to the defeated and terrified rulers of the beast and horn powers who survive the battle. He does this by quoting the 2nd Psalm as convincing proof that he is the Christ of God, returned from the right hand of his Father to fulfil the prophetical divine decree revealed to David. Their ignominious defeat will be convincing evidence that he is, beyond shadow of doubt, the subject of that decree.

Messiah will be sitting on David's throne for nearly 40 years before the nations, having no alternative, are forced to acknowledge him as universal King. The very Scriptures on which Christendom professed its religion will condemn them. Its neglected prophecies proclaim to the world that this Lion of the tribe of Judah is God's anointed King over all nations and peoples. *"So shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand"* (Isa. 52:15). The King will then command that they serve him lest worse befall them: *"Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled"* (Ps. 2:10-12). The rulers may read this instruction in their own Bibles. Need they any further proof? Before their gaze stands the Christ of God whom they professed to worship. Here they are, the kingdoms of Europe and of the whole world, entirely at the mercy of this mighty Jewish Messiah, having been deceived into an international plot to destroy him. The news will flash around the world and the rulers of the nations will be stunned with amazement.

They Will Hate the Harlot

The "BODY" of the apocalyptic beast, in all its phases, symbolizes its subject peoples, while its head signifies its rulers. Any form of leadership and government may come under the scriptural name of "king" or "kingdom." When the "kings" oppose the Lamb, their rulers in counsel make the decision (Rev. 17:13-14); Ps. 2:2). When the enormity of the triple-mouth conspiracy dawns upon the world there will be a tremendous and ominous reaction among the common people. When the angel first showed John the woman, he said, *"I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who is seated upon many waters"* (Rev. 17:1). The same angel later made it clear to John just how these *"many waters"* would perform the judgment on the harlot. He first reminds John, *"The waters that you saw, where the harlot is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues"* (Rev. 17:15).

This explanation of the symbolic waters is vital to the angel's further disclosure to John: *"And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the harlot; they will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire"* (Rev. 17:16). The implication is clear: that the shocked "kings" and the subordinate "beast" rulers who survive the Lamb's wrath have now to answer to their peoples for their folly. Not only has the great King convinced them of their tragic mistake, but the wrath and clamours of their peoples demand a terrible revenge. As the plot was internationally conceived, so will the avengement by the nations be organized with devastating effect upon the great religious system which deceived them. *"For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and giving over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled" (*Rev.17:17).

God's purpose, through the LAMB, will first create the atmosphere which causes the beast and kings to conspire with the harlot; being blinded by their ignorance and anti-semitism and their perverted allegiance to the woman and her false prophet. Moreover, He designed that both beast and kings should continue in coalition in venting their wrath on the false Christian system whose teachings beguiled them. The combined will and wrath of the peoples is the primary factor leading to this mighty convulsion called *"a great EARTHQUAKE such as had never been"* (Rev. 16:18).

The words, *"For God has put it into their hearts"* refers to their avowed intention to utterly destroy the WOMAN. The seed of this resolution was sown by the proclamation of the eternal gospel. The resultant three

reactionary spirits then generate a blazing controversy throughout the world, between Rome and Jerusalem. This is so deep that it will only be resolved by war. The heat generated over some thirty years will leave its mark on human minds and the mass conscience. Only to think that the long and embittered propaganda levelled against this amazing man in Jerusalem has proved to be a tissue of lies and calumny, and that by the great churches of Christendom.

If it needs more to set their mental reactions ablaze, the sharp sword of the King's mouth will accomplish it. He will reveal to them in overwhelming victory and power that he takes world rulership by divine decree. Either they serve him or perish. The fact is emphasized that it was the 6th bowl, poured out on the *"Euphrates waters"* under the great city, that so weakened Babylon's walls as to make her vulnerable to conquest and destruction by the "KINGS FROM THE EAST." The *"waters"* under the woman became the Lord's avenging army. The way is cleared: the King of kings on his white charger of righteousness, followed by his saints similarly mounted, will enter the city to complete its spiritual conquest.

Made Bright with His Splendour

"After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendour. And he called out with a mighty voice" (Rev. 18:1). Scriptures already cited show how the Lord will make himself known to the nations of Europe after defeating them. Only one person could answer to this description and that one, the Lord himself. When Christ is revealed as an angel (Rev. 10:1) *"coming down from heaven wrapped in a cloud,"* it would refer to his actual presence on earth direct from God's right hand. Although his face was like the sun, he was wrapped in a cloud. This reflects a rainbow of covenant-keeping for Israel and the saints but to the world he is obscured and unrecognizable.

The reference in Rev. 18:1 reveals him in a different light. No longer wrapped in a cloud, *"the earth was made bright with his splendour."* The glory of his countenance, *"like the sun"* (10:1), is made visible to the nations after "Armageddon" when he makes himself known to them. The Apocalypse has to do with the vast work of Christ in this world and we must not suppose that its prophetic visions portray scenes in God's heaven. Whether the Roman heaven or the new "Christ" heaven in Jerusalem, "heaven" betokens a place of rule and authority on this earth. The concept of a political *"heaven and earth"* is common to Scripture and Jesus used such terms in his prophetical discourses. The "heaven" and its occupant must be decided by the context. When Christ comes in glory, *"then will he sit on his glorious throne."* This becomes the apocalyptic "heaven" whence judgments and blessings are poured upon the world.

Nevertheless there are references to God's heaven in the Revelation. In three different visions John saw Jesus as a distinctive "angel" *"coming down from heaven"* (Rev. 10:1; 18:1; 20:1). He certainly comes from God's heaven in these visions. To the powers of the "Gentile heaven" Jesus is to be seen *"coming in a cloud with great power and glory"* (Luke 21:27). He will remain in this political cloud unrecognized by the world, until after his Armageddon victory. As he told the Pharisees, *"The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed . . . for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you"* (Luke 17:20,21).

Like the Pharisees, the leaders of Christendom will be oblivious to Christ's presence in Jerusalem for about 40 years. They will see the STONE Kingdom in Zion and feel its tremendous impact on world affairs; but the Lord's personal return is believed by a mere fraction of one percent of the earth's 3600 million people. A much smaller number still would associate his return with the nation of Israel. This Jewish leader will be regarded as an offence to presidents, kings and rulers of this modern world and a defamer of the great churches of Christendom, especially the "mother" of them all.

When the triumphant King of kings makes himself known to the startled kings of Europe, they will realize that the Kingdom of God has been *"in their midst"* ever since Russia's abortive invasion of Israel. To the world he

will have been *"coming in a cloud"* for nearly four decades and they finally "see" him in effect "COMING DOWN FROM HEAVEN." Thus his "COMING" to the world of men and nations will be an event of tremendous importance, the greatest the world has ever known; *"and earth was made bright with his* SPLENDOUR."

The Great Earthquake of Revelation Chapter 18

As the world receives the awesome news of the King's identity, they will see him as having great authority. The nations will wait on his words with bated breath. The peoples of Europe will clamour for revenge on the great episcopal system of Rome while the nations of Europe and beyond will wait for the King's pronouncement. As he appears in angelic glory before the world he makes his final verdict on the fate of Rome, and *"he called out with a mighty voice, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul and hateful bird; for all nations have drunk the wine of her impure passion, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness"* (18:2-3). The chief Judge of the Great Assize having spoken, the doom of the Woman – *"the great city which has dominion over the kings of the earth"*—is sealed. Her long dominion will have ceased for ever. The Lord's utterance is a terrible indictment of Babylon's wickedness. The "demons" and "foul spirits" obviously refer to the papal propaganda which deceived the kings of the whole world. The Hitler-Goebbels anti-semitic machine appears as a mild version of what is yet to arise in Europe against Israel's Messiah and his people.

The great Judge roundly condemns the marriage of a false Christianity to the State, with its consequent spiritual fornication and subversion of Christian truth. His withering judgment is directed against the MERCHANTS of the earth: the cardinals, archbishops, bishops and men of "holy orders," who willingly regarded gain as godliness. Such is the Catholic hierarchy and priesthood who have waxed fat on the sins and credulity of its worshippers. *"For thy merchants were the great men of the earth, and all nations were deceived by thy sorcery"* (Rev. 18:23). One ex-Catholic priest expressively summed up the *"merchants"* when he wrote:

> "There are two departments in the Church of Rome, the thinking and the paying departments. It is the job of the thinking department to stop the paying department from thinking, for once they start thinking they'll stop paying."

"And the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness" (18:3).

This is followed by a voice from the Jerusalem heavens, *"Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins . . . for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities"* (Rev. 18:4-5). This is probably the voice of the Lord, issuing a final warning to any believers of the eternal gospel, Gentile or Jew, still scattered throughout the great city. A vivid symbolic picture is drawn in advance, of Babylon's devastating overthrow. It is the decree of the divine court sitting in judgment, directing the kings and peoples not to spare Babylon. *"Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double draught . . . so give her a like measure of torment and mourning"* (18:6-7).

The social, economic and industrial life of a great city, with its waterways and sea trade, is used to symbolize the world ramifications of the vast Roman Catholic enterprise with the Vatican as its hub. The ships, merchandise, wares, musicians, etc., are all to be spiritually discerned. It is natural that the spiritual "*merchants"* who deal in human souls, and by deceiving them wax rich and opulent, will *"weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their 'cargo' any more"* (18:11). There is a degree of literality about the cargo list: gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet. Rome's fabulous material wealth, extorted from the hundreds of millions of her devotees through fear of devil, hell and purgatory, has long been dangled before her deluded worshippers to keep them paying.

"Slaves and souls of men" were harnessed to the Catholic hierarchy in the name of religion to increase her pomp and grandeur. Men like Michelangelo sweated and expended their great talent in conditions little better than forced labour, to design, quarry, sculpture, build, paint and create great works of art to embellish St. Peters and other famous cathedrals. Like the silversmiths of Ephesus, whose wealth came by making silver shrines to Diana, so did these "merchants" of religion oppress and cheat the souls of men out of salvation in Christ Jesus. The "faithful" were kept poor and ignorant to pay for the idols and images and the temples that housed them. Then after they were set up the "faithful" had to pay again to worship them.

The principal mourners for Babylon are the spiritual *"merchants"*; but the *"kings of the earth"* who *"committed fornication and were wanton with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning"* (Rev. 18:9). Another class, designated *"ship-masters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, "What city was like the great city?"* (18:17). Since the apocalyptic "sea" represents the peoples of the world, this class of men who trade upon the sea may be regarded as those lesser lights of Rome who work among the people under her dominion. They may well include priests, monks, nuns, the Jesuit orders, Catholic action, papal diplomatic service, the interminable "holy orders," envoys and emissaries, political agents, papal press and communications, missionaries and a host of others wrapped up in "the *mystery of iniquity."* All of them will then be among the unemployed.

Cast Into the Sea

"Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, So shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and shall be found no more" (18:21). To understand what the sea symbolized, consider Jesus' words: *"there will be distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves"* (Luke 21:25). Jesus alluded to the massed peoples of the world surging to and fro like the troubled sea. This surging is rampant today throughout the world, but must become ever so much worse. Into this turbulent SEA *"mingled with fire"* the angel cast great Babylon with violence. This sea is the "waters" of humanity whereon the Woman sat; but now stirred to violent rebellion to *"burn her with fire."*

This same sea is the "LAKE OF FIRE" into which the beast and the false prophet are also cast. The Lamb himself, in the process of setting up his kingdom, turns the world into a "*lake of fire."* At his first advent Jesus said, *"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!"* (Luke 12:49).

"That 'fire', kindled by the ministry and crucifixion of Jesus, was extended into the Roman Empire bringing salvation to many. In addition it finally burned up pagan Rome, *"But by the same word,"* wrote Peter, *"the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for FIRE, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men"* (2 Pet. 3:7). By the fierce heat of this *"furnace of fire"* the King's adversaries will be consumed. In all of this the vast Gentile dominion is reduced to a "carcase" upon which "*all the birds were gorged with their flesh."* In other words *"the kingdom and dominion . . . under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"* (Dan. 7:27).

That part of the Woman's name, *"Mother of Harlots,"* has already been considered. Her "daughters" could only apply to those diversions and breakaway denominations, who while repudiating certain aspects of papal teaching, have carried over the burden of Rome's spurious doctrines. If in ecumenical council these "denominations" become allied with Rome, they become part of Babylon and meet the same fate as the mother who bore them.

There is no definite clue to the verse which says: *"The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell"* (Rev. 16:19). The *"splitting"* must be due to the "*earthquake"* and this development will no doubt occur at some stage during the great destruction. It may mean that the woman can no longer over-ride

nationalism with religion. With no papal head, Vatican control could disappear and be replaced by antagonistic control centres based on national antipathies. *"Split into three parts"* called *"cities of the nations"* seems to carry such an explanation. The fury of the people will cause total disintegration and the triple splitting will only hasten it.

God remembered great Babylon, to make her drain the cup of the fury of his wrath. And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found" (Rev. 16:19-20).

The Ideological War

No pockets of ecclesiastical or national resistance will survive the wrath of the LAMB. They will be speedily dealt with by the sharp sword of his mouth. Beset by the disillusioned "horn" powers and the peoples of the decapitated beast, great Babylon will perish and sink in the "sea of the people"; from whence she first rose up as the Sea-beast.

It is a question of how long Christ will suffer these unrepentant spiritual "merchants," shipmasters and kings of the earth, who continue to weep remorsefully over Babylon's fate. The relentless sword, proceeding from the King's mouth as he sits astride the symbolic white horse, will not be sheathed until all false religion is rooted out of the earth, *"Let the faithful exult in glory . . . Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands, to wreak vengeance on the nations and chastisement on the peoples . . . to execute on them the judgment written"* (Ps. 149:5-7, 9). Relentless ideological warfare, backed by infinite power, will be waged from the NEW HEAVEN against any who cling to Catholicism and its traditional idolatry. The *"great hailstones . . . dropped on men from heaven"* (Rev. 16:21) is to be understood metaphorically. The "heaven" is the King's throne in Jerusalem and the "great hailstones" will fall from his mouth in powerful rebuke on the heads of "image" worshippers. The wrath of the people on those who *"curse God for the plague of the hail"* will doubtless be the lot of the rebellious. *"If any one worships the beast and its image . . . he also shall drink the wine of God's wrath . . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . in the presence of the Lamb"* (Rev. 14:9-10).

Whether it be "fire and brimstone" or "great hailstones," they are symbols of the Lamb's wrath on incurable beast worshippers. The whole concept of Roman Catholic worship, with its spill-over of error and ritual into the "protestant" world, will be purged from the earth by "the lake of fire." It will be replaced by the pure religion of Christianity, rejected by Rome, but then vindicated by the Lamb enthroned in power and the spirits of just men made perfect.

Chapter 35 BINDING THE DRAGON (Revelation 20:1-2)

"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:1-2).

Scriptural and historical evidence was presented in our Chapter 25 to show that Soviet Russia is the *"apocalyptic dragon"* in its latter day context. If this is correct then the dragon binding act of Rev. 20:1-2 would logically appear as Messiah's mighty destruction of Russia's military power in Israel and Edom. This would be followed by an ideological "binding" of the godless political philosophy of Communism so befitting to a modern "dragon."

China is also a vast developing communist nation and the dragon figures prominently in her festive worship. Would she not also be reckoned part of the modern dragon complex? Undoubtedly so; but communism throughout the world will be rigidly suppressed as second only to false Christianity in hindering the filling of the earth with God's glory. This is implied in the dragon's binding, which act could extend well beyond the 40 years' judgment period. It is unlikely that Russia and China will resolve their existing antipathies this side of the Kingdom of God.

In its divided and expanded latter day form, the fourth world Empire must continue to retain its Roman identity. This is comprehended in the ten "toe" kingdoms of the dream image and confirmed when those same nations are seen as ten horns on the rejuvenated Roman beast of Rev. 17:8.11. Further, the Babylonian woman is essentially Roman, though her spiritual domain extends far beyond Europe into the nations of the world. Great Babylon sits upon the world, but it is misleading to regard the world as Babylon.

The Dragon of the 6th Bowl—Revelation 16:13

When the three papal inspired demonic spirits go abroad one of them issues from the mouth of the DRAGON. The question is valid as to why the dragon is still left to defame the King in Jerusalem, after the Gogian power is destroyed and the dragon bound? In reply, the demonic spirits belong to the final toe phase of the image; when the dominant control is vested in Rome and not in Moscow. Despite the 6th bowl dragon uniting its foul spirit with that of Rome, the same dragon is conspicuously absent at Armageddon (Rev. 19:19-20). This could well be if its military might was already broken in Israel. Greek Catholicism still exists in Russia, and its revival after Gog's destruction would swing Europe's political "centre of gravity" westward for the Armageddon conflict. Whilst too weak and fearful for further military encounter with the Jew, their hatred would burn against Israel and her remarkable leader. An upsurge in Russia of Greek Catholicism, in ecumenical alliance with Rome, would promote the binding of the dragon's communist ideology by the Christ-angel of Rev. 20:1. When Constantine dethroned the pagan Roman dragon it was later found as a Greek Catholic dragon in Constantinople. Will the modern dethroned dragon be so converted?

The fact of the dragon's binding being disclosed in the Apocalypse four chapters later than its alliance with papal Rome, does not determine the two events in that order. Only in a broadly progressive sense are the apocalyptic prophecies written in sequential order. The book has been likened to a multi-sectioned telescope which, in a series of regressions and extensions, progresses from the small eyepiece to the large frontal lens-head. Visions of final judgment and glory show up throughout the book in a progressive crescendo.

In the 14th chapter of the Revelation, for example, the presence of the Lamb and his 144,000 on Mount Zion presupposes a resurrection; yet we do not read of the actual resurrection until the 20th chapter. It is there associated with the binding, loosing and final destruction of the dragon and with a second resurrection. The events of the 20th chapter embrace a time span of more than a thousand years, to the end of the Millennium.

Careful consideration shows that the 21st chapter continues from Rev. 19:9 and that the 20th chapter is interposed.

Events within the 20th chapter are set down in their strict order of fulfilment. First the dragon, symbolically bound and put in a pit, is seen as Gog's overthrow, then the first resurrection takes place. After a thousand years the dragon emerges from his state of bound seclusion. This is followed by his complete destruction; then the second resurrection occurs.

The "Bottomless Pit" or "Abyss" of the 5th Trumpet

The "bottomless pit" of Rev. 20:1 quoted above is translated from the Greek word "abussos" meaning "very deep" or "very deep place." It is translated "abyss" in the RV and the NEB, which word is considered to be the more correct translation. Paul used the same Greek word in Rom. 10:7; rendered "abyss" (RSV) and "deep" (AV). In the Greek MSS (Septuagint), the same Greek word is used for 'sea' (the depths) such as in Isaiah 63:13, referring to Israel being led through the Red Sea. In Gen. 1:2 we read, "darkness was upon the face of the deep (abyss), " meaning water or seas.

To assist in the interpretation of the "dragon binding" event it will be beneficial to consider the 5th trumpet prophecy of Rev. 9:1, which also involves an angel, a bottomless pit and a key. *"And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the **KEY** of the shaft of the bottomless pit* (abyss); *and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft" (*Rev. 9:1-2). The verse which follows reveals locusts swarming out of the smoke with scorpion-like power to torture those on the earth, who *"have not the seal of God upon their foreheads."* John Thomas in "Eureka, vol.II, p.450, has convincingly expounded this 5th trumpet as successive invasions of the Saracens into the domain of the Eastern Roman dragon. The unifying power of Mahomet welded the Arab hordes into a fanatical and aggressive opponent to the trinitarian and image-worshipping Eastern Roman inhabitants.

The *"falling star"* was Mahomet and his successors, Omar and others, who for three centuries scourged the Greek "infidels" of the Byzantine Empire without subduing it. They fell from the Islam *"heaven"* onto the Roman *"earth"* from 632 to 932 A.D. The **PIT** is regarded as the Dead Sea Valley, 1,300 feet below sea level, which typified the seat of the Arabian "locusts." A map of the Eastern Roman Empire in 600 A.D. shows Islam's western border running north-south up the Dead Sea valley, hard against the border of the Eastern Roman Empire. The 'trumpet angel" gave Mahomet the key. Gibbon records the words of Mahomet: "The sword is the key of heaven and hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God . . . is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer." A great fire of avengement was kindled in this abyss of the Arab world and then the "locusts" were loosed. The locust was known to be the heraldic symbol of the Saracens. The Dead Sea rift is referred to as the "Arabah" in the Old Testament (Joel 3:16: 2 Kings 14:25, RSV) Can we make use of this historic fulfilment of the 5th trumpet prophecy, to explain the binding of the dragon of chapter 20?

The 5th Trumpet "Bottomless Pit" Applied to Rev. 20:1,2

The "dragon binding" angel of Rev. 20:1 may be recognized as the Lord having "come down" from God's heaven, *"holding in his hand the key of the bottomless pit."* The key is the symbol of authority and power. Of God's sign man, Eliakim, whom He placed over the household of Judah's king, God said, *"And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shalt shut, and none shall open"* (Isa. 22:22). Jesus applied these words to himself (Rev. 3:7). God's authority and power is vested in the house of David from the line of Judah and David's greater son was ordained to be universal king. It is this "**KEY**" of power which the Lord brings from heaven, with which he locks the binding chain and seals the dragon in the bottomless pit. Mahomet was given the "key" of the abyss by the angel. This symbolized Mahomet's

divinely bestowed power to inflame the Arab world by a new religion backed by the sword. With this key he opened the Arabah "abyss" to loose the locust plague on Eastern Rome.

Are we justified in looking to the location of the Dead Sea rift as the "abyss" or deep pit where the dragon is to be bound, thrown, shut up and sealed over? For here the old dragon of Roman identity was tormented by the Islam "fire" which figuratively burned in and around the Arabah, apocalyptically designated the "abyss." It was then a geographical symbol which stood for a nation geared for aggression. When the Turks later invaded under the 6th trumpet and finally overthrew the Eastern Roman dragon, the geographical symbol of their nationhood was the Euphrates river (Rev. 9:14).

If the identity of Russia and her satellites has been correctly determined as both modern dragon and Assyrian, then the prophet Isaiah will help us understand the great dragon-binding act of the Apocalypse. *"For behold, the LORD is coming forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed upon her, and will no more cover her slain"* (Isa. 26:21). *"In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea"* (Isaiah 27:1). The New Bible Dictionary (1962) p.729, gives this interesting interpretation: "It (Leviathan) is used twice symbolically in Isa. 27:1, referring to the Empires of Assyria (the "piercing"—RV "swift"—serpent is the swift-flowing Tigris) and Babylonia (the "crooked"—RV "winding"—serpent is the Euphrates").

The context in Isaiah shows these happenings to be associated with the appearing of the Lord to his people Israel as their national redeemer, as indicated by the following quotation: *"On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of Hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem . . ."* (Isa. 24:21-23) . The events described in these Old Testament passages bear a striking similarity to those performed by the Christ-angel of Rev; 20:1,2.

ISAIAH	**REVELATION**
a) A dragon, called a serpent and identifiable as the modern Assyrian power, is imprisoned in a pit.	A dragon—"*the ancient serpent"*—is seized, bound and thrown into a pit which is shut and sealed over.
b) This event takes place before "the (papal) moon will be confounded and the (Roman) sun ashamed" (see Joel 3:15). Hence it is before *"the great and terrible day of the Lord"* at Armageddon.	The *apocalyptic dragon* is associated with the names *"Gog and Magog"* (Rev. 20:8) whose army is to be destroyed when Christ comes as deliverer of restored Israel.
c) The dragon, imprisoned and shut up in a pit. *"will be punished after many days."*	After a thousand years the dragon is loosed a little while, then consumed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9).
d) Armies of Gog and Magog to be destroyed in the Dead Sea rift or "pit" (Isa. 34:5-9) and buried as told in Ezek. 39:11-16. Gog is the equivalent of the modern Assyria (Isa. 30:29-33)	The Eastern Roman dragon was "tormented" by the Islam fire of the 5th trumpet. (Rev. 9:1); which came out of the Dead Sea rift or Arabah, called the "*bottomless pit."* Will the modern dragon be placed in the same pit, bound and sealed over?

Ideological Warfare on the Dragon

The great act of binding the dragon has a broader context than the destruction of God's armies and the breaking of his military power. The bruising of the dragon's head by destroying his army accords with Christ's own wise philosophy: *"How can Satan cast out Satan? . . . no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man"* (Mark 3:23,27). The **STONE** of Israel must first accomplish this before suppressing the deceitful and profane ideology of hate, oppression and violence, which now controls over a third of the world's population. For good measure he *"will send a fire on Magog . . . and they shall know that I am the **LORD**"* (Ezek. 39:6). In the modern Assyrian context we read: *"They* (Israel) *shall rule the land of Assyria with the sword"* (Micah 5:6). Gog's vast country holds over three million of the Lord's kinsmen after the flesh. He will therefore *"say to the north **GIVE UP**"* (Isa. 43:6). As a result of these judgments, *"there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant which is left of his people"* (Isa. 11:16).

The pagan dragon was in the world long before Constantine threw it out of the Roman heavens. The power that replaced him there—the Sea-beast—has never been apocalyptically called the dragon. This distinction persists to the end of the Revelation. The dragon is basically anti-God, which the beast, the woman and the false prophet are anti-Christ. This makes them both powers of wickedness; but with a difference recognized by the Revelator. Russia may be regarded today as the champion of the dragon ideology, "enlightened" by Marxist-Leninist Socialism and science. She is the head of the dragon domain, comprising USSR, China and other Asian countries and including much of the Arab world. For the present the "iron curtain" countries of Europe are of *"dragon"* persuasion, and Soviet Russia will see that they remain so until the Lord's coming.

Against all of these anti-God forces the King of kings will make powerful use of the sharp sword of his mouth, "*with which to smite the nations."* The binding of the dragon must embrace a subjugation of this age-old principle of rebellion against the Most High God. When the principles of sin, personified as Devil and Satan, activate rulership in high places of national power and authority it is scripturally designated the dragon. Idol worship is its prominent characteristic, whether the idols be of stone, wood or metal as among the primitive; or in our advanced age, human achievement in technology and scientific discovery or a political ideology. At root it is founded on human pride and egocentricity. Its earliest manifestation was in Eden, then came the tower of Babel in bricks and mortar of pitch reared up to heaven to defy God and make its builders a name. In this 20th century it is jet and rocket travel, lightning speed communication and vision, nuclear power for war and peace, computerised administration, automation, medical science, space exploration and the rest. Man today is constructing his mighty tower of Babel to the high heavens, meanwhile denying in general his Creator's existence and abusing His gifts and laws. While he behaves thus man is filling the earth with violence as he did before Noah's flood.

An Angel "Coming Down From Heaven"

"Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire" (Rev. 10:1). This angel was seen *"coming down from heaven"* just as John saw the dragon-binding angel *"coming down from heaven"* (20:1). Since the description of these angels befits no other than Christ himself, it may be concluded that the "coming down" in either case is from God's heaven.

Now the apocalyptic mission of this "rainbow angel" of Rev. 10:1 was concerned with the seven bowls to be poured on the papal beast. Their judgment content was written in a scroll which he gave to John: but our special interest here is the angel's appearance and what he does. One of the principles laid down for this interpretation assumes the absence of any direct reference in the Apocalypse, to Christ's messianic

role with Israel. Yet his coming is so intimately bound up with Israel, that it is not surprising to find some oblique reference to it. *And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, and called out with a loud voice, like a LION roaring; when he called out, the seven thunders sounded"* Rev. 10:2,3).

The angel seemed primarily concerned with the seventh trumpet and its seven plagues on the papal beast, for when John was about to write what the thunders said, a voice from heaven said, *"Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down"* (10:4).

Because the angel's face was like the sun and he was wrapped in a cloud, it is natural that a rainbow was seen over his head. The rainbow is the covenant sign which God gave to Noah. *"This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you . . . When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant . . ." (Gen. 9:12-15).* This rainbow covenant is first for Israel, then for saints. Isaiah wrote God's words to Israel: *"For this is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn . . . and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you"* (Isa. 54:9-10).

The Christ-angel is seen to plant his fiery legs on earth and sea. This is the challenging confrontation to the image colossus of Gentile dominion standing astride Europe: just as David confronted Goliath. A loud voice like a lion roaring seems to identify this angel as the '**LION OF JUDAH**' who stirs up the seven thunders. Thunders symbolize wars. If we may venture an interpretation of this seeming mystery, is it not more than likely they represent as many wars for the liberation and deliverance of national Israel? Might these not include World Wars I and II, Arab-Jewish wars (three to date) and Gog's overthrow? The thunders were sealed, whereas the scroll of seven bowl judgments on Rome was open, i.e. about to commence. Though incidental to the apocalyptic theme, the angel's description and voice, along with the thunders, appear to fit the interlude between the 5th and 6th bowls when Israel's redemptive programme takes over. (See top of Chart 4(b).)

The Rainbow angel of 10:1 is identical with the dragon-binding angel of Rev. 20:1. The "angel" in both cases is the *"Lord from heaven"* and there is only one *"coming down from heaven"* which is his initial "touch down" on earth. He comes firstly to rescue Israel by seizing and binding the dragon; then to establish his rainbow covenant with Jew and saint. This presents the setting of Rev. 14:1, when the Lamb with his glorified "144,000" stand ready to execute the mighty judgments of the 6th and 7th bowls. The one other *"coming down from heaven"* of Rev. 18:1 has already been explained as the Lord's delayed thief-like coming to the world, nearly 40 years after his "touch down" on Mount Zion.

CHAPTER 36 THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (Revelation 19:1-9)

Redeemed Saints Rejoice in Zion

"After this I heard what seemed to be the mighty voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God . . . he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants" (Ref. 19:1-2) Clearly in God's sight, the greatest force of evil in the world is the false Christian system and its spiritual leader. Its entire destruction, root and branch, is the focal point and climax of a chain of dramatic events under the 6th and 7th bowls. In the words of the Dead Sea Scroll, this period may be called the "*Messianic travail."* The opening scene of the 19th chapter is one of great jubilation for the fall of Babylon.

For seventeen depressing centuries to date, spiritual vice has forced itself on the world as a kingdom of virtue. With Babylon no more, truth will be vindicated for the first time in man's long history with power and authority, and virtue will see her reward. It is indeed fitting that the great King will have effected this last powerful act of pre-millennial judgment per medium of peoples, nations and tongues. It is the Lamb's final weapon against the harlot to destroy her for ever. Peoples and nations suffered the tyranny and the great deception. The wrath of peoples and nations becomes the "LAKE OF FIRE" into which Great Babylon is thrown with violence.

The opening words of chapter 19 quoted above, were uttered with a mighty voice which cried them out. The exultant cry came from the throats of the "144,000" redeemed saints standing in the "NEW HEAVEN". Many of them were once "*souls under the altar,"* placed there by being burned alive, strangled, beheaded or otherwise put to death by the inquisition of Rome. They are the first to praise God and to acknowledge His glory in this epoch-making judgment. *"His judgments are true and just;"* because *"he has avenged on her the blood of his servants."* Then the 24 elders and the four living creatures, representing saints as the court of judgment sitting, endorse the words of the redeemed by saying *"Amen, Hallelujah!"* while they fall down and worship God.

The Millennial "Harvest" Saints Give Praise

"And from the throne came a voice crying, Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great. Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns, Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed in fine linen, bright and pure—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints" (Rev. 19:5-8)

An earthshaking event is here set forth that will initiate recognition and acknowledgement from the world of the GREAT KING in Jerusalem. This voice of a great multitude, raised in unstinted praise, is in response to the voice from the throne inviting praise from all God's servants. This voice could fittingly be that of "the angel," who will have proclaimed the eternal gospel in the *"midheaven"* for some thirty years. Then his command was *"Fear God and give him glory"* (Rev. 14:7). Now his invitation is to *"all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great"* to *"Praise our God."* Their part response to this is *"Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the glory."*

The first "mighty voice" after Babylon's fall was of *"a great multitude in Heaven"* for these were the immortal "144,000"; but the second *"great multitude like the sound of many waters"* are not said to be in heaven. The way they are addressed by the voice from the throne and the words of their response, show them to be the *"great multitude which no man could number."* John saw them there "*from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb"* (7:9). They were

gathered out of the world as the Lord's harvest when he on the white cloud swung his sharp sickle on the earth (Rev. 14:15-16). Here, on the eve of Christ's universal reign, John beholds them standing before the throne sheltered by the Lamb's presence and giving him the glory.

These mortal servants of God are obviously speaking about others than themselves in alluding to the Lamb's Bride. They feel most magnanimous toward the privileged "144,000". They see them as their fellow saints, who, having received their immortality, are to be the rulers of the glorious new age. They rejoice greatly that *"the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready. . ."* They rejoice to hear the Bridegroom's voice. *"And the angel said to me, Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb"* (Rev. 19:7-9). As those invited to a marriage supper would necessarily exclude the bride and bridegroom, so may we think of this vast multitude as being the invited guests. The words of Jesus seem to apply here: *"And men will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God"* (Luke 13:29).

His Bride Has Made Herself Ready

The marriage supper of the Lamb has a powerful spiritual connotation. It marks the gathering into one of all the scattered components of the Body-corporate of Christ throughout the ages. They have been widely dispersed by time, distance and nationality. *"He is the head of the body, the church . . . that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell"* (Col. 1:18-19). Of these individual and communal components of the Christ-body, the writer to the Hebrews declares, *"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven . . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect"* (Heb. 12:22-23)

What the apostle visualizes here still awaits realization. Saints are enrolled in heaven for its ultimate fulfilment. The powerful influence which drives forward this conquest of human souls, is the Lord's work of reconciliation by the blood of his cross and the grace of God which flow from it. Therefore the *"heavenly Jerusalem"* is the LAMB'S BRIDE, which is to be united with him at the MARRIAGE SUPPER of the LAMB.

The spiritual union between Christ and his Bride will be forged during the remarkable and exciting events of the 6th and 7th bowls. While the Great Assize is in session and the nations are raging, there would be neither time nor atmosphere for the happy spiritual union to be consummated. In none of John's visions does he witness the actual marriage supper taking place. From the words of Rev. 19:7-9, and of Jesus during his ministry, it may be assumed that there is a notable festal ceremony in Jerusalem to make the inauguration of the Lord's millennial reign. The Bride, the Lamb's wife, will be there as the "heavenly Jerusalem" in fine linen, bright and pure, together with innumerable angels in festal gathering.

Then John saw *"the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"* (Rev.21:2). In vision John takes a general look at the city and hears *"a great voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people"* (21:3). The great voice is from the Lord himself, seated on the throne in Jerusalem. The men among whom God dwells are the redeemed saints, immortal and glorified. For THEM there will be no more tears, mourning, crying, pain or even DEATH, *"for the former things have passed away." "Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house; and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him . . . The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes; in many-coloured robes she is led to the king, with her virgin companions, her escort, in her train. With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king"* (Ps 45:10-15). The remainder of this Psalm makes it certain that the setting of this symbolic marriage scene has a millennial application.

There even seems to be a place in this Psalm for the great multitude of mortal believers, who emerge from the great tribulation to stand before the throne. We left them there loudly praising the King on his throne and exulting in his forthcoming marriage. Since they appear to be invited to the marriage supper, they may well fulfil the role of *"her virgin companions, her escort, in her* (the Bride's) *train."* As these mortal saints cannot form, at that time, a permanent part of the New Jerusalem City, the King shelters them with his presence and from his throne shows his loving consideration for their spiritual welfare. *"To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life. He who conquers shall have this heritage* (the new Jerusalem), *and I will be his God and he shall be my son"* (Rev. 21:6-7).

This assurance would hold for all believers, past, present and future. But since the New Jerusalem will have already comprised the redeemed "First-fruits" to God and the Lamb, the words in their setting seem to apply to mortal believers of the millennial age. The thousand years completed and death abolished, they enter into their heritage.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

With the initial work of subduing the King's enemies completed a most important phase of the Stone Kingdom is reached. *"The stone that struck the image became a GREAT MOUNTAIN and filled the whole earth"* (Dan. 2:35). While the ten kingdoms are in existence as part of the beast, the Kingdom is being "set up." When the beast and false prophet are destroyed and Babylon the great consumed by "earthquake," the "setting up" of the Stone Kingdom is completed. It is then ready for universal expansion. Further pockets of resistance are hinted at in Old Testament prophecy as the Stone Kingdom grows and fills the earth; but the ideological sword proceeding from the mouth of the white horse rider will be more than equal to the task. The breath of his lips will slay the wicked, *"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares . . . neither shall they learn war any more"* (Micah 4:2-3).

During the "setting up" the Son of man will be obscured from the world *(in the clouds of heaven."* During this time he is known to redeemed saints as "King of kings" and to Israel as Messiah. *"And behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man"* (Dan. 7:13). With his enemies subdued he is no long wrapped in cloud for Daniel informs us: *"And he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him"* (Dan.7:13-14). It is then and not till then that *"the time came when the saints received the kingdom"* (Dan. 7:22).

These words of Daniel fit harmoniously into place as we consider the Son of man for 40 years in Jerusalem. Then at a marvellous ceremonial occasion depicted in Rev. 5:11-14, he is presented before God and acclaimed UNIVERSAL KING in the presence of countless angels, saints and *"every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea."* John is shown *"a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more"* (Rev. 21:1). This is clearly the beginning of the Millennium. The troubled sea of humanity and nations, which the eternal gospel of Christ turned into a lake of fiery judgment, will then have ceased to rage.

Peter was inspired to write: *"The heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire . . . But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up"* (2 Pet. 3:7,10). This form of symbolism has already been reduced to terms of war and revolution, the fall of dictators, kings and governments, the wrath of the masses on false religion and its leaders and the sweeping away of false political ideologies. *"For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the*

arrogant and all evil doers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch" (Malachi 4:1).

"And he who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Then to John he said, *"IT IS DONE! I am ALPHA and the OMEGA, the beginning and the end"* (Rev.21:5-6). Jesus is speaking as he does in Rev. 22:12), where he says these things of is own person. The events of the 7th bowl are all completed. The words, "It is done," uttered by the Lamb when the 7th angel poured his bowl into the air (16:17), are again announced by the Lamb as the "earthquake" judgment is completed.

The LAMB Becomes King of the World

The man born to be king declared his divinely decreed rulership to Pilate. He had first to reign in the midst of his enemies and establish his kingship by right of conquest. He then appears before the world as their undisputed King. They either accept him or perish. There will be no coronation ceremony, no humanly recognized title to a throne, no human proclamation of sovereignty by international consent and no selection by popular ballot or acclamation. *"Honour and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his court! Worship the LORD in holy array; tremble before him, all the earth! Say among the nations, The LORD reigns!"*

Ps 96:6-10). The closing verses of the 5th chapter of the Revelation present an amazing vision of universal acknowledgement of a universal King: *"I heard around the throne . . . the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the LAMB who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing"* (Rev. 5:11-12).

The introduction of angels in vast array indicates that John's long standing vision of the ages will have become reality on earth. The Lord's ALPHA title, "THE LAMB" is declared by God's angels to be the grounds of his worthiness to receive seven divinely bestowed gifts. The last three are dependent on the loyal devotion and homage of the peoples and nations over whom he reigns. The whole setting suggests a time, appointed by proclamation from Jerusalem, for the assembly of the world's surviving rulers. There they would witness supernatural evidence that the Lord God the Almighty rules the world in the person of His Son. The Lamb's kingship is confirmed in spectacular manner by God's messengers from heaven, in the presence of both glorified and mortal saints.

The immortal saints are there arrayed as the symbolic living creatures and elders, signifying their appointed rulership in the new world order. It is appointed to the angels, as God's celestial witnesses, to make the divine declaration; to which the living creatures give their "Amen" assent and the elders fall down and worship. *"And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein saying, To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!"* (Rev. 5:13,14). Heaven and earth and sea symbolize all human life, from the Jerusalem "new heaven" to all mortal earthly rulership and the "sea" of humanity throughout the whole world. Mortal flesh will be visited with the amazing presence of God's holy angels, whose divine effulgence of glory with other signs, will prove their identity to the world. They are there to announce God's decree and to acknowledge the new King's worthiness and greatness beyond their own. They are there to serve him. Taking up his "LAMB" title from the angelic host the whole world spontaneously ascribes blessing and honour and glory to their KING, to which they add *"might"* in acknowledgement of his right to reign over them. We might think of this scene as being televised throughout the world.

He is the KING OF GLORY

The word "GLORY," so copiously used Scripture, may seem trite and meaningless to the mind untutored in the Spirit. Nowhere was glory demonstrated with such pomp as by the Roman emperors and later by the papal system. In our democratic age the word is rather shunned, but the world teems with people whose life ambition is to attain to glory or call it what you will, and become the idols of public praise and adulation. God has sworn that the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. In a world in which man, for so long, has sought his own glory and despised his Creator it becomes largely a matter of divine vindication, for God will not be mocked.

A sceptical world has declared God dead, despised His Holy Word, crucified and discredited the claims of God's only begotten Son and spurned His offer of redemption. God's chosen nation, equally guilty, as in turn been despised, robbed and persecuted by the Gentiles and their divinely promised heritage usurped and denied. God's judgment and anger have long been withheld in the face of men and nations dishonouring and denying Him. The mighty events dealt with in this publication will demand an answer from peoples and nations. *"For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness"* (Isa. 26:9).

Glory means renown, praise, honour, adoration and much else where God is concerned; for He is Creator and Sustainer of all. Mankind loves the adulation and praise of his fellows, but denies it to his Creator and Provider because of his own sinful selfishness. When God reveals His omnipotence through Christ and "destroys the destroyers," men and nations will fear Him. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. When the Son of God presents the perfect solution to all world problems, social, moral, economic and international, men will honour and praise him. When bodily change to eternal life is demonstrated to the world in a universal government of immortal rulers, and the LAW of the Lord proceeds from Zion, men and women will avidly seek the Lord's Salvation. Man will learn the hard way that personal freedom, amidst chaos and self-destruction, is no substitute for loyal devotion to the PRINCE of LIFE and the GOD of LOVE and JUSTICE. So will the earth be *filled with God's GLORY, echoing back the words, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!"*

CHAPTER 37 THE NEW JERUSALEM (Revelation Chapter 21)

"Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and spoke to me, saying, Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:9-10).

A Great Mountain That Filled the Earth

The prophet Daniel said, *"But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth"* (Dan. 2:35). John's first general view of the Holy City came after he saw "*a new heaven and a new earth,"* the first heaven and earth having passed away (Rev. 21:1). The new HEAVEN and EARTH, under the symbol of a great high mountain, became the vantage point from where the angel showed John the holy city. It will be the privilege of glorified saints to stand atop of this high mountain on which the city itself descends from heaven. It was there that the angel took John around and into the city, measuring its walls in his sight. *"It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills; and people shall flow to it"* (Micah 4:1). Micah's high mountain, like the great high mountain John was carried to, stands for the Kingdom of God on earth. On the top of this mountain, to be seen by all the world, is God's NEW JERUSALEM, symbolizing the Theocratic Government of the *"New Heaven."*

The BRIDE a Living City

Of Abraham and his co-faithfuls, the writer to the Hebrews said: *"God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city"* (Heb. 11:16). And again, *"For he* (Abraham) *looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God"* (Heb. 11:10). *"One of the angels who had the seven bowls"* said to John, *"Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot . . ."* (Rev. 17:1), *"One of the angels who had the seven bowls,"* also said to John, *"Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb"* (Rev. 21:9). The woman who is judged is *"the great city which has dominion over the kings of the earth"* and sits upon the seven hills. The Lamb's BRIDE is the HOLY CITY which sits upon the great MOUNTAIN Kingdom, reigning with her Lord over the nations of the earth.

"Coming Down Out of Heaven from God"

The *"heaven"* from whence the NEW JERUSALEM is seen to descend is the heaven of God's dwelling place; but the figurative *"descent"* must be given its true spiritual significance. *"He who conquers. . . I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name"* (Rev. 3:12). In what sense then will this great spiritual city come down to earth from God? Jesus is said to have descended from heaven (John 3:13). Jesus said of himself: *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me"* (John 6:38).

A trinitarian formula, invented by Rome, insists that Jesus, as "God the Son," descended in person from heaven to be begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary. The Bible knows of no such theory. There is, however, a vital principle of GOD-MANIFESTATION through angels and finally through God's begotten Son which is basic to God's dealings with the human race throughout the Bible. Jesus told the Jews, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven . . .and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh"* (John 6:51).

But of course the "flesh" of Jesus did not come down from heaven. The flesh and blood of Jesus was of earth substance, first derived from his mother, then to grow to adult stature. Only in a purposeful and

mystical sense was the *"Logos"* made flesh by the power of the Father's Holy Spirit upon an obedient Son. This may be defined as a divinely controlled ancestry, a miraculous begettal and the pouring out, without measure, of the Father's Holy Spirit upon the man Jesus. By this, *"the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."* So came Jesus, *"EMMANUEL—God with us."* God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. *"I proceeded and came forth from God; I came not of my own accord, but he sent me"* (John 8:42). Such is the *"mystery of godliness"* concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which should help us to understand in what sense the BRIDE-CITY will come down from God.

The *"New"* and *"Heavenly Jerusalem"* is built up of lively stones which represent *"the assembly of the first-born"* and *"the spirits of just men made perfect"* (Heb. 12:23). Every feature and aspect of the *Bride* called the holy city, New Jerusalem, is of God's doing and design. He is the architect, builder and maker. His Holy Spirit came upon Mary and the Son of God was born. God's WORD and authority and power were given to His son to speak and to heal. God raised him from the dead and made him to sit at His right hand in the heavens. Those who had faith in the Son *"were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh . . . but of GOD"* (John 1:13). *"Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven"* (1 Cor. 15:49). *"As a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (*Eph. 1:10). *"But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Phil. 3:20). *"Because of the hope laid up for you in heaven"* (Col. 1:5). *"The assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven"* (Heb. 12:23). *"To an inheritance . . . kept in heaven for you"* (1 Pet. 1:4).

Mortality comes from the dust and returns to the dust; but from the dust immortality cannot come. The immortal nature is a gift from heaven to those deemed worthy to receive it and the Son of God will bring it with him. The NEW CREATION is a heavenly assembly dwelling on the earth. *"He* (Jesus Christ) *is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation . . . in him all things hold together . . . For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell"* (Col. 1:15,17,19). The NEW JERUSALEM comes down from heaven, that God's Kingdom should come, that His will should be done on earth as in heaven. That is why it is called the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Bride is adorned for her husband's delight. She is both bride and wife to the Lamb. Their union will be permanent and perfect throughout the Millennium and beyond. The relationship between the glorified Ecclesia and her Husband, the Lamb, is one of the deep mysteries of God. The other is the relationship between God and the Son of his love. The Lamb purchased his multitudinous bride with his own blood and gave himself for her. Their mutual affection will be deep and abiding.

The City's Walls and Foundations

John first saw the descending city as *"having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal"* (Rev. 21:11). The ancient jasper was a precious stone found in various colours, either translucent or transparent; unlike our present opaque stone called jasper. *"The city had a great wall with twelve foundations and on them, twelve names of the apostles of the Lamb"* (21:12-14). "*The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper . . ."* (21:19). With regard to the wall itself, it was built entirely of jasper. Paul told the Ephesian brethren that they were *"fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets"* (Eph 2:19-20).

In the spiritual temple of mortality, Paul saw Christ as the corner-stone; but since the Holy City itself symbolizes the Bride, the corner-stone is omitted. All twelve jewels garnishing the foundations (21:19-20), would, by their names, display the various colours of the spectrum. The crystalline nature of the jasper

walls would break up and diffuse the brilliant white light of the GLORY of God from within the city. The external effect would be a diffused radiance of transcendent beauty, like the facets of a most rare jewel.

The glorified BODY CORPORATE of Christ is here seen as a high wall, representing the royal priesthood of the millennial age. Through them, God-in-Christ is pleased to spiritually illuminate the mortal population of the earth. The jewels, with their various colours, are emblematic of the perfection of the divine graces in their varied excellencies of manifested glory. Through the eternal Spirit they are radiated from the Christ LAMP within, which is the Lamb. These excellencies will be exemplified and relayed to the whole world through the redeemed saints, as part of their priestly office.

Its LAMP is the LAMB

The divine perfections were first demonstrated in their fullness through the character of Jesus. During their mortality saints found their personal righteousness through faith in his sacrifice. In a vision of the Lord in ultimate glory, he is seen by John seated on a rainbow throne. (Rev. 4:3). The carnelian or sardius, in addition to the jasper, represented in its bright redness the precious blood of the Lamb's sacrifice. The saints, during their mortality, were transformed by the Lamb's spiritual light. *"We all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another"* (2 Cor. 3:18).

John saw the Bride City as *"having the glory of God." "For the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb"* (Rev. 21:23). It is with mingled beauty and softened radiance that the glory of the Lord, emitted from the lamp which is the Lamb, shows through the tinted crystal jasper in various hues. Of the literal millennial city, Jerusalem, where the spiritual NEW JERUSALEM is centred, it is prophesied; *"You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God"* (Isa. 62:3).

In marked contrast to the Bride of Christ there is a false woman—mystical Babylon—bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls. The primary significance of this may be seen in her assumed piety and holiness, expressed in pompous formalities, holy orders, sacred rites, the canonization of saints and their invocation, the presumption of priestly office with such titles as "Holy Father." Nor can the literal aspect be lost sight of in the gold, jewels and pearls which adorn the hierarchy and swell the fabulous treasure chest of episcopal Rome.

The Layout of the City

John observed of the Holy City: "*It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes . . . of Israel were inscribed; on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates and on the west three gates"* (Rev. 21:12-13). This mighty wall presented its four-square jasper faces to the four winds of heaven. The eternal gospel is for all peoples, nations and tongues.

"The city lies four-square, its length the same as its breadth; and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia; its length and breadth and height are equal. He also measured the wall, a hundred and forth-four cubits . . ." (21:16-17). The square of twelve is preserved in its overall dimensions and the height of its walls. The number of units in its length and width are important. Their equivalent in miles or feet mean little, except that the city is of immense proportions (1500 miles square) and the wall great and high (230 feet). Moreover the height of the city was 12,000 stadia, referring not to the wall, but to the buildings of gold within the city (v.18). The *"holy of holies"* both within the wilderness tabernacle of Israel and Solomon's temple, were cubical in dimension; and likewise the Holy City. This city in effect is the spiritual "holy of holies" of the millennial age.

Since the redeemed are numbered in symbolic completeness on the square of twelve, and not on its cube, the length multiplied by the breadth of the city equals 144 million. This is a thousand times greater than the *"first-fruit"* 144,000. This fact and the vastness of the city suggest that it is large enough, symbolically, to take in the whole of the millennial harvest of the redeemed throughout the thousand years. Nevertheless, the Holy City will remain throughout the Millenium, with the "144,000" first-fruits constituting the priesthood and governing theocracy under the great "MELCHIZEDEK." The city is the prospective heritage of mortal millennial saints, who are said to enter it without being part of its structure.

The Twelve Pearl Gates

The names of the twelve sons of Israel appear on the pearl gates. The whole city is the "ISRAEL OF GOD" selected out of every nation and tongue as the Lamb's first-fruits (Rev. 7:4). The names on the gates are also a reminder that God's great city is made up of the spiritual seed or descendants of Abraham, whether they be Jew or Gentile. Abraham was to become the father of many nations, since they would all be blessed in his bodily seed, which is Christ. In turn Jesus Christ uses first-fruit SPIRITUAL ISRAEL to bless all the nations during his millennial reign. The blessings in this case are both material and spiritual. *"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl . . ."* (21:21).

Jesus likened the kingdom of heaven to a *"pearl of great price,"* such that a man would sell all that he had to purchase it (Matt. 13:45-46). A gate of such huge proportions, made of a single pearl, would be of fabulous value and aspirants for the Kingdom of God must place this kind of value on their eternal redemption. *"And its gates shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there"* (Rev. 21:25). In other words the gates are always open, and the Lamb's invitation is *"I am the Alpha and the Omega . . . Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates"* (Rev. 22:13-14).

The gates of pearl symbolize the treasured kingdom which will be sought by those who come from east, north, south and west. There will be no climbing over those high walls as thieves and robbers; but only by washing their robes in the Lamb's shed blood, shall men and women *"enter the city by the gates."* The walls of a city were for strength, defence and separation. Of the Holy City it is said, *"But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life"* (21:27). "Angels" will guard the gates to prevent entry of such as are deemed unworthy.

Walls of Salvation

The walls of this great city have a most important function other than of separation. Their radiance and beauty are for the salvation of the nations and peoples. *"In that day,"* says Isaiah, *"this song will be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; he sets up salvation as walls and bulwarks. Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps faith may enter in"* (Isa. 26:1). Israel will have their actual temple in which they will worship and to which many of the Gentiles will seek. We may rest assured, however, that the prophet was referring to that mystical city of righteousness and salvation, which is the NEW JERUSALEM. Part of its venue will be the literal temple upon Mount Zion—a house of prayer for all nations.

"You shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise. The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor . . . the moon . . . by night; but the LORD will be your everlasting light and your God will be your glory" (Isa. 60:18-19). Compare these words with those of the angel to John: *"And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb* (Rev. 21:23). What Isaiah describes as being the strength and salvation of redeemed Israel, the Revelation shows to be available to

every nation and people: *"By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it"* (Rev. 21:24).

City of Gold

"The city was pure gold, clear as glass" (21:18). *"The street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass"* (21:21). Pure gold can only come from the refiner's crucible. In the Holy City gold is significant of moral and bodily perfection; not wood overlaid with gold as in Solomon's temple, which stood for mortality. Jesus counselled the Laodicean Church to *"buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may be rich . . ."* (Rev. 3:18). Job said, *"When he has tried me I shall come forth as gold"* (23:10). Transparent gold is unknown to man; but the word may refer to its dazzling reflective surface.

It needed an angel with *"a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls"* (Rev. 21:15). The wall was measured in cubits, *"by a man's measure, that is, an angel's"* The cubit was the distance from a man's elbow to his fingertip; but since an angel is the equivalent of an immortalized human being (Mark 12:25), it is likewise an angel's cubit. It is an ideal reserved for immortal saints to comprehend *"what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge* (Eph. 3:18-19). It will be given to those who become part of the New Jerusalem to know the fullness of God's great love, while reflecting it generously to all mankind.

City of Salvation and Blessing

"By its light shall the nations walk . . . they shall bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations" (Rev. 21:24, 26). *"But nothing unclean shall enter it."* This blessed privilege rests with the mortal saints of the Millennium, *"and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence"* (7:15). Earth's kings will come from year to year to keep the feast of tabernacles and by expressions of loyalty and allegiance, will bring their glory into it. In the words of the 72nd Psalm, *"All kings fall down before him, all nations serve him . . . Men bless themselves by him, all nations call him blessed."* Many of these kings and rulers will be true worshippers, worthy to enter the spiritual New Jerusalem through its pearl gates.

Now in the midst of the city there is a very broad street paved with mirror-like gold. This spacious thoroughfare would have access roads entering it from the city gates. *"And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb"* (Rev. 21:22). *"Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations"* (Rev. 22:1-2). The water of life is the gospel of Redemption in Christ; the tree of life is the Word of God centred in Christ. The fruit is the spirit of Christ derived from his unadulterated WORD, by which mortal man may live spiritually by its continual eating. Man shall not live by bread alone in the millennial age. *"To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life"* (21:6). *"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates"* (22:14).

The fruit of the tree of life is for the spiritual sustenance of the *"great multitude which no man could number"* and for all other saints of the millennial harvest who follow them. It will still involve the saving grace of God. There is to be perceived in the leaves of the tree of life a civil code of righteous laws for the nations. This is part of the law which goes forth from Zion. International strife and jealousy is today a devastating plague, graft and corruption a malignant growth and immorality a leprous sore. Christ is coming to heal these maladies and to bring swift judgment on those who promote and practice them. He will *"defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor!"* (Ps. 72:4). *"He makes wars cease to the end of the earth . . . he burns the chariots with fire"* (Ps. 46:9).

Society will be regulated with the fundamental laws of justice and morality in the spirit of the sermon on the mount. All will be tempered with mercy based on infallible judgment and discernment of motive. All nations will call him blessed.

A Theocratic Government

The Holy City, though wholly symbolic, is very real in what it stands for. Religious fervour and credulity have made it a literal golden city in God's heaven, with pearly gates, where departed righteous souls rejoice in felicity. Some picture it as a literal city, 1500 miles high, descending from heaven, in which the redeemed will take up their abode on earth. The New Jerusalem is the climactic vision of the Apocalypse, which may only be understood by taking it in context with the symbolic nature of the whole book. It must be interpreted in context with the down-to-earth Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel.

The promise to Abraham (2000 B.C.) embodied a land, a multitude of descendants and a special seed or descendant who would bless all nations. In Abraham's line, King David (1000 B.C.) was promised a son to restore his throne for ever, and from thence to rule the whole world. The New Testament designates Jesus: Seed of Abraham, son of David, son of God, Israel's Messiah and Universal King. The NEW Jerusalem is in vivid contrast to the Gentile Empires symbolized by Nebuchadnezzar's dream image. The fifth world empire was to be a Theocracy, foretold by Daniel six centuries before the promised son was born in David's royal line.

The final and sufficient reason for this THEOCRACY is succinctly stated by the apostle Paul: *"In Christ shall all be made alive . . . Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the Kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death . . . When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one"* (1 Cor. 15:22-26, 28). The New Jerusalem, under the wise and powerful leadership of the LAMB, constitutes a vast organization of divine appointment, designed primarily to reconcile the millennial world to God. It is first and foremost a spiritual and priestly house. To initiate this reconciliation, it will create such a climate of world peace and prosperity that all mankind will turn in thankful acknowledgement to God, their Creator. While ever there is mortality there will be imperfection, temptation and sin. But those who now exploit human weaknesses for evil motives will no longer be tolerated, or indeed allowed to exist. *"Spiritual wickedness in high places*" will be a thing of the past.

The moral and spiritual atmosphere will be conducive for millions to enter the gates into the CITY. Death will persist until the close of the Millennium; for that is the last enemy to be destroyed. Millions upon millions will find eternal life at the final and second resurrection. This will be God's great HARVEST. There will certainly be many born under these privileged conditions who will not enter the city. They are described as: *"any one who practices abomination or falsehood,"* thereby to be judged unclean (Rev. 21:27).

The True ETERNAL CITY

The holy city, the NEW JERUSALEM, will stand out in stark contrast to that which has been called *"the eternal city on the seven hills."* It too did have and will yet have dominion over the kings of the earth. In place of an absolute ecclesiastical sovereign, claiming infallibility while practicing falsehood and deceit; there will be the infallible, omnipotent and righteous Son of God. Because his appointment and power are of God, his rule is consistent, endurable, irresistible and divinely wise. His justice is perfect, but tempered with mercy and love. In place of the "Papal Chapel" with its college of cardinals, partriarchs and archbishops, called "Assistant to the Papal Throne," there will be a tried and immortal priesthood. The New

Jerusalem will embrace rulers of faith and rectitude, whose mortal records of sacrifice, courage and devotion in the face of adversity and persecution, found them a place *in the Lamb's book of life.* There are scores of names spread over 4000 years of Bible history of those who pleased God. For the remaining host of names which will make up the "144,000" it is sufficient that they are recorded in the Lamb's book.

The spirit of these just ones made perfect will exercise their priestly function to the world under the great HIGH PRIEST of the "Melchizadek" order. They are not there as kings and priests because of their dedication to a corrupt system but because they sought, under trial, a city whose builder and maker is God. Each one of them will become a *"pillar in the temple of my God."* This makes them a permanent part of the symbolic structure of God's eternal city.

Those millions of millennial citizens, who accept the Lamb's offer of eternal salvation, are said to enter the New Jerusalem through its gates. This will be true of them, however far they may be from the literal city, Jerusalem. As mortal saints they become citizens of the New Jerusalem, free to throng its symbolic streets, to drink its life giving waters and feast on its spiritual fruits. At the close of the thousand years death for them will be swallowed up in victory. After final resurrection and judgment, it is evident that the New Jerusalem will figuratively fill the whole earth.

The HOLY CITY will come into existence at the beginning of Christ's millennial reign, not at its end. It was seen as *"a Bride adorned for her Husband"* and of necessity must come into being shortly after Great Babylon is destroyed (Rev. 19:7). In the Holy City itself *"death will be no more";* but not among the nations where mortality and death will continue. Within the Holy City structure it can be said, *"neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more."* Only among the "144,000" can it be said that "*the dwelling of God is with men"* in the true sense. In a secondary sense God will dwell with mortal men and women, because His Son's throne will be on earth among them. *"By its light shall the nations walk"* (21:24).

As the nations and peoples visit Jerusalem year by year, to appear at the great literal temple described by Ezekiel; so may they drink of the water of the river of life and eat of the fruits of the tree of life in the midst of the spiritual New Jerusalem. Nor will distance prevent them, for *"out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem"* (Micah 4:2). These mortal saints of the millennial Ecclesia will be a most privileged people. There will be vast congregations of joyful worshippers comprising a majority of the world's teeming millions. They become citizens of the Holy City by washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. They stand as it were before the throne of God, and the Lamb will be their great Shepherd.

V: PROPHECIES OF THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST

Literal Jerusalem – With a House of Prayer for All Nations

CHAPTER 38 A LITERAL TEMPLE FOR RESTORED ISRAEL (Ezekiel, Chapters 40 to 48)

Ezekiel's Visions of Messianic Glory

Ezekiel was a priest in the Solomon temple of Jerusalem, and is said to have been deported to Babylon with Jehoiachin, king of Judah, in 597 B.C. He was settled in a village among Jewish exiles beside the Babylonian river, Chebar. Ezekiel's prophecy opens with visions of the "glory of the LORD" riding the Cherubim, and in active judgments against Judah and Jerusalem. He said he was prophesying to a stiff-necked people whose sins had reached to heaven.

His opening visions were of future messianic glory to Israel; the ultimate of God's purpose with His chosen nation. When Ezekiel saw his visions in Babylon the temple of Solomon was still standing; but its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar was only about five years away. While prophesying this great calamity Ezekiel is transported in spirit back to Jerusalem, where he sees the glory of the Lord enter and fill the temple. Of course it was only a vision, but it spoke of Israel's glory under Christ.

Then he saw the "*living creatures"* of his vision scatter coals of judgment over Jerusalem to accomplish its devastation. These "living creatures" parallel the living creatures of the Apocalypse, who were vitally interested in promoting God's judgments upon Rome (Rev. 6:1, 15:7). Both Ezekiel and John were shown scrolls which they were asked to eat (Ezek. 3:1; Rev. 10:9). Ezekiel's scroll was full of woes on Judah and Israel; John's scroll was full of sore judgments on the Roman beast and Babylon the great. It was a source of bitterness to Ezekiel that his vision saw the glory of the LORD fill the temple, but immediately leave it. Solomon's temple was abandoned to the avenging armies of Babylon.

Ezekiel is known as the prophet of doom; yet among the many heavy judgments pronounced on Judah and Israel, their final acceptance by God is assured. The end of the aggressor nations is foretold and his prophecy progresses to a mighty crescendo of deliverance, accompanied with divine favour and glory upon Israel. In his early chapters the last he saw of the cherubic vision is expressed in the words: *"And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city"* (Ezek. 11:23). This could only refer to the Mount of Olives. Then in spirit he is carried back to exile in Babylon. There upon the Mount of Olives the vision was left in suspension, waiting as it were for the *"words of lamentation and mourning and woe,"* written in the scroll, to be fulfilled. The climax is seen in the destruction of the Jewish Commonwealth by the Romans. *"A third part of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed with famine in the midst of you; a third part shall fall by the sword round about you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds and will unsheathe the sword after them"* (Ezek. 5:12). This verse summarises the history of the Jews as a prophecy, from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D.70 to the end of their dispersion.

Israel's Regathering and Deliverance

The mood of Ezekiel's prophecy changes from the 34th chapter onwards.

CHAPTER 34: The gathering of Israel is promised, with a shepherd to feed them in spiritual prosperity.

CHAPTER 36: Israel's long desolated land is to blossom forth like the garden of Eden and her waste and desolate cities to be rebuilt and filled with flocks of men. A new spirit and a heart of flesh will motivate them.

CHAPTER 37: A national and spiritual resurrection is to happen to the dry bones of a dead nation. Israel is to stand up in new spirit as an exceedingly great host. In their own land God will make a new covenant with them and set HIS SANCTUARY in their midst.

CHAPTER 38: The Gogian Confederacy from the north of Europe will invade Israel with a great army in the latter days. The invader meets with overwhelming defeat and destruction by the elements, released in fury by the God of Israel.

CHAPTER 39: God's utter destruction is seen as God's great incipient anger against Israel's enemies. The spoils of war will be to Israel, who bury Gog's remaining dead for seven months. From the writings of other prophets, their celestial deliverer is made known as Jesus their MESSIAH, returned with his holy angels.

Restoration of Temple Worship Promised

CHAPTERS 40, 41 AND 42: God's Sanctuary of Ezek. 37:28 is shown to the prophet as a literal temple, first viewed from a very high mountain. In vision Ezekiel is shown over the temple by an angel; architectural details and measurements are given him as well as the form of temple service.

CHAPTER 43: *"Afterwards he brought me to the gate, the gate facing east. And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east . . . like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory"* (43:1-2). Into this beautiful new temple the "*glory of the LORD"* was seen by Ezekiel entering the east gate.

"And the vision I saw was like the vision which I had seen when he (the LORD) *came to destroy the city. . . and I fell upon my face"* (Ezek. 43:3). Some twenty-five centuries of Israel's tragic history have elapsed since he left his vision of cherubic glory on the mounting east of Jerusalem (11:23). The effulgent future Messiah of Israel was its symbolic centre piece. Ezekiel lived in vision to see the same glory return, but to a new temple shown him in the vision. From the inner court of this new temple he saw *"the glory of the LORD fill the temple."* Then a voice out of the temple said to Ezekiel: *"Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever"* (43:7).

CHAPTER 44: The remainder of chapter 43 along with chapter 44 details the order of Israel's priesthood and their priestly functions.

CHAPTER 45: Specifies the holy portion of the land for the Lord, *"a holy place for the sanctuary"* and for houses for the priests who minister to the LORD. A further holy section is set apart for the Levites who minister in the outer sanctuary. To complete the square of territory set aside for the Lord, a strip is included for a commercial city belonging to the whole nation of Israel. East and west of the Lord's square portion and of similar north-south width, the *"prince"* in Israel has his inheritance. The remainder of the chapter specifies ordinances imposed upon the "prince" as part of his duties.

CHAPTER 46: Defines further duties for the *"prince"* in respect of regular daily, Sabbath and seasonal offerings. He is to lead the Jews and other people in worship and escort them in and out of the Sanctuary. Laws of inheritance are defined for this prince.

Division of the Land Among Restored Tribes

CHAPTER 47: A great gusher of fresh water is seen to emerge from the threshold of the temple. It flows out eastward from the Sanctuary enclosure, broadening to a river flowing to the Dead Sea to heal its waters.

The Dead Sea produces fish abundantly and along the river bank grow rare trees bearing different fruit each month. *"Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."* The borders of restored Israel are specified by place names, making an area some 300 miles north-south and up to 100 miles eastward from the Mediterranean Sea coast. This area is to be divided among the tribes for their inheritance, excluding the Lord's and prince's portions.

CHAPTER 48: Allotments for each of the tribes of Israel, excluding the Levites, are set out in order. Of the holy portion set apart for priests—the sons of Zadok—and the Levites, it is said: *"They shall not alienate* (sell or exchange) *this choice portion of the land, for it is holy to the LORD."* The city, south of the holy section for sanctuary and priesthood, is defined as square with twelve exits, three per side. They are named after the tribes. East and west of the city, within the Lord's portion, is for growing produce *"for the workers of the city. And the workers of the city from all the tribes of Israel, shall till it."* (Ezek. 48:18-19).

This survey summary of the last thirteen chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy shows a progressive and ordered programme of divine favour on Israel. We can neither doubt its literality nor dissociate any of it from the national descendants of Abraham. Some commentators endeavour to spiritualise the temple building and its form of worship. Others refer to it as Ezekiel's ideal temple. It has been misconstrued to apply to the Christian Church—a mystical temple offering up spiritual sacrifices. Such inferences are untenable in view of the intimate architectural details and specifications, the particularized duties of priests and Levites, and the dimensional and topographical details submitted. The entire literality of Ezekiel's vision is consistent with the restored throne of David and all that has been predicted about it by the Hebrew prophets. Ezekiel builds up to it as the highlight of a great divine programme, set for Israel's restoration and redemption.

Sacrificial Worship in the Kingdom Age

Some Christians balk at the idea of animal sacrifices being reinstituted as an ingredient of divine worship. The basis of true Christian worship is seen as "in spirit and in truth" without ritual, as Jesus defined it. This principle was promulgated by Paul and the other apostles to Gentile and Jew. It is also seen as the mode of Gentile saint life in the Revelation. Certainly the principle has its appeal in the earthly absence of the Saviour of men. While the saints of God pursue by faith their mortal probation, waiting for the promised Kingdom, it is hard to imagine ritual worship as commendable to God.

When the Kingdom of God is established on earth and Messiah rules the world for God, men will walk by sight and not by faith. Ritual worship and observance will find a true place in the presence of the LAMB OF GOD when he rules from Jerusalem as "Lord of hosts." The Children of Israel will continue to be God's distinctive and holy nation as long as mortality exists amongst men. This is as true of the millennial age as it was of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The world is to reap special benefits from mortal Israel, by virtue of their restored temple worship and their great spiritual insight awakened by Messiah's presence. *"For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?"* (Rom. 11:15). Who would doubt that the Jews in general would welcome the opportunity to reinstate their temple worship in Jerusalem? How much more when God establishes His new covenant with them and takes away their sins. This new temple can only be realized under Messiah's rulership.

Temple worship, with blood sacrifices, was a divine concept under the Law of Moses. It was especially ordained by God for Israel, and will be re-ordained under Christ as essentially applicable to the chosen nation. Unable to grasp the spiritual significance of their ancient sacrifices from the time of their offering until now, Israel, with enlightened hindsight, will see their ancient worship as fully meaningful in Christ. A nation, so devoted to its ancient landmarks in ritual remembrance, will receive tremendous inspiration in the restitution of sacrificial worship.

There is nothing in Old Testament prophecy to suggest that Gentile peoples will be asked to observe any extensive ritual in millennial worship, beyond the feast of tabernacles. This is certainly obligatory for the nations and probably for every mortal once a year in worship of the great King. Even here the wording suggests it more as an act of homage by the nations that one of individual worship by the Gentiles (Zec. 14:16-19). The prophets make it clear that Gentile nations and peoples will avail themselves of Israel's temple worship, since it is divinely ordained as a *"house of prayer for all peoples."*

Other Prophets support Ezekiel's Temple Prophecy

Scriptural evidence for a future Jewish temple is by no means confined to the book of Ezekiel. The Old Testament prophecies abound with predictions of its universal recognition and influence.

"Do good to Zion in thy good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then wilt thou delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on thy altar" (Ps. 51:18-19).

"I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the LORD of hosts" (Zec. 1:16).

"Behold, the man whose name is the BRANCH: for he shall grow up in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD . . . and shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule upon his throne . . . And the crown shall be in the temple of the LORD . . . and those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD" (Zec. 6:12,14-15).

"The Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn cereal offerings, and to make sacrifices for ever . . . so I will multiply . . . the Levitical priests who minister to me" (Jer. 33:17-18, 22).

"But you shall be called the priests of the LORD, men shall speak of you as the ministers of our God" (Isa. 61:6).

"And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations . . . to my holy mountain Jerusalem . . . And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the LORD" (Isa. 66:20-21).

"For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod . . . Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God . . . in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4-5).

These and many other Old Testament scriptures point to an essentially Jewish form of temple worship, bound up with a new covenant in Christ. This will give an entirely new concept to sacrificial worship for Israel, and indeed for the worshipping Gentile who is now averse to it. This new meaning will have its appeal to other nations, especially to those who now surround Israel as her enemies. With the Arab world disillusioned in respect of the Mahomedan imposture, they will turn to Israel's God and King.

"And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him . . . and to be his servants . . . and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; . . . their burnt offerings . . . will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa. 56:6-7).

"And the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and burnt offering" (Isa. 19:21).

"All the flocks of Kedar (Bedouin Arabs) *shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth* (Ishmaelites) *shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will glorify my glorious house"* (Isa. 60:7)

CHAPTER 39 THE SONS OF ZADOK (Ezekiel Chapters 43, 44)

"But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me; and they shall attend on me to offer me the fat and the blood, says the Lord God; they shall enter my sanctuary . . . to minister to me" (Ezek. 44:15-16)

The Priesthood of Immortal Saints

"For it is witnessed of him, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 7:17). The immortal saints—the symbolic 144,000—are to be associated with Jesus in his "MELCHIZEDEK" priesthood. Theirs is a royal priesthood, for *"they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years"* (Rev. 20:6). Their priestly function is in the realm of the spirit. Christ will endow them with the wisdom which immortality alone can exercise, to instruct, preach, advise, judge, admonish, assist, expound and exemplify the righteousness of God. They will mediate between sinners and God with the authority and discernment to forgive sins. Their present training ground is their probation of tribulation causing them to be touched, like their Master, with the feeling of mortal infirmities and weaknesses. To reign as kings and priests combines two functions, making them rulers and judges as well as priests. Their scope in Christ is universal, as a vast council for the eternal salvation of men and women. They are also to govern the world for the solution of its problems and the ordering of society. There will be organization and departments of operation under the direction of the Great King, who is the centre of world homage and praise.

Ezekiel's temple with its priesthood must not be confused with the symbolic holy city, THE NEW JERUSALEM of the Revelation. Both are contemporary in the Kingdom. The first exists with special reference to the House of Israel and her spiritual life. The latter is the divine vehicle for the GLORY OF THE LORD, that it might fill the whole earth including Israel. It is the THEOCRACY of the NEW HEAVEN. The literal temple of Israel becomes a vital focal point and a venue in part, through which the glory of the Lord will be channelled to peoples and nations.

Origin and Order of the Zadok Priesthood

Those Old Testament references in our last chapter are a convincing assurance that "priests and Levites," in future temple worship, are part of the Davidic covenant for restored Israel. The term "Priests and Levites," dates from Aaron's appointment under Moses as high priest to Israel and is carried through to second temple times. The term does not mean that "priests" are not Levites; for both must be of the House of Levi, the son of Jacob. There is a functional distinction between Levites who by lineage are ordained priests and other Levites who minister in the outer services of the temple. The priests alone were authorised to perform service in the "holy place" or tabernacle and entry to the "MOST HOLY" was for the high priests only (Num. 16:36-40; 2 Chron. 26:18).

Of the two surviving sons of Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar, Eleazar was appointed high priest in his father's stead. From then on, for six generations it passed from father to son through Eleazar. The lineage of Ithamar then took over, with Eli as chief priest in the days preceding king Saul. In David's reign a joint high-priesthood was instituted in Abiathar through the line of Ithamar, and ZADOK of the line of Eleazar. With the help, chiefly of Zadok, but also of Abimelech (Abiathar's son), David organized the divisions of the sons of Aaron for the great forthcoming temple.

The Ithamar line of priests in Eli proved unsatisfactory; the intriguing, weak and unreliable Abiathar was deposed by God's direction on Eli's house, through the hand of Solomon. It was to the wise, discreet and faithful Zadok who organized the carrying of the ark, helped David plan the temple service and anointed Solomon king over Israel, that the high priesthood was entrusted when Solomon came to the throne (1

Kings 2:27,35). The priestly divisions of Solomon's temple were two-thirds descended from Aaron's high priest son, Eleazar, and the remaining third through Ithamar his brother.

For the next eight centuries the posterity of Zadok held the high priesthood in Jerusalem. Jehosedek, the last high priest of Solomon's temple, was carried captive to Babylon. In the post-exile temple of 518 B.C., Jehosedek's son, Joshua, took up the high priesthood. The Zadok line continued till 171 B.C., when Onias II was unjustly deposed and later murdered under the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, Greek king of Syria.

Outstanding priests came from Zadok's posterity. Their spiritual judgment and zeal for the law of God was often over-ridden by the evil kings they served. Jehoiada, high priest under king Azariah and the evil queen mother, Athaliah, was of outstanding character and courage (2 Chron. chaps 23 and 24). For six years he hid Azariah's child, Joash, in the temple to foil Athaliah's resolve to murder the young heir to the throne. He armed the Levites, then brought out young Joash and crowned him king. While the multitude acclaimed Joash, Athaliah cried "Treason," and the murderess of her other grandchildren was promptly executed. Then her house of Baal was torn down and its heathen priests slain. Jehoiada was buried in great old age "in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and toward God and his house." Afterwards the princes influenced Joash and he forsook God's house and served idols. True to the Zadok heritage, Jehoida's high-priest son, Zechariah, stood and admonished the people for forsaking the Lord; but they conspired against him and at the king's command stoned him to death.

When Uzziah, king of Judah, rashly entered the temple in pride to offer incense, it was Azariah the "Zadok" high priest and priests, "men of valour" who withstood their king at the risk of losing their heads. They ordered him from the temple. His resentment and anger aroused, the Lord struck him with leprosy which rose on his forehead and he hastened to quit. In the reign of Judah's king Josiah, HILKIAH, the high priest, found the book of the Law in the temple and brought it to the king's attention for reform of temple worship. With his co-priests he encouraged and supported the king in removing the idolatrous practices and images, which former evil kings had introduced into the Lord's house.

Joshua, the first high priest of the second temple, stood with the fathers returned from the Babylonian captivity as a faithful priest of the Zadok line. His uncle, EZRA, the brilliant scribe and priest, was a direct descendant from Zadok through the line of high priests. He was a man of tremendous courage and zeal and a true instructor of the law of Moses to the returned exiles. The book bearing his name, as well as that of Nehemiah, testify to his great spiritual insight and the revered place he holds in Jewish history.

It is most fitting that in Israel's millennial temple the ZADOK ORDER of priesthood, as instituted by David and Solomon, should be restored. The record of their service in the main was one of devotion to God in the righteousness of the law. History testifies their worthiness compared to other sons of Aaron. In the millennial temple God has narrowed down His choice of priests from "sons of Aaron" to "SONS OF ZADOK." In God's book of genealogies we may rest assured that the modern sons of Zadok will be traceable, when the great new temple priesthood is to be organized. "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight . . . and he will purify the sons of Levi . . . till they present right offerings to the LORD. Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old . . ." (Malachi 3:1-4).

A photo of 300 black-coated members of the Cohen family at the wailing wall, appeared in the "Sydney Morning Herald," 15/4/71, who claimed descent from the "Cohen tribe, the ancient high priests of the Hebrews."

"The Levites"

"But the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray . . . They shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates . . . and they shall attend on the people . . . They shall not come near to me to serve me as priest" (Ezek. 44:10-13). *"When Israel went astray" refers to the evil of king Jeroboam of Israel. He deserted the Jerusalem temple, set up foreign gods and "made priests for the high places again from among all the people; and any who would, he consecrated to be priests of the high places"* (1 Kings 13:33). In Jewish history this earned him the title: *"Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin." It also made Judah to sin, for Josiah, the great reformer-king of 640-609 B.C. "deposed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places at the cities of Judah and round about Jerusalem . . . and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense . . ."* (2 Kings 23:5,8).

Ezekiel does not explicitly say so, but it is evident that the Levites, including the priestly line of Ithamar, gave their services to the evil kings of Judah to become priests for Baal and Ashteroth worship. Heathen gods were pressed into the temple worship by Judah's kings, and the temple priesthood were not without blame in tolerating their worship. Ezekiel's testimony however, is that the sons of Zadok were generally true to their charge and loyal to the temple in Jerusalem.

The New Temple Priesthood Essentially Mortal

There is abundant evidence to demonstrate that Ezekiel's prophecy is applicable to Israel's spiritual restoration in the Kingdom of God; "Melchizedek" priesthood in the same Kingdom. In the universal NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH of Rev. 21:1, there is the spiritual NEW JERUSALEM with its own temple—the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb enthroned. It has its spiritual river of living water and its tree of life; with an immortal priesthood. All of this constitutes a spiritual anti-type. The type is to be seen in the Jewish "New Heavens and New Earth" of Isaiah 65:17-19. "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth . . . behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people." This prophecy applies to the Jewish nation with its newly built city of Jerusalem and its literal temple; which for Messiah will be "the place of my throne . . . where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever." Israel's Jerusalem will also have its river of life-giving water actually flowing from its temple, and literal trees bearing fruits for bodily healing. In and around its literal temple will be its moral "Priests and Levites" dwelling in suburban homes provided for them.

Some expositors profess to see in Ezekiel's temple priests the immortal saints, both Jew and Gentile, performing their function in the Kingdom of God. Seen as the "sons of Zadok" they perform the role of the Aaronic priesthood with blood, fat and incense offerings. The "Levites," unfit for priestly function, are the mortal gate keepers, slayers or animals and servers for the people. Such an interpretation confuses the "natural" order with the "spiritual." The Revelator has taken Ezekiel's temple prophecy and Isaiah's "new Jerusalem" prophecy of Israel's literal restore commonwealth, using them to typify the Spiritual Creation of the millennial age. Everything natural in one order appears to have its spiritual counterpart in the other; yet each complements the other. The King and High Priest is common to both orders and the spiritual directs the natural.

Ezekiel defines the priests in the millennial temple as "the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray . . ." (44:15). This designation takes us back in history to Solomon's temple from where the origin of this order of priests was traced. Our last chapter (No. 38) concluded with quotations from other prophets, fully confirming Ezekiel's vision that the "sons of Zadok" are mortal Levitical Jews. This is also made clear by the various restrictions and duties revealed to the prophet concerning them:

1. Like Israel's ancient priests they are carefully restricted and instructed regarding their dress while on duty. They offer the fat and the blood and boil the guilt and sin offerings (Ezek. 44:15-19; 46:20).
2. They sweat, trim their hair and beards and must not drink wine when on duty (44:18, 20-21).
3. They marry and have children (44:22,25). This is contrary to the nature of an immortal as stated by Jesus (Mark 12:25).
4. They die (44:22); have father, mother, brother and sister, son or daughter who may also die (44:25).
5. They may become defiled and need cleansing, even to making a sin offering before resuming duty (44:26-27).
6. They live in their suburban homes, possessing only the block of land on which it is built. This they may not see or exchange (45:4; 48:12, 14: 44:28). Daniel was told: *"the saints of the Most High shall . . . possess the* (Gentile) *kingdom for ever. . ."* (Dan. 7:18,27).
7. They must eat to live, since they have to be sustained by the offerings of the tribes (44:28-31).
8. They are reckoned, along with their mortal brethren, as one of the tribes of Israel; having no land inheritance and living on the sacrifices and tithes from the other tribes (44:28).

God's New Covenant With Israel

A pattern of temple worship was set by David and Solomon at God's direction. Along with Solomon's wisdom and glory it became the wonder of the eastern world. Time proved that it was a pattern of something that would only achieve permanence under a greater future son of David. David himself was well aware of this (2 Sam. 7:10-29). Solomon's kingdom typified a glorious future King and temple, which would be realized in the prophetic words of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon: *"Blessed by the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on HIS THRONE as king for the LORD your God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them for ever, he has made you king over them, that you may exercise justice and righteousness"* (2 Chron. 9:8).

Solomon's was only a transient and shadowy enactment of these great words and Israel still awaits from God the new covenant He promised her (Rom. 11:27; Heb. 10:16). These New Testament quotations are from Jer. 31:33-34), which reads: *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts . . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."* Where the writer *to the Hebrews takes up these words from Jeremiah, he adds: "Where there is forgiveness of these* (Israel's sins), *there is no longer any offering for sin"* (Heb. 10:18). The question will naturally arise, Why then are animal sacrifices to be offered in the Kingdom? The writer, presumably Paul, is reasoning that *"it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins"* (Heb. 10:4). He further adds, *"But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins . . . for by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified"* (Heb. 10:12,14).

He then quotes as above from Jeremiah's prophecy and his argument runs: that if God is going to wipe off all of Israel's sins in His new covenant with them, then it can only be on account of that one great sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This is the whole basis of God's new covenant with Israel, when *"he* (Messiah) *shall make a strong covenant with many for one week"* (Dan. 9:27). We need to harmonise this new covenant of the spirit for Israel, of which Jeremiah writes, with his later statement: *"For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the LEVITICAL PRIESTS shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burn offerings . . . and to make sacrifices for ever"* (Jer. 33:17-18). He further calls this, *"my covenant with David my servant . . . and my covenant with the LEVITICAL PRIESTS my ministers"* (Jer. 33:21).

The fact must be recognized that Israel will remain to the end a peculiar nation as well as a peculiar people to the Lord. His new covenant will be with them, as of old, a national as well as an individual covenant of

salvation. To the Gentiles it is individual only. The paradox is explained by Paul's words, *"For Christ is the end of the law, that every one that has faith may be justified."* The Jews will comprehend in the ritual daily and seasonal sacrifices, the LAMB of God who died for them and their nation. The sin and thank offerings and the burning of incense to the worshippers without, will appeal to the law written in their hearts. It will be a constant reminder, in repentance and joy, of the *"one great sacrifice"* of their Messiah who dwells in their midst. Nor will the nation ever forget in the offering and blood of these sacrifices the true Passover LAMB OF GOD, whose blood they unwittingly shed at the instigation of a false priesthood.

The second temple after the exile, being smaller and inferior to the first, was indicative of the faded glory of the David-Solomon concept. The priesthood too, after some eighty years of exile, was dispirited and polluted by inter-marriage with the alien. Joshua, first high priest of the restoration, was among the initial enthusiasts as a son of Zadok. He figuratively bore the burden of guilt of the priesthood and his people with much more to come. And the prophet in vision saw Joshua *"standing before the angel clothed with filthy garments. And the angel said . . . Remove the filthy garments from him. And to him he said, Behold I have taken your iniquity away from you . . . behold I will bring my servant the BRANCH . . . says the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day"* (Zec. 4:3-9). So will Jesus their Messiah cleanse the priesthood and the nation at his return.

God said to Haggai the prophet: *"Speak now to Zerubbabel . . . governor of Judah, and to Joshua . . . the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people . . . is it* (the second temple) *not in your sight as nothing? Yet now take courage . . . My Spirit abides among you . . . and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendour . . . The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts"* (Haggai 2:2,9).

Only Messiah's presence in Israel can bring about this grand transformation.

CHAPTER 40 A MILLENNIAL TEMPLE FOR RITUAL WORSHIP Ezekiel 40 to 46

Measurements – Reed or Cubits?

The temple was measured in Ezekiel's sight by an angel with a measuring reed of six long cubits (Ezek. 41:8). This unit was equal to the 18 inch standard Israel cubit plus a hand breadth, making a sacred cubit of 21 inches. Difficulty has been experienced in determining the overall size of the sanctuary from the Authorised Version. This is due to conflicting units of measurement being given on internal as against overall dimensions. Also, in defining dimensions of the holy districts associated with the sanctuary and the priesthood, the Levites and the city district, the units of length are omitted in the original text. Only the number of units are given.

In the original Hebrew text the dimensions overall of the outer sanctuary walls are given in reeds and the internal dimensions in cubits. In the LXX (Greek Septuagint), both external wall lengths and internal dimensions are all in cubits. The overall lengths in the Hebrew text makes the sanctuary six times larger than does the LXX. Where the unit of length is omitted from the land, the A.V. translators inserted "*reeds*" in the first dimension and left all the following measurements as numbers only. In both the Hebrew text and the Greek LXX the internal dimensions, making up the square of the sanctuary, are given in cubits. Now if we add these internal dimensions up from east to west and from north to south, it gives us a sanctuary 500 cubits square overall; not 500 reeds overall as stated in the A.V. The A.V. is seen to contradict itself as between the overall size and the internal summation of measurements which make it up. The R.S.V. and New English Bible (N.E.B.) use cubits throughout, including the land measurements, following the LXX (translated 270 B.C.) to avoid the manifest contradiction. A minor exception is the height and thickness of the outer wall and certain gate dimensions, given as one reed (rod) – equal to six cubits.

In the large "Comprehensive Family Bible" (A.V.), edited by John Eadie, a marginal note appears against Ezek. 42:16, quoting from "Calmet":

> "These are the measures of the holy mountain or area on which the temple stood; it is an exact square. Capellus is of the opinion, that instead of 'five hundred reeds' we ought to read 'five hundred cubits' and this reading is supported by the Septuagint, by St. Jerome, by the Jewish authors themselves, by all the interpreters and by the actual size of the holy mountain."

Consistent with the sanctuary measurements in cubits, the R.S.V. and N.E.B. presents the land measurements in cubits. This gives an area of holy or separated land of about eight miles square as the Lord's portion, instead of 50 miles square according to the A.V. Such a large area would be quite excessive for the priestly and Levitical suburbs and wasteful for a land the size of Israel. It would also extend from the Mediterranean to the Dead (Eastern) Sea, leaving little or nothing for the prince, whose inheritance is east and west of the Lord's Portion. The Mosque of Omar stands today within an oblong walled enclosure, the east-west width of which scales 875 feet, equal to the 500 cubits of Ezekiel's four-square sanctuary.

The Layout of the Sanctuary

Salient features of the sanctuary and temple are indicated in the diagram Fig. 1 and are listed below it. The clear opening of the three external and three internal gates is ten cubits (17'6"); widening to a vestibule width of 25 cubits (43'9"). In the outer corners of the outer court are four enclosures each 40 x 30 cubits; and in these kitchens the Levites boil up the people's sacrifices (46:21-24). The Levites will slay the sacrifices on eight tables, set inside and outside the vestibule of the outer north gate. The outer court area of 340,000 square feet (about 8 acres) would be capable of seating about 50,000 people.

The inner court has its three gates similar to and opposite the three outer ones, with similar vestibules extending inwards to the inner court. The east-west and north-south centre-lines of the whole sanctuary intersect on the centre of the altar for burnt offerings. The altar hearth is 12 cubits (21ft.) square by 9 cubits high with lower ledge 14 cubits square. It is approached by steps from the east side.

Flanking the sides of the temple, on north and south sides, are holy chambers in three stories, "*where the priests* (the sons of Zadok) . . . *shall eat the most holy offerings*." In the N.E. and S.E. corners of the inner court are two chambers, one for the Zadok priests attending the altar and the other for the Zadok priests attending the Lord inside the temple (Ezek. 40:44-45). Conceivably they are the toilet and change rooms for the priests. The "*Levites*" minister in the outer court to the people but do not enter the inner court. The only temple furnishing mentioned by Ezekiel is a wooden altar called "*the table which is before the Lord*." It stands in the "*nave*" before the "*holy of holies*," but its function is not specified.

There are interesting points of difference between Messiah's temple and Solomon's. Ezekiel makes no mention of overlaid gold but rather does it appear a timber finish throughout. The "Most *Holy*" has no veil separating it from the "*holy place*" or "*nave*" (Ezek. 41:1), but is accessible by a two-leaf door. Ezekiel omits any description of the Most Holy and makes no comments no comments on its contents. There will be no ark or mercy seat there and probably no golden cherubim. "*And when you have multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says the LORD, they shall no more say, The ark of the covenant of the LORD. It shall not come to mind, or be remembered, or missed; it shall not be made again. At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it . . .*" (Jer. 3:16-17). This is just as we would expect. The ark and the mercy seat were symbolic and prophetic of the atoning work, the salvation, and the priestly office of Christ. The golden cherubim symbolised the saints in glory, beholding Christ, the mercy seat of the millennial age; they themselves being priests with him and guardians of the Word of life. Under the new covenant for Israel all of these ancient symbols are obsolete.

The reality of all they represent will be present with Israel in Jerusalem: the LAMB then enthroned as HIGH PRIESTS and LAW-GIVER, the living MERCY SEAT and the multitudinous priesthood of saints in glory. Behind it all is the Lord God Almighty whose effulgent glory is visible above Mount Zion and above the temple precincts and upon whose throne Messiah reigns. *"And I will give you shepherds* (Christ and his saints) *after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding"* (Jer. 3:15).

Internal Measurements of the Sanctuary

The design of Ezekiel's temple is on the same pattern as Solomon's. The reader is referred to the ground plant, Fig. 1, when considering the internal dimensions, which make up the sanctuary and the temple within it. This plan appeared in I. Benzinger's "Hebraische Archaologie" (1927) and in the Cambridge Bible. It appears in modern Bible Dictionaries as the accepted plan of Ezekiel's temple, 500 cubits square and is easily followed from the specifications laid down by Ezekiel, except for the three stories of side chambers for the priests. The *"holy place"* and the "*holy of holies*" measure 40 x 20 and 20 x 20 cubits respectively, similar to Solomon's temple. The 18 inch cubit of Solomon's temple is replaced by the 21 inch cubit in Ezekiel's. Starting at the outer entrance of the east gate and working westward the measurements overall are made up as follows:

EAST-WEST LENGTH OF SANCTURY		**Cubits**
Ezek. 40:15	"From the front of the (external east) gate at the entrance to the end of the inner vestibule of the gate." This being the length of the vestibule	50
Ezek. 40:19	"From the inner front of the lower (external) gate to the outer front of the inner court." This being the width of the outer court.	100

Ezek. 40:32-33	”The inner court on the east side and he measured the gate . . . its vestibule were of the same size as the others . . .” Its length was	50
Ezek. 40:44,47	“He brought me . . . into the inner court . . . and he measured the court a hundred cubits long”	100
Ezek. 41:13	“Then he measured (the length of) the temple”	100
Ezek. 41:15	“He measured the length of the . . . (store house) building facing the yard which was at the west and its walls . . .” (including a 20 cubit wide yard behind the temple)	100
TOTAL LENGTH OF SANCTUARY, EAST TO WEST being the length of the north and south walls.		**500 (875 ft)**

NORTH-SOUTH OVERALL WIDTH OF SANCTUARY:		**Cubits**
Ezek. 40:20-21	Vestibule to outer north gate—its length was	50
Ezek. 40:23	Between inner and outer north gates; “gate to gate.” This being the width of the outer court	100
Ezek. 40:24-25	Outer gate on the south—Its vestibule length was:	50
Ezek. 40:27	Between inner and outer south gate—“from gate to gate . . . This being the width of the outer court	100
Ezek. 40:28-29	South gate of inner court—“he measured the south gate . . . and its vestibule; its length was”	50
Ezek. 40:35-36	Inner north gate—Its vestibule length was	50
Ezek. 40:47	The square inner court, between inner vestibule faces. “He measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits broad.”	100
TOTAL WIDTH OF SANCTUARY, NORTH to SOUTH being the length of the east and west walls.		**500 (875 ft)**

EAST-WEST LENGTH OF THE TEMPLE BUILDING:		**Cubits**
Ezek. 40:48 to 41:11	Length of front vestibule—east to west	20
	Length of tabernacle or “holy place”	40
	Length of “Holy of Holies	20
	Rear wall thickness	6
	Breadth of side chambers (round about)	4
	Thickness of outer walls of side chambers	5
	Free projecting width of temple foundation plinth	5
TOTAL LENGTH OF TEMPLE BUILDING (41:13)		**100 (175 ft)**

The careful reader may desire to check these dimensions against the plan of the temple shown in Fig. 1. These summations of internal dimensions are common to all versions but the lengths given in both A.V. and R.V. as 500 reeds (Ezek. 42:17-20) make an obvious contradiction.

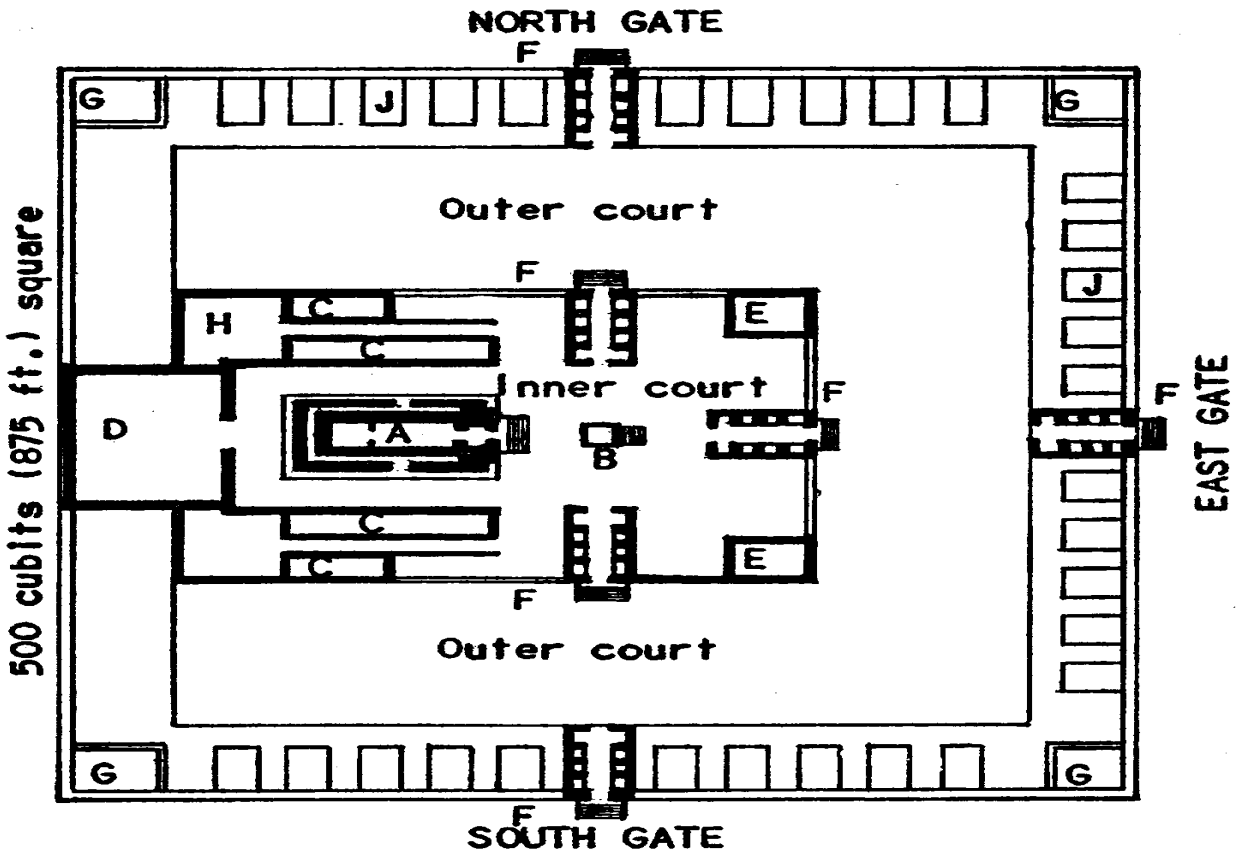


Fig. 1. --- EZEKIEL'S MILLENNIAL TEMPLE

A.---Temple or Sanctuary. B.---Altar. C.---Priests' holy chambers. D.---West side building (probably storeroom). E.---Room for priests (probably retiring rooms). F.---Gates with vestibules. G.---Kitchens for Levites to boil people's sacrifices. H.---Kitchen for priests to boil people's offerings. J.---The 30 chambers of Ezek. 40:17.

Worship in the New Temple

All of the appointed feasts under the Law of Moses will be observed in Israel's temple worship, with probably one exception (Ezek. 45:17; 46:9-11). Those laid down by Ezekiel differ from the Mosaic in respect to the offerings. Presumably the other feasts remain as observed under Moses and in Solomon's temple. Those which differ are: The continual daily offering; the Sabbath offerings; Passover and Feast of tabernacles offerings. The appointed feasts and offerings for the millennial temple would appear as follows:

TIME	OCCASION	REASON	SCRIPTURE
1. Daily	Morning Offering	Daily service and remembrance of the "LAMB of God."	Ezek. 46:13-15 cf. Num. 28:3-4
2. Weekly Sabbath	Holy convocation	God's 7th day of rest in His spiritual creation and for his people Israel.	Ezek. 46:4-5 cf. Num. 28:9
3. New Moon 1st of month	No rest enjoined	Dedication to remembrance and service.	Ezek. 46:6-7 cf. Num. 28:11-15

* New moon of year 7th month, "Tisri" (feast of trumpets), begins civil year

4. 14th of 1st mth. Abib to 22nd Abib	Passover offered with 7 days unleavened bread	Commemorate deliverance from bondage and death by Messiah from spiritual Egypt.	Ezek. 45:21-25 cf. Lev. 23:6; Num. 28:16-35 Exodus 12:1-27
5. 16th of Abib	First fruits	Dedication of Harvest	Lev. 23:9-14
6. 6th of 3rd mth. 'Sivan'	Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), 50 days after "First Fruits"	Tribute of thanks in harvest rejoicing and for new-covenant blessing.	Lev. 23:15 Num. 28:26-31
7. 15th of 7th mth. to 23rd (eight days)	Feast of Tabernacles. (Ingathering) 1st and 8th days holy	"Rejoice before the Lord 7 days." Commemorate Israel in booths. Deliverance from Babylon the great and Gog will give new meaning.	Ezek. 45:25 Zec. 14:16 Lev. 23:33-43 Num. 29:12-34 Deut. 16:13-15

The Day of Atonement is purposely omitted from the above table. *"It is a sabbath of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict yourselves."* This makes the Atonement Day more of a fast than a feast. There appear good reasons why it should not be included in the new temple worship. It was the one yearly sacrifice in which the blood was taken into the *"holy of holies*" by the high priest. This was *"to make atonement for the holy place* (nave) *because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions"* (Lev. 16:16, 34). It effected the cleansing of Israel's collective sin once a year, and pointed forward in type to the cleansing power of the one great sacrifice made for human sin and uncleanness. This theme is taken up by the writer to the Hebrews: *"For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf"* (Heb. 9:24).

This new and better covenant was established in Christ for the Christian dispensation, but not for national Israel. The new covenant for Israel is pending. *"And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob; and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins"* (Rom. 11:26-27). The high priest of Israel figuratively bore the nation's sins on the Day of Atonement. Such was the first high priest of the post-exile temple, Joshua, who was told by God that the BRANCH (Messiah) would remove the guilt of the land in a single day (Zec. 3:8-9). This signifies the cleansed state of the house of Israel, when the Lord shall have purified the sons of Levi and inaugurated temple worship in the spirit of the new covenant. There being no ark or mercy seat in Messiah's temple, it will only serve to emphasise the glorious presence of all that was bound up in its symbology. There will be no mortal high priest in the new temple, and the Day of Atonement and all that went with it is not likely to find a place in Israel's worship.

Ritual Rejoicing in Israel's Worship

The thorny march of Israel from Egypt to their kingdom and temple under Solomon, is but typical of their grander march from spiritual Egypt or Babylon the great, to the Kingdom of God under Messiah. The prophets clearly draw the analogy between the two. It becomes equally clear that the new future temple sacrifices and feasts will carry meanings, pregnant not only with the ancient exodus from Egypt, but with all their long bitter history since the Babylonian captivity. The temple feasts will highlight these landmarks in Israel's national life and their greatest deliverance of all at the hands of their mighty Messiah.

Faith is the fuel that feeds the flame of the Christian life. When faith is replaced by fulfilment and presence, and the conduct of a nation instead of a sect is involved, the necessity of ritual and observance will be of paramount importance. Such will it be for Israel's holiness and loyalty that the many facets of the feasts, in sacrificial worship, will starkly present their history, deliverance and salvation. Jesus said to his disciples at the last supper: *"Do this in remembrance of me . . . For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death UNTIL HE COMES"* (1 Cor. 11:24, 26). Of course the last words from v.26 are by the apostle Paul. The national glory and prosperity under the great King will need bolder and more vivid symbols of remembrance than bread and wine. What more vivid than animal blood in life-giving to symbolise, and hold indelibly in mortal memory, the blood of the everlasting covenant.

David catches the spirit of the Kingdom Temple worship in these words; *"Thy solemn processions are seen, O God, the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary—the singers in front, the minstrels last, between them maidens playing timbrels: Bless God in the great congregation, the LORD, O you who are of Israel's fountain! . . . Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel, and his power is in the skies. Terrible is God in his sanctuary, the God of Israel" (Ps. 68:24-26, 34-35).*

The words, *"his power is in the skies"* is an evident reference to the cloud by day and shining of fire by night, over all Mount Zion and her assemblies. It could also refer to the "new heavens and new earth: of Israel's glory.

King Josiah's epic Passover celebration in Solomon's temple (2 Chron chap. 35), gives some idea of the massive proportions of the new Zion assemblies. Josiah contributed 30,000 lambs and kids and 3,000 bulls to the lay people from his own possessions. His princes made available, through the chief temple officers, 2,600 lambs and kids and 500 bulls to the priests for passover offerings. Chief men of the Levites gave to the Levites for passover offerings, 5000 lambs and kids and 500 bulls. Solomon dedicated Israel's temple seven days through the priesthood, then kept the passover other seven days. In sacrifices and meat for the people, 22,000 bulls and 120,000 sheep were consumed This included the passover lamb on the first day, roasted and eaten by the people. It was *"a very great congregation from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt"* (2 Chron. 7:8).

Ezekiel defines the offerings for dedication and the opening Passover feast which follows it. With awesome contemplation our minds turn from King Solomon, with his inspired dedication speech and his fervent and eloquent prayer, to the "greater than Solomon." *"The LORD whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight . . ."* (Mal. 3:1). Gracious and wonderful words will flow from the mouth of Israel's HIGH-PRIEST KING at this dedication ceremony. A much greater congregation than Solomon's will be present and the Lord's glorious voice will be heard around the world. There will be a multitude of immortal saints at the King's right hand. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel and the other prophets will be present and all of those just men made perfect whose names we know so well.

Could it be at this ceremony, or an extension of it, that the universal KINGSHIP of the Lamb is acknowledged by the world in accordance with John's vision of Rev. 5:11-14)? *Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north* (of David's Judah), *the city of the Great King . . .We have thought on thy steadfast love, O God, in the midst of thy temple. As thy name, O God, so thy praise reaches to the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 48:1-2, 9-10).

The All-Embracing PRIESTHOOD of Messiah

Although the Lord Jesus will be the Great High Priests of Israel's temple, it should be realised that his is an abiding priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. This is a spiritual priesthood which stands far above the high-priestly functions under the Law of Moses, which functions he will not be exercising in Israel's temple. It would be meaningless and redundant for Messiah-Priest to enter the *"Most Holy"* once a year with blood and incense. The new temple will be without veil, ark or mercy seat; but the Shekinah glory of the Lord will always be there, a symbol to Israel of Messiah's throne in their temple and his high priesthood in the midst of Israel.

The figure of Abraham being blessed by Melchizedek and paying him tithes (Gen. 14:18-20), appears to have its anti-typical end point in the millennial dispensation. Abraham's natural seed, the sons of Israel, will pay their tithes and spiritual offerings to the greater "MELCHIZEDEK," King of (Jeru-)Salem—Immortal Priest of the Most High God. As Melchizedek blessed Abraham (then Abram), so will the mighty King in Jerusalem bless Abraham's mortal sons, both in word and deed.

There is another Kingship and High Priesthood to the Gentile world, which is not via Israel's temple. Its outflow to the world is direct from that throne and temple which is in the midst of the spiritual Holy City, the NEW JERUSALEM. The LAMB is the Lamp of this temple, shedding forth the Glory of the Lord to nations and peoples. The redeemed saints as king-priests, symbolised by the jasper walls and jewelled foundations, will shed the softened rays of LIGHT not only to Israel but to all peoples. Gentiles may come directly through the open pearl gates into the city and find eternal redemption. This is equally true of the sons and daughters of Israel, who having entered the *"Holy City"* through its pearl gates will serve with new heart and spirit through their temple worship.

The beauty of this arrangement will be that a "feed-back" of spontaneous blessing, worship, thanksgiving and thank offerings will flow into Jerusalem, and to mortal Israel from the Gentile world. The annual feast of tabernacles (booths) will bring crowds of Gentile worshippers; and the temple, as the visible, tangible focal point, will be the delight of the happy pilgrim and a house of prayer for all peoples. This is on a voluntary basis, for we read: *"Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people"* (Zec. 2:11). Melchizedek brought bread and wine to Abram (afterwards Abraham); even as the anti-typical Melchizedek gave to his world-wide Ecclesia to signify the true LAMB-offering of the passover for human redemption. This may still remain an ordinance for the Millennial Ecclesia to observe, though it was instituted by the Master with the words *"until I come."* Baptism may be continued as the initiating ceremony into the Holy City for both Jew and Gentile, but there is no Scriptural evidence on this point.

CHAPTER 41 THE PRINCE OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE (Ezekiel Chapters 45 & 46)

Ezekiel's Use of the Word "Prince"

Who is the mysterious prince of Ezekiel's temple prophecy? There is no clue to his exact identity; not a word in his praise or from his lips is recorded. He has many duties and responsibilities. He is obviously a very important personage in the restored Israel glory, but with a tight set of regulations to follow.

Apart from the temple vision, the title *"prince"* frequently occurs throughout Ezekiel's prophecy and with one exception it is translated from the Hebrew word *"nasi"* meaning *"lifted up"* or *"exalted."* The title *"prince"* is everywhere spelt with a small "p." From the "New Bible Dictionary" (1962) we learn that:

> "Fifteen Hebrew words are translated "prince" in the A.V., but not all are only so represented. "Ruler," "leader." "captain," etc. are also used because the translators were following (though not entirely consistently) the LXX (Septuagint Greek Version) "archon" a word which represents more than twelve Hebrew words, the most important of which is the word for "head", "ros"

Ezekiel uses the Hebrew "nasi" (translated as "prince") for: King Zedekiah in Jerusalem. (Ezek. 12:10); the chief men and nobles of Israel, Tyre and other nations (Ezek. 22:6, 26:16, 45:9); the nobles and chiefs of Edom as distinct from their king (Ex 32:29) ; Gog of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal (38:2); Jesus Christ as Messiah of Israel: *"David my servant shall be their prince"* Ezek.34:24, 37:25). The same word *"nasi"* is translated *"princes"* of Israel (A.V.) and *"leaders"* of Israel (R.S.V.) in the books of Numbers and Joshua; and it is rendered *"ruler"* in 1 Kings 11:24 (A.V.). These references indicate that the Hebrew word *"nasi"* is used widely of mortal kings, subordinate head men and rulers of nations, as well as of Christ, Messiah of Israel.

Great Responsibility Without Priesthood

The people of Israel are to be tithed in offerings for the new temple worship; in wheat, barley, oil and sheep, for cereal, burnt and peace offerings to make atonement for them (Ezek. 45:13-15). *"All the people of the land shall give this offering to the prince in Israel. It shall be the prince's duty to furnish the burnt offerings, cereal offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the new moons, and the Sabbaths, all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel . . . to make atonement for the house of Israel"* Ezek. 45:16-17). These extensive offerings of the tribes are placed in the hands of the prince, who would possibly hold the animal life on his large estates until the time of their offering. The cereal offerings with other produce would be stored in the large building behind the temple, against the western wall, as in the temple of Solomon (Ezek. 41:12). The prince would probably contribute extensively to the temple offerings from his 250,000 acre estate of the choicest land in Israel.

In pre-exile and post-exile times, the selfish and idol-worshipping tribes of divided Israel mostly refused or neglected to furnish their allotted tithes to the priesthood. The temple worship and the priests suffered severely as a result; as did also the moral fibre of the nation. The high priest was powerless to exert pressure on evil or indifferent kings and princes, to perform their duty to the Lord. The appointment of this new prince in the Kingdom age, to organize the temple offerings, is seen as a vast improvement on the old order. It will guarantee the sustenance of the priesthood and the integrity of temple worship under the great Messiah.

The prince, despite his temple responsibilities, is not a priest; for his duties do not take him into the temple proper nor into the inner court. Since he has an extensive inheritance he could hardly be a Levite. *"And to the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district"* (45:7). In contrast Ezekiel says of the sons of Zadok, *"They shall have no inheritance; I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no possession in*

Israel" (Ezek. 44:28). Since, in the division of the land, there is no allotment to the tribe of Levi, it appears as of old that they primarily serve in the temple and otherwise dwell in the cities of the other tribes.

The prince will have an exacting and arduous full time job in receiving the people's offerings, organizing the feasts, arranging for the offerings and receiving the peoples; including Gentile worshippers from near and far. There is no hint that he will be a ruler in Israel or that he engages in any other administration. Much of his work would doubtless be delegated to Levitical staff in the temple service. Nevertheless he must appear in person at least every Sabbath, on new moons, on the seven days of the passover feast and at *"all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel." "The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut on the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened"* (Ezek. 46:1). "*The prince shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from without* (i.e. the gate of the inner court that faces east) *"and shall take his stand by the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offerings and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening" (*46:2).

From his viewing point the prince would be looking into the 175 feet square inner court, at the altar of burnt offering in its midst and beyond it the threshold of the temple building. He would see the sacrifices being offered by the priests; but this would be his nearest approach to the altar and the temple itself. *"The people of the land shall worship at the entrance of that (inner) gate before the LORD . . ."*(46:3). The people will be standing in the outer court, the prince and the altar being visible to them through the open gateway to the inner court.

Who Entered the OUTER EAST GATE?

Those who regard the sons of Zadok as immortal saints, also see in the "prince," the glorified Christ, Israel's Messiah. They believe the prince to be *"the Lord, the God of Israel"* whom Ezekiel saw entering the outer east gate of the sanctuary. This outer east gate gives external entrance to the 500 cubit-square enclosure walled around the temple outer court. It must not be confused with the inner east gate leading to the inner court, from which the prince will see the offerings being made. Now through this OUTER EAST GATE, *"The GLORY OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL came from the east; and the sound of is coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory . . . like the vision which I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east, the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court ; and behold the Glory of the Lord filled the temple"* Ezek. 43:2-5).

Then said Ezekiel: *"I heard one speaking to me out of the temple . . . Son of man, this is the place of MY THRONE, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever"* (43:6-7). What Ezekiel saw go through the outer east gate coincided with what he saw entering Solomon's temple. It was large luminous cloud with fire flashing forth continually. This glory withdrew from Solomon's temple; but is in the new one to stay. *"And the glory of the LORD went up from the cherubim to the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the LORD"* (Ezek. 10:4). This is how Ezekiel saw it in Solomon's temple and since the glory *"went up from the cherubim"* the cherubim themselves were not part of that glory. To the prophet is was a vision of something symbolic of future reality.

The pillar of fire which followed the tabernacle in the wilderness, and sometimes filled it, was real and visible to the Israelites. It will certainly be so in this latter day house. Indeed it is the grand return of the SHEKINAH GLORY to Israel. The word 'Shekinah' is not found in Scripture, but it figures prominently in the Jewish Targum and the Talmud. The root meaning of the word is "to dwell" and it has never "dwelt" with Israel since the destruction of Solomon's temple by the Babylonians.

Ezekiel's prophecy provides no evidence that the "glory of the Lord" will pass into the sanctuary through the east gate more than once. It will abide in and above the temple permanently throughout the Millennium. Its entry through the east gate would be at the dedication and inauguration of temple worship in Israel. The assembled Jews on that occasion will no doubt hear the same words as did Ezekiel: *"This is the place of my throne . . . where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever."* None but the Lamb, as Israel's Messiah and Lord of hosts, could utter these words for the God of Heaven. Isaiah saw him sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple.

Now Ezekiel saw in vision that *"the glory of the LORD went up from the cherubim to the threshold of the house* (Solomon's temple); *and the house was filled with the cloud"* (10:4). The cherubim were left outside the temple. When the glory of the Lord left Solomon's temple, it *"went forth from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth . . . and the glory of the God of Israel was over them* (Ezek. 10:18-19). We gather from this description that the GLORY OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL, which Ezekiel saw entering the east gate of the new temple (43:1-4), would comprise the luminous cloud, surmounted *by "the likeness of a throne"* on which *"was a likeness as it were of a human form"* radiating rainbow brightness (Ezek. 1:26). The cloud entering the millennial temple will certainly be literal and visible: but the throne and the kingly figure upon it could only be symbolic of the glorified King of Israel.

Reduced to literal terms, it is Messiah in person as Israel's King who enters the east gate, accompanied by the glowing cloud of God's glorious presence. The temple is the focal point of Messiah's rulership over Israel, because it is *"the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet . . . "* (43:7). *"He* (the BRANCH) *shall build the temple of the LORD . . . and shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule upon his throne"* Zec. 6:12-13). *"Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion"* (Isa. 4:5).

The Shutting of the EAST GATE

The first allusion to *"the prince"* is found in Ezek. 44:3 in association with the outer east gate of the sanctuary. It was after the prophet saw the Lord's glory enter the gate and heard the voice speak from within the temple. From there he came back to the outer east gate and found it shut. *"And he* (the angel) *said to me, This gate shall remain shut, it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut"* (Ezek. 44:2). The translation of the third verse is critical, since it is suggested by some that "the prince" actually passed through the east gate; therefore he must be the Lord Jesus himself. Ezek. 44:3 reads in the various versions as follows:

A.V.*:"It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to east bread before the LORD. . . "*

R.V.: "*As for the prince, he shall sit therein as prince to eat bread before the Lord . . ."*

R.S.V.: *" Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before the LORD . . ."*

N.E.B.: *"The prince, however, when he is here as prince, may sit there to eat food in the presence of the LORD . . ."*

Knox Translation: *"Access to it is none, even for the prince himself; sit there he may, to eat his share of the welcome-offering . . . "*

The remainder of verse 3 reads: *"He* (the prince) *shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way." (R.S.V.)*

The rendering of the 3rd verse in the A.V. is misleading. Although it does not say the prince passed through the gate, the words "it is," which are in *italics* and therefore not in the original text, suggest that the "LORD, the God of Israel" and *"the prince"* are one and the same. In the four modern versions the wording makes a distinction and contrast between the *"LORD, the God of Israel"* who entered the east gate and one called *"the prince"* who is granted the special privilege of sitting in the vestibule or hall within the gate, to eat bread: while not being allowed to pass through the gate.

Ezekiel describes the vestibule of the gate as a spacious hall, 44 feet wide by 88 feet long, extending inwards from the gate opening. The prince's privilege is clearly defined. He may enter this spacious vestibule from within the sanctuary, sit in it to eat bread *"before the LORD,"* then return back to the outer court from whence he came. He cannot open the outer gate to enter or leave the vestibule. The prince may be regarded as the highest mortal official in all Israel. Not being a priest he cannot enter the temple building (46:2); but since the east gate betokens the Shekinah glory, he has the unique distinction of this ceremonial act of worship.

There is a special regulation to be observed by the people and the prince with regard to the outer north and south gates of the sanctuary. There is no west gate, because the storehouse behind the temple backs onto the western wall of the sanctuary enclosure. The east gate, being permanently shut, the people entering the outer court may only do so through the north and south gates. *"When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, he who enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate; and he who enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate . . . When they go in, the prince shall go in with them; and when they go out, he shall go out"* (Ezek. 46:9-10).

This quotation would make the idea—that *"the LORD the God of Israel"* is equivalent to "the prince" quite untenable. *The 'prince'* is seen to escort the people, evidently in groups, through the north gate and out the south gate, and vice versa. We may simply ask: Why should the north and south gates not be closed and remain so, as in the case of the east gate; IF the LORD the God of Israel passes through them in the person of "the prince"? The prince in no way answers to the majestic and awe-inspiring personage seated on the fiery cloud which Ezekiel saw above the cherubim; nor to the one whom Isaiah saw *"high and lifted up."* As already shown, the prince never enters the temple building nor the inner court before it.

THE PRINCE a High Ranking Mortal

The prince is to be seen as a mortal Israelite, most likely from the tribe of Judah (Zec. 10:3-4). He would be responsible to the great KING in Jerusalem, for the smooth functioning and integrity of temple worship. No mention of a high priest is made by Ezekiel; and it would appear to be unnecessary under the comprehensive supervision of *"the prince."* There is to Israel and the world only ONE HIGH PRIEST. It could well be the evidence of divine wisdom, that a non-Levitical prince of no priestly standing, should be selected as SUPERVISOR OF THE SANCTUARY because a mortal high priest has no place in it.

The great King of all the earth bears God's own titles: *King of kings and Lord of lords, Lord of hosts, Almighty God.* On his shoulder rests the dominion and government of the whole world. All nations come up to Jerusalem to worship God and he who represents the God of the universe in power and glory. It is inconceivable that the restricted movements and routine duties, imposed on one called "the prince," important though they be, could be reconciled with the so exalted SON OF GOD. Since the whole world belongs to him and his immortal saints, he would not require a personal holding of some 250,000 acres to call his inheritance. *"If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons out of his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons . . . The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their property . . . so that none of my people shall be dispossessed of his property"* (Ezek. 46:16, 18). A mortal prince is evident here, who on another occasion: *"shall provide for HIMSELF and all the people of the land a*

young bull for a sin offering" (Ezek. 45:22). Can we associate such a duty and need as this with the LAMB who sits upon the throne of God in the midst of the holy city, THE NEW JERUSALEM; who is at once the tree of life and river of the water of life to a world needing redemption from sin and death?

"When you allot the land as a possession, you shall set apart for the LORD . . . a holy district . . . it shall be holy throughout its whole extent" (Ezek. 45:1). This LORD'S PORTION, eight and a third by six and two-thirds miles in area, is not to be regarded as the Lord's personal inheritance. Apart from the sanctuary and Jerusalem city, most of this *"holy district"* is to be taken up with suburbs for *"priests and Levites"* who own their building block and the home upon it (48:11-12). This holy district includes the holy city, Jerusalem, and the *"Lord's portion"* of eight and a third miles square has a commercial city south of its *"holy district."* The prince's inheritance would be east and west of the Lord's portion, extending to the Dead Sea eastward and the Mediterranean westward. The fact that there is a *"Lord's portion"* separate from the *"prince's inheritance"* indicates that they are two separate personages.

The prince would have the most responsible and exacting position of any mortal in Israel. His work will call for great devotion and dedication to things spiritual; since he has the oversight of the Lord's sanctuary. Its organization and smooth functioning under the direction of the great HIGH PRIEST is his responsibility. He would need to be a man of much sympathetic understanding, with physical charm and endurance. It may be assumed that from his large estate will be furnished much of the animal and cereal offerings for the temple worship. It is a fitting compensation that such a one should possess very extensive holdings. This serves to emphasise the prominent part the temple service is to play in the life of Israel and indeed of the whole world in the Kingdom age.

Chapter 42 JERUSALEM—CITY OF THE GREAT KING

The Lord Will Choose Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem is to become the hub of the world. While the Lord will be present in many places by his spirit, all prophecy converges on Mount Zion and Jerusalem as the city of the great King. This is where Messiah will reside in person. "*On the holy mount stands the city he founded; the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God"* (Ps.87:1-3). *"Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King"* (Ps.48:2). *"I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill:* (Ps.2:6). *"I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem"* (Zec.8:3). *"And the LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem"* (Zech.2:12).

It is certain that the new temple will grace the original site of Solomon's temple of which we read: *"Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah . . . at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite"* (2 Chron..3:1). The statement in Zech.2:12, *"the LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land . . ."* is of special interest. Ancient Judah, in the days of the post-Solomon divided kingdom, was not a large territory. It extended along the western shore of the Dead Sea for about 60 miles and spread westward 40 miles to the border of Philistia. Its straight east-west border bulged northwards by about nine miles to take in Jerusalem as part of Judah. It is part of this ancient Judah (not the millennial Judah), which the LORD "inherits" as his portion. It includes Jerusalem and the ancient temple site.

The total allotment for the Lord is a little more than 8 miles square, and by far the greater section is devoted to two distinct *"holy districts."* The Jerusalem sanctuary is in the middle of the north-most holy district; which borders on its north side with the millennial inheritance of the tribe of Judah (Ezek.48:8). *"Thus says the LORD, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it . . . and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem"* (Zech.1:16). If we were to entertain any doubt as to the precise location of this new Jerusalem city of which the prophet speaks, he defines it for us by the various gates of the old city known so well in history (Zech.14:10). Out of this same Jerusalem the living waters are to flow (Zech.14:8), coinciding with the healing waters seen by Ezekiel issuing from under the temple threshold and flowing eastward from the sanctuary (Ezek.47:1,2).

The sanctuary, 500 cubits square, is to stand in this north-most holy district, which in effect is the new Jerusalem city. Everything radiates from the SANCTUARY. Its temple altar becomes the surveyor's "datum point," from which the measuring line will be stretched out in all directions. *"Behold . . . the city shall be rebuilt upon its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be"* (Jer.30:18). *"The days are coming, says the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD from the tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah. The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to the LORD"* (Jer.31:38-40). Though two of these names cannot be located on ancient Jerusalem maps, it sufficiently defines the outline of the administrative centre of the new city to be roughly from the present N.W. wall to well south of the Valley of Hinnom.

The HOLY DISTRICT

The diagram, Fig. 2, shows the *"holy district"* of Ezekiel's prophecy placed on the modern map of Israel. Ezekiel's temple is set down on the old temple site and the borders of the holy districts assume their positions accordingly; as the measuring line is stretched out over Jerusalem. The present walls of the old city are indicated and the extent of the modern Jewish city outside the old walls. *"The* (holy) *portion which you shall set apart for the LORD shall be 25,000 cubits in length (*8 $^{1}/_{3}$ miles), *and 20,000 in breadth* (6 $^{2}/_{3}$

miles) . . . *the priests shall have an allotment measuring 25,000 cubits on the northern side . . . 10,000 in breadth* ($3^1/_3$ miles) *on the eastern side . . . with the sanctuary of the LORD in the midst of it. This shall be for the consecrated PRIESTS, the sons of Zadok . . . it shall belong to them as a SPECIAL PORTION from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place"* (Ezek.48:9-12). *"It shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary"* (Ezek.45:4). *"Of this a square plot of 500 by 500 cubits shall be for the sanctuary, with 50 cubits for an open space around it"* (45:2). This accounts for the northern half of the holy district with the sanctuary in the midst of it.

The southern half of the holy district is to be: *"25,000 cubits long by 10,000 cubits broad . . . for the Levites who minister at the temple, as their possession for cities to live in"* (45:5). *"They shall not sell or exchange any of it . . . for it is holy to the LORD"* (Ezek.48:14). This completes the holy district of the LORD'S portion; leaving to the south a strip $1^2/_3$ miles north-south by $8^1/3$ miles east-west to complete the square. Bethlehem will probably come within the holy district of the Levites on the south.

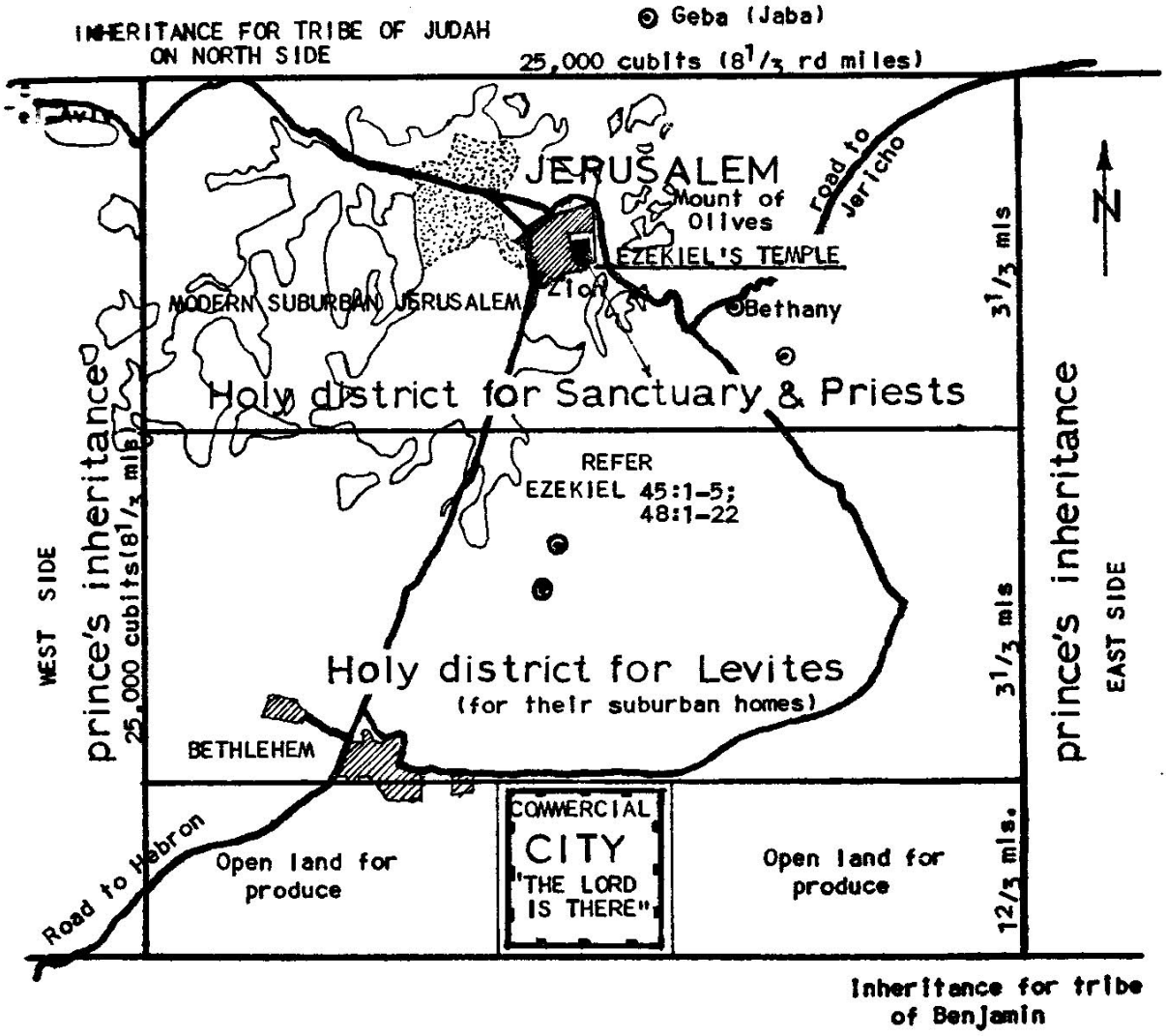


Fig. 2.—THE LORD'S PORTION

Set Upon a Modern Map of Jerusalem

We are not entitled to say that the present city of Jerusalem, either within its walls or outside them, will survive the Gogian invasion and the drastic earthquake which follows it. It seems certain that the whole city is to be rebuilt around the sanctuary site, *"when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD* as prophesied by Jeremiah. A reference to the map, Fig. 2, suggests that the total holy district could become one city, including the suburbs both of the priests and Levites. Nor is it difficult to visualize the new city extending northwards into the new Judah making it in part a Judean city.

There are frequent references by prophets, other than Ezekiel, to the extent of the new city Jerusalem and its inhabitants; *"Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of men and cattle in it . . . and I will be the glory within her"* (Zech.2:4,5). *"Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem . . . And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing . . . and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem"* (Zech.8:4,5,8). The glorified city of Jerusalem is also linked with the tribe of Judah; as it has been throughout its long history. *"But Judah shall be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem to all generations"* (Joel 3:20). *"in that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; he sets up salvation . . . open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps faith may enter in"* (Isa.26:1,2). All of these passages need to be equated to Ezekiel's specific requirement of a holy district surrounding the sanctuary, reserved for the temple priests, as *"a place for their houses."* This could well be outside the administrative city which is adjacent to the sanctuary.

Whatever topographical changes are brought about by earthquake on the Mount of Olives and in the Judean mountains, the Jerusalem site will be left at its present level. *"The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba* (6 miles north) *to Rimmon* (35 miles south) *of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft upon its site from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the corner gate . . . "* (Zech.14:10). It is to be left as the Lord's *"holy mountain, beautiful in elevation . . . the joy of all the earth . . . the city of the great King"* (Ps.48:1,2). The existing elevation of Jerusalem above sea level varies from 2400 feet at the temple site to 2700 feet in the adjacent hills. The earthquake will evidently leave the temple site and the old city area at an elevation commanding the whole countryside, with distant views in all directions.

The Commercial City to the South

"The whole portion which you shall set apart shall be 25,000 cubits square, that is, the holy portion with the property of the city" (Ezek.48:20). *"Alongside the holy district you shall assign for the possession of the city an area 5000 cubits broad, and 25,000 cubits long; it shall belong to the whole house of Israel"* (Ezek.45:6). This *"remainder . . . shall be for ordinary use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the midst of it shall be the city . . . And the workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall till it"* (Ezek.48:15,19). Ezekiel describes this commercial city as 4500 cubits square, equal to one and a half miles, with a further 250 cubits (437 feet) of open land all around it. This would leave 10,000 cubits (31/3 miles) east and west of the city (48:18). The exits from the city are to be three on each side, *"being named after the tribes of Israel . . . And the name of the city henceforth shall be, THE LORD IS THERE"* (48:31,35).

This future city will be nearly six miles south of the temple site. It is outside the holy district and must not be confused with the Holy city Jerusalem. Ezekiel does not name it Jerusalem, but *"The LORD is there."* Whatever its actual name may be, this will be its meaning. It will serve as a provision and commercial centre for Israel and seems to have special reference to the material needs of Jew and Gentile, in their frequent visitations and assemblies in the holy city and its sanctuary. Its name implies the integrity of its business life and the patronage of the great King. Divine wisdom has determined that the commercial life of the nation should be entirely divorced from the holy precincts of the temple. (Zech.14:20,21).

The Nations Shall Gather To It

The prophets draw vivid word pictures of a continuous procession of rulers, kings, ambassadors, emissaries and multitudes of worshippers going up to Jerusalem. They will be there from every nation to pay homage, to worship, to entreat and to offer their copious gifts in the joy of spiritual and temperal benefits received. The annual feast of tabernacles will be obligatory to mortal rulers and governments and possibly to the vast concourse of worshippers who will assemble from afar, in a joyful feast of thanksgiving (Zech.14:16-19). *"At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem"* (Jer.3:17). *"Many nations shall come, and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD" (Micah 4:2). "Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in precession"* (Isa. 60:11). *"On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees"* (Isa.25:6).

Emphasis is repeatedly laid on the extreme holiness of the *"city of the great king,"* where commercial life is banned. It is therefore consistent with Ezekiel's land allotment that the holy city should spread itself around the sanctuary. Outside and beyond the city proper would extend the suburbs for housing the Zadok priesthood. Jerusalem is clearly the King's administrative city for Israel and the whole world. It will be dedicated to the dispensing of true religion, righteous judgments and wise decrees for the ordering of society and international relations.

Eternal salvation for mankind and their obedience to God's righteous laws will be the foremost essential task for the LAMB and his saints. It may be visualized as a vast project, extending over a considerable period of time, to bring distant and heathen worshipping nations into full accord with Zion's Christianity. This is the work of the mystical NEW JERUSALEM of the Apocalypse with its headquarters in Zion. The attainment of individual holiness among the mortal populations of the world will become a thing greatly sought after. It will also appeal to many of the great intellectuals among Jews and Gentiles, that the perfection of wisdom is to be found in the study of true religion, in all its aspects of truth and application to living. We are encouraged by the words of prophecy to contemplate the magnetic attraction God's holy city will have for such people. Immortal teachers will be there to instruct them in the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

We may therefore think of the new city as having a mortal population, not only of "*priests and Levites,"* but of those from all the tribes and lands who love the LORD in truth and delight themselves in *"the king's business."* That it will contain some truly great men in the mortal sphere, there can be no doubt. The existence of immortal rulership in high places will in nowise tend to stifle mortal talent or suppress initiative for mortal achievement. The extended period of human leisure will bring true happiness to mankind, and human knowledge in all directions of things good and lovely will be greatly increased.

It is essential to discern between the Davidic throne over Israel and the universal throne symbolized in the NEW JERUSALEM. In a special sense the Lamb is both King and High Priest to Israel. While other nations have mortal rulers who will be in subjection to the King of kings, Israel becomes the model holy nation with pure theocratic government. Her civil and moral code of law will proceed from the temple and its King Priest, and her spiritual and temporal life regulated by the joy of temple worship. This will become a shining example to all nations causing them to seek the LORD in Jerusalem.

The THEOCRACY of the "NEW HEAVEN"

Wherever the immortal saints may go in the course of world administration, their headquarters are with the King in Mount Zion. The saints will be like the angels. Angelic beings are presented in Scripture as real

and tangible, as for instance the one who wrestled with Jacob. Like them, was the risen Lord to the gaze and touch of doubting Thomas and the other apostles. Beyond knowing that they can eat food, evidently without the necessity of doing so, we know nothing of the living habits of immortals. Sleep and housing would be deemed unnecessary and rapid self-transport, unaided by human rocketry, is in keeping with scriptural testimony. What we know of the Son of God after his resurrection, of his subsequent contacts and movements, is some small guide to mortal contemplation of these mysteries. Jerusalem's literal provision for accommodation of the Lamb's Bride—the immortal saints—could only be a matter of conjecture. The fact is that they are real and tangible beings occupying space, who will fraternize together and with mortals; to whom supreme rulership of the world is committed under their Lord's direction. Their diversified operations will take them to every country of the new world order.

Solomon, in his initial glory and wisdom, typified the greater and eternal son of David who was one day to succeed him in resplendent glory. Solomon built himself a palace hard by the temple of the LORD. This became the focal point of his extensive administration to his own and many other peoples. We are left to contemplate the possibility of such a building in Jerusalem of the "New Heavens". There will be continuous contact between the *Prince of Peace*—the *"Everlasting Father"* or the Millennium—together with his king-priests, on the one hand, and the mortals of every rank and nation on the other. Mortals will come in their thousands to seek salvation, spiritual wisdom and righteous judgment. A building like Solomon's would be appropriate to their necessity and propriety, which will be amply provided for.

The prophets of Israel were God's inspired men of wisdom, to whom He showed a future world governed by a UNIVERSAL THEOCRACY. Democracy had some semblance of redress and virtue when it superseded the divine right of kings and the feudal system. It has now degenerated into a permissive society where laws are defied and resisted by organized violence. This cry for complete "freedom" and methods of achieving it are largely condoned, excused or taken for granted. The fear of God and Christian ethics – the only effective restraints on human behaviour – are generally taboo in an ever worsening society.

In the Kingdom of God the backbone of government is no longer vested in mortal dictators, kings, presidents, parliaments, cabinets, judiciary and the legal profession. There will be no interminable depositions, judgments and judicial precedents to guide the less qualified aspirants in the subtleties of legal interpretation. Police forces with their "Scotland Yards" will become outmoded and obsolete. Government will no longer depend on a vast accumulation of parliamentary legislation, in acts so obliquely worded as to need interpretation by a highly qualified and lucrative legal profession.

The two greatest commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets, will become the guide for all living, *"for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."* In a universal call to worship by the King of kings, mankind will be taught from youth the principles of the sermon on the mount as the rule of life. The way of integrity in human relationships and moral rectitude for human happiness will be taken for granted. God's law of LOVE will be sown and in turn generated in the hearts of men; but the way of evil doers to exploit human weaknesses or to oppress will not be tolerated. Joy and happiness with self-discipline will be the inevitable result. The rebellious and the confirmed evil-doer will be purged from society. Behind the throne will be superhuman power which humanity will fear and remember; then learn to love and to bless.

Chapter 43 TOPOGRAPHICAL CHANGES AND TRIBAL DIVISIONS

Splitting the Mount of Olives

The prophecies indicate that the present levels of the ancient city site will not be unduly disturbed as a result of the second advent earthquakes. Some writers have suggested that the future east-west cleavage of the Mount of Olives will extend through Jerusalem to the Mediterranean, allowing the sea to flood the Arabah. Zechariah's prophecy may not be so construed, for it confines the earthquake rift to the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem's eastern aspect. Moreover Ezekiel says that *"Fishermen will stand beside the* (Dead) *sea; from En-gedi to En-eglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of very many kinds . . ."* (47:10). Such a statement could not apply to an ocean-flooded Arabah.

"And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward" (Zech.14:4). No hint is conveyed here that the cleavage will extend westward of the Mount of Olives. The valley formed by the earthquake is called *"the valley of my mountains"* down which the Jews are evidently to flee eastward to the Jordan. "*And the valley of my mountains shall be stopped up, for the valley of the mountains shall touch the side of it; and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah"* (Zec. 14:5). Translators have experienced difficulties here. The A.V. reads: *"Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal."*

The supposed place name, *"Azal"* (Azel R.V.), means *"declivity"* or *"slope."* Since the context concerns the head of this valley, the R.S.V. translators have omitted "Azal" and applied its meaning to the text. We may therefore imply from verse 5 (R.S.V.) that this new valley, between the two half-mountains, is "stopped up" with a declivity or gradual slope touching the sides of *"it,"* that is, the sides of the valley. The east-west splitting of the mount, removing its halves to north and south, would fill up the valley of Kidron, which runs north and south on the eastern side of the temple site. This would cause the present abrupt falling away from the eastern side of the temple site to assume a gentle downward slope eastward. A head would thereby be formed to this new *"valley of my mountains,"* which will run east from the temple area through the divided Mount of Olives opposite.

A mile and a half eastward of the temple area the country falls away to 1960 feet above sea level, or 400 feet below the temple site, into a natural valley. It therefore needs only the Mount of Olives to split and no further, in order to open up an ideal valley bed for the living waters which are to flow eastward from the sanctuary. There is also to be a wide-spread earth disturbance in the Judean mountains whereby *"the whole land shall be turned into a plain* (or plateau) *from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft upon its site . . . "* (Zech.14:10). Geba is six miles N.NE of Jerusalem and Rimmon 35 miles S.SW. Geba is at the same elevation as Jerusalem; but southward the mountain chain rises to 3350 feet near Hebron, dropping to about 1600 feet at the ancient Rimmon. It appears as an extension of the Mount of Olives earthquake, that a massive subsidence will occur over a considerable length of the Judean mountains to below the Jerusalem level. This will be associated with the terror pursuing the hordes of Gog as they flee southward from Jerusalem. *"There shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel . . . and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall . . . "(Ezek.38:19-20).*

Literal Living Waters for Israel

The wide valley through the Mount of Olives will be seen from the new temple, to be built 40 years or more after the earthquake. This valley will extend away eastward down to the Jordan valley and the northern end of the Dead Sea. The sea will be called "dead" no longer, for down *"The valley of my mountains"* will run a marvellous river, initially fed by a stream gushing from underneath the temple

building. In the course of a mile or so it will swell into a wide stream. *"This water flows towards the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the stagnant waters of the (*Dead) *sea the water will become fresh"* (Ezek.47:8). The multitude and variety of fish in the "dead" sea, resulting from this conditioning of its waters, are *"like the fish of the great sea."* This suggests that the "Dead" sea water will be left with ocean salinity of about 6% salt instead of its present 28%. Neither will the present commercial exploitation of salt cease, for *"its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt"* (Ezek.47:11).

Down the valley of the mountains, along the banks of the river, luscious fruit will grow on trees of such variety as to make fruit available every month. *"Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing"* (Ezek.47:12). This is *"because the water for them flows from the sanctuary."* These same *"living waters"* are foretold by Zechariah: "*On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter"* (Zech.14:8). The eastward stream evidently splits, part of it flowing around Jerusalem westward to irrigate and beautify the western landscape. Joel pictures the scene in the words: *"And all the stream beds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the LORD and water the valley of Shittim"* (Joel 3:18). This valley or plain was beside the Jordan, opposite Jericho.

A Possible Source of the Sanctuary Waters

The apparently miraculous qualities of these waters will no doubt have a scientific explanation. Geologists appear to agree, and the vast limestone structure around the Arabah seems to confirm their theory, that the ocean once covered Palestine. The ocean laid down limestone beds (dead marine insect life), which were thrust up by major earth convulsions in two tremendous north-south folds. These folds formed the existing mountain ranges on either side of the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea. The deepness of the rift between the two folds is considered due to a rupture and a major shearing action through the several deep stratas below the sea floor. The general depression fault runs from northern Syria, down the Jordan to the Gulf of Akaba for some 350 miles, and to a lesser extent continues into Africa.

It is considered that another east-west up-thrust of limestone occurred simultaneously south of the Dead Sea, so preventing the Gulf of Akaba from penetrating northwards to the foot of the Lebanon. The resultant lake so formed by these convulsions would have stretched from north of the Sea of Galilee to about 50 miles south of the Dead Sea. Great subsequent changes to hotter climate, with intense evaporation, is thought to have caused the shrinking of this vast lake to the large and the small one now existent.

Mount Hermon (9100 ft.). in northern Syria and Lebanon, fed the bulk of water to the upper Jordan via Lake Huleh. This Huleh swamp area was drained by the Israelis and does not exist as a lake today. Both Syria and Lebanon, with their mountains, will eventually be part of the Israel inheritance. George Adam Smith traversed the whole of the Jordan valley and Palestine in the 1880's, and records in his well known book "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land" his visit to the foot of Mount Hermon. He describes the copious undergrowth and how he saw, flowing from the bowels of the earth, through huge boulders, a great torrent of water. Another emerged from a gorge, traceable to a large limestone cliff oozing water freely over its whole face. Still another issued from a cavern, like "a full born river". He commented that "the place is a sanctuary of waters" (Paperback copy p.314).

This area is associated with ancient Dan, and Josephus styled it "the reputed fountain of Jordan." George Adam Smith then proceeds to tell of the Greeks who installed their god, Pan, and named the town Pan-eas; how Herod built a marble temple there, containing the bust of Augustus Caesar; also how Philip the tetrarch established the town of Caesarea-Philippi, which Christ visited before setting his face to go up to

Jerusalem. Prior to them all the early Semites adored the "Baalim of the underground waters" which became the subsequent object of heathen worship (Joshua 11:17; 12:7).

Jerusalem, noted for its poor water supply, is to have water in abundance—a veritable river from its midst. We may reasonably presume that this will eventuate from the earthquakes. Such vast subterranean disturbances in the geological structure might well result in bringing the snow-fed waters of Mount Hermon underground to the temple site. The flow continues in summer and winter. The water could acquire its special mineral qualities during its underground course. This may not so easily account for its natural capability of desalinating the Dead Sea water, and the wonders of divine chemistry are yet to be revealed. A positive head of water would be necessary to feed the temple fountain and a source of supply so ample could be looked for at considerably higher elevation. *"I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water" (Isa.41:18).*

"*The LORD . . . will make her wilderness* (of Judea) *like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD"* (Isa.51:3). This abundant water supply can only come about by a considerably increased rainfall. All this is part of the wonderful blessing assured to Israel by the word of the LORD as revealed to His prophets.

Figure 3 – Millennial Israel – Ezekiel's Tribal Divisions

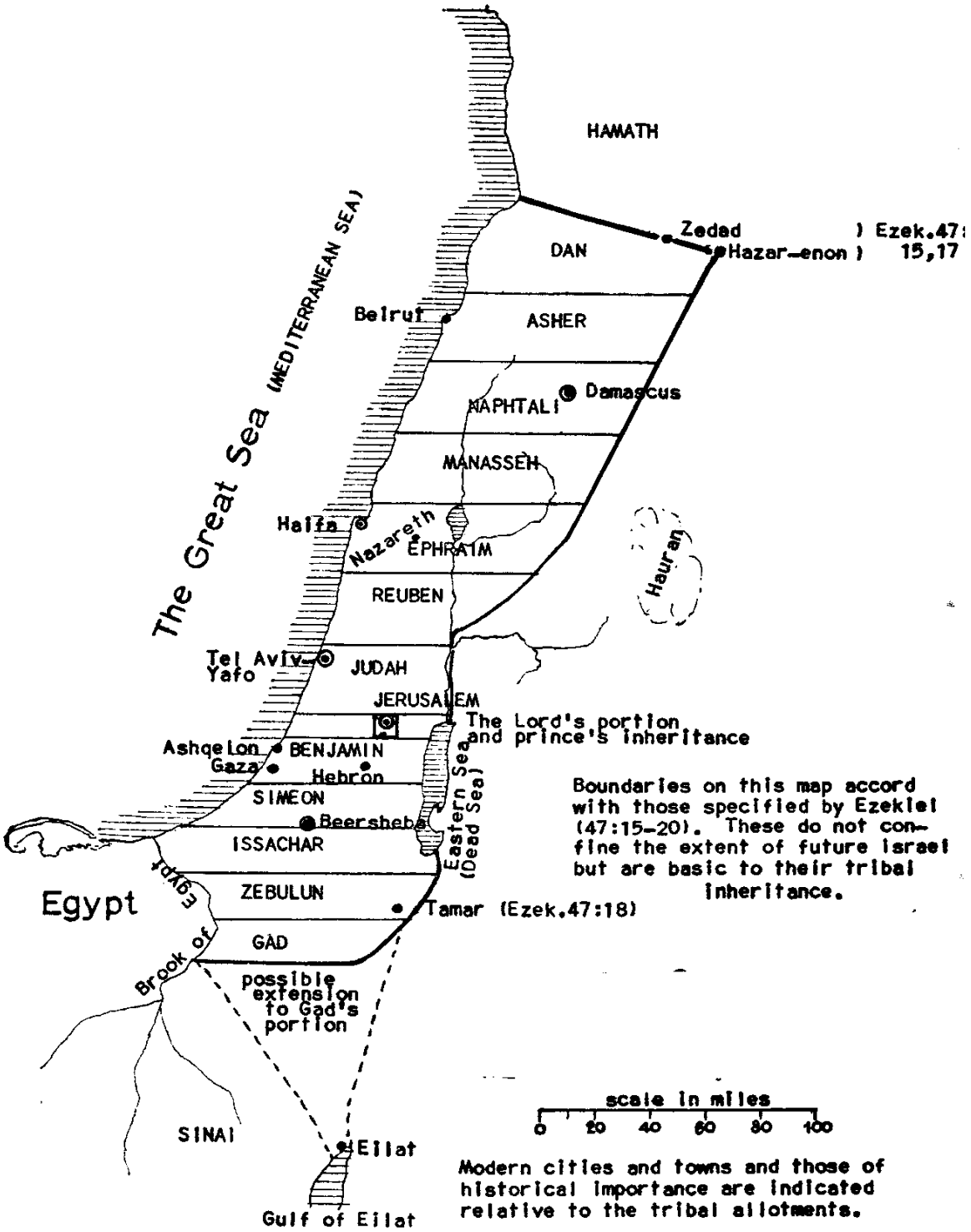


Fig. 3.—MILLENNIAL ISRAEL
Ezekiel's Tribal Divisions

Division of the Land

Ezekiel defines the northern boundary of the future state of Israel as *"From the sea by way of Hethlon to the entrance of Hamath, as far as Hazarenon (which is on the northern border of Damascus over against Hamath)"* (Ezek.48:1, 47:17). The *"entrance of Hamath"* refers to the northern end of a pass through the Lebanon; and must not be confused with the city of Hamath some 60 miles further north. Hamath was a country as well as a city called by the same name. The northern border of Ezekiel's Israel will be about 130 miles south of the river Euphrates, corresponding with the known border of the David-Solomon kingdom. Hazarenon, 80 miles east of the Mediterranean, defines the east-west extend of the new Israel.

The southern border is the traditional *"Brook of Egypt"* (not the Nile), then to Tamar via the waters of Meribath-Kadesh (Ezek.47:19). The eastern border is set down with reasonable clarity as from Hazarenon (N.E. corner), south between Hauran and Damascus, along the Jordan between Gilead and the northern end of the Dead (Eastern) Sea; thence to Tamar, south of the Dead Sea. The precise location of Tamar is by no means certain. These borders are shown on the accompanying map, Fig. 3, page 213. Whatever the ultimate extent of Israel's borders, whether further east from Jordan or north to the Euphrates, their basic inheritance is to be regarded as that defined by God to Ezekiel. This includes present Lebanon, the southern half of present day Syria and all territory presently held by Israel (after the six-day war), except Sinai south of the Brook of Egypt.

Starting from the northern border, the prophet enumerates the portions for the tribes of Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben and Judah, in that order. These are all north of the Lord's and the prince's portions on which Judah borders. South of these portions are Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun and Gad, who is the most southern of the tribes. The average north-south width of the seven northern tribal allotments would be about 26 miles and that of the five southern tribes, 16 miles. The east-west lengths of the southern allotments are greater, so compensating for their narrower widths. God's territory would possibly include the present part of Eilat.

This apportioning of inheritance with the planning of the holy portions, prince's portion and the city area are by divine arrangement. It bears the hall-mark of expert town and country planning for a possible population of six or seven million people. The spiritual needs of the nations, and indeed of the whole world, become the paramount feature in the layout of the Jerusalem area. The emphasis here is on holiness and sanctity. Its beauty to the eye will be unsurpassed; with functional utility everywhere apparent.

At least ten of the tribes possess a sea frontage. The hinterland of each portion will back onto the then exciting attractions of the Arabah, from the snows of Hermon and Lebanon to south of the living waters of the "Dead" Sea. The inter-tribal borders will be long, allowing free access and social intercourse between the tribes. The main highways running north-south will promote the commercial and social life of the tribes and all roads will lead to Jerusalem. The whole land will become like the garden of Eden. *"The river of God is full of water; thou providest their grain, for so thou hast prepared it. Thou waterest its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth. Thou crownest the year with thy bounty; the tracks of thy chariot drip with fatness. The pastures of the wilderness drip, the hills gird themselves with joy, the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy"* (Ps 65:9-13). *"But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him"* (Hab.2:20).

Relative Blessings on the Tribes

The special privileges and blessings enjoyed in the past and promised for the future, are guaranteed to the foremost tribes in millennial Israel. Judah and the house of David are hard by Messiah's throne and the royal kings and priests of the new order. Less than two miles away is the holy mount and the most holy temple of David's dreams. The mortal prince, whose sacred task is to co-ordinate and organize temple worship, is most likely a son of Judah. The great city of Tel-Aviv, with its harbour, would stand on Judah's sea front and adjacent to it the river Yarkon and the famous Yafo citrus-growing area. Jericho will also be part of Judah's heritage. Then there is the house of Joseph—Ephraim, chief tribe of Israel, still to the north of Judah with Reuben in between; but having the Sea of Galilee, beautiful in its surrounding fertility and sacred in its historic associations. Nazareth and Capernaum will be within her borders. On her sea front will be the deep sea port of Haifa.

"Bless God in the great congregation, the LORD, O you who are of Israel's fountain! There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the lead, the princes of Judah in their throng" (Ps.68:26-27) Benjamin, no longer the least of them, borders on the Lord's portion and that of the prince. He adjoins the all-Israel commercial city with its twelve exits, whose business life is beyond reproach; a model to the millennial business world. Benjamin's portion will back onto the healed waters of the "Dead" Sea then teeming with fish, and on the once Judean desert then blooming as the rose. Ancient Hebron, probably rebuilt after the earthquake, will become their city. The vineyards and enhanced delights of En-gedi will be within their borders; also the town of Gaza and the port of Ashkelon in the west.

Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, forfeited his birthright by bad behaviour; yet showing good character in relation to his brother Joseph he is to be next, north to Judah between the "Dead" Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Not as privileged as Ephraim, he will share with Judah the fertile plain of Sharon with its now densely populated area. The double portion due to Reuben as first-born passed to the younger Joseph through his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob, in his patriarchal blessings, gave preference to Ephraim the younger brother; therefore Manasseh's portion lies north of Ephraim's. He will take in the southern portions of Lebanon and Syria which includes Mount Herman, "the sanctuary of waters". The ancient city of Damascus would possibly be included.

The remaining sons of Leah, Simeon and Issachar, are to take their portion south of Benjamin. Simeon's hinterland is against the healed Dead Sea where busy fishermen will ply their nets, and against the blossoming "wilderness" of Judea. In the midst of his territory is the very important southern capital of Beersheba, gateway to the Negev. Immediately south of Simeon is the heritage of Issachar, extending westward and still commanding a Mediterranean shoreline. The salt marshes, left unhealed at the southern end of the Dead Sea, would ensure a salt recovery industry for the tribe of Issachar. The Negev, as elsewhere in future Israel, will be flush with growth and water.

The river or brook of Egypt forms in part the southern boundary of Ezekiel's Israel. It will become a permanent stream, rejuvenating the present desert. The Negev has been found to harbour extensive mineral deposits, some of which (copper, iron and phosphate) are already being exploited. Zebulun and Gad, the southern-most tribes, are to take over this area. It is most likely that Israel will retain her outlet to the Gulf of Akaba. As Gad, so far south, can hardly have outlet to the Mediterranean, the now important port of Eilat would probably be included in his portion. The three northern-most tribes, Naphtali., Asher and Dan, were sons of Jacob by his concubines, Zilpah and Bilhah. Gad, also a son of Zilpah, makes up the fourth.

These observations on the inheritance allotted to each tribe take in existing attractive features more or less native to the tribal allotments. Equal divisions are assumed for the seven tribes north and again for the five tribes south of the dedicated portion of the land (Ezek.47:14). The whole land will be fertile and well watered; but the choicest land and geographical features, with proximity to Jerusalem, are seen to be apportioned in a gradation of blessing. This is in harmony with God's declared estimate of the character and worthiness of Jacob's sons and their respective tribal behaviours. The maternal parentage, historic conduct and proven integrity of the tribes are reflected in their heritage; but all will rejoice in their lot. It can reasonably be pointed out that the tribes today are so integrated by inter-marriage as to be beyond recognition. But the restoration of tribal identity under Messiah is not confined to Ezekiel but permeates Old Testament prophecy. Where human registration may fail we must recognize that divine records are infallible.

Ezekiel's land division is not intended to define the full extent of Israel's territory. Under Messiah there will not be a haphazard distribution of land as under Joshua's conquest; but rather an orderly and equitable division of the Holy Land itself and preservation of sea frontage for the tribes. Abraham's promised land was to reach north to the Euphrates; while extensive areas of present-day Jordan including Edom, Moab and Ammon are to be taken over by Israel. *"In that day the boundary shall be far extended"* (Micah 7:11).

CHAPTER 44 EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE WORSHIP AND THE REVELATION

The Ultimate for Mortal Israel

There exists a profound relationship between the literal glory to come to Israel and the spiritual glory symbolised in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Ezekiel wrote as a priest, deeply concerned with the destruction of Judah's temple, the desecration of their worship and the withdrawal of divine favour from the nation. It was about these things that God revealed His ultimate purpose through Ezekiel.

Out of the great judgment on Israel was to come deliverance; and out of deliverance a new heart and a new spirit, from which there would flow a pure worship to their God. There was revealed to Ezekiel a nation purged, reborn and restored to divine favour. The pattern of a great literal house of worship was shown to the prophet. There were to be animal sacrifices, a purified priesthood and an open manifestation of the divine presence and power in the midst of Israel. Ezekiel makes only oblique reference to Messiah. He is referred to as *"David my servant," "one shepherd"* over Israel and *"he . . . whose right it is."* In the cherubic visions he is seen *"in the likeness of a human form,"* seated on a throne and clothed with cloud and fire. He is obviously part of *"the glory of the God of Israel"* which enters the ultimate temple as the place of Messiah's throne over Israel, never to leave his people again.

It was left to the Psalms, to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah and other of the prophets to fill in and portray Messiah in the plenitude of his glory as the spiritual Father, Wonderful Counsellor and Great High Priest; reigning from his temple throne over the House of Israel.

The Natural Embraced by the Spiritual

The Apostle Paul announced a vital principle of God's unfolding purpose for human redemption when he wrote: *"But it is not the spiritual which is first but the physical* (natural A.V.), *and then the spiritual"* (1 Cor. 15:46). From Adam to the end of the Millennium there is to be seen an ascending order, from the natural to the spiritual. This is summed up in the words: *"Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven"* (1 Cor. 15:49). It is of the utmost significance that the exalted Son of God, Israel's Messiah and Saviour, should take hold on the physical and natural things of Israel's millennial worship as presented by Ezekiel, using them to symbolize the grand new order of immortal spiritual perfection. It also signifies the harmonious blending, in a new system of human redemption, of the natural and spiritual Israels. In this the spiritual embraces and conditions the natural.

The last thousand years of God's great time cycle is to see the end of death among mankind. The Millennium, as a great arch, is to bridge over from a totally mortal to a totally immortal world. It spans from the present *"first heaven"*—an evil world of rebellion, chaos and failure—to a *"third heaven"* of immortal perfection and God-likeness. The millennial age is the *"second heaven"* or the NEW HEAVEN of Rev. 21:1. *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the FIRST heaven and the FIRST earth had passed away."* Out of the *"first heaven and the first earth"* there will be drawn the "first-fruits" of eternal redemption, bearing *"the image of the man of heaven."* During this "second heaven of the Millennium, the earth's teeming population is the field of HARVEST. Man's greatest enemy, DEATH, will not be destroyed until the end of the harvest period.

The infinite wisdom of the Great Eternal is seen in the interposing of this transition arch of the SECOND HEAVEN, designed to ease this groaning world of sinful humanity into the wonderful world of the Eternal presence. This millennial "second heaven" is centred in Jerusalem; while the "new earth" comprises the Gentile nations and peoples of the world.

A New Heaven and Earth for National Israel

In the context of natural (and national) Israel there comes to view for God's chosen nation, the "new heavens and new earth" of Isaiah's prophecy: *"For behold I create new heavens and a new earth . . . for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people . . ."* (Isa. 65:17-19). *"Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots, and fill the whole world with fruit"* (Isa. 27:6). *"And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising"* (Isa. 60:3). *"But you shall be called the priests of the LORD, men shall speak of you as the ministers of our God"* (Isa. 61:6). *"I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth"* (Zeph. 3:20).

These and many such passages concern an Israel dwelling in holiness before God and men; and exemplified as a pattern of righteousness for all nations to follow. Their's is a new national covenant for human redemption, to be ratified at the Lord's coming to Israel. It will last for a thousand years until death is abolished. The fulfilment of Ezekiel's temple visions is a vital part of this new Israel covenant, made possible on a national basis as the result of prior purging of the nation by Messiah. *"I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones . . . For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD . . . they shall do no wrong and utter no lies . . .* "(Zeph. 3:11,13). The coming of an Elijah beforehand, to create a new covenant expectancy, will be part of this purging process.

The *"new heavens"* of national Israel will become integrated into the universal NEW HEAVEN of the NEW JERUSALEM; and in the glory and guidance of the latter the favoured nation will bask. The twelve apostles are to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. There will also be present in glory all the Hebrew patriarchs and prophets with king David and a host of others besides, many of them mighty men of God, made perfect in immortality. It is not surprising that all nations will flow to Jerusalem and that Israel will become a wise and holy people sought after by the nations.

National and Spiritual Israels

It is both interesting and instructive to consider salient features of Ezekiel's prophecy which, being literal in fulfilment, are taken up in the Apocalypse as symbols of the immortal NEW JERUSALEM. Both are seen as contemporary developments, initiating the millennial reign of the LAMB and his "144,000."

	NATIONAL ISRAEL **Ezekiel's Temple Prophecy**	**SPIRITUAL ISRAEL** **The Revelation**
1.	The rebuilt city, JERUSALEM, rebuilt to the glory of God and holiness ascribed to its inhabitants.	A Spiritual city of immortalized saints; called the holy city, THE NEW JERUSALEM.
2.	In Jerusalem a literal temple is erected on Mount Zion, primarily for Israel, but open to other NATIONS as a house of prayer.	In the new spiritual JERUSALEM the Temple in its midst is THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY AND THE LAMB.
3.	This literal temple is the place of Christ's throne as King of Israel (not a literal throne but there by effulgent glory filling the temple as "the glory of the God of Israel"). He will often be present there in person.	The exalted Christ bears God's titles; also his own, "THE LAMB." "His throne" is emblematic of his supreme KINGSHIP over the world and all in it. The LAMP of the temple is the LAMB and by its light the nations walk.

4.	A literal river of water issues from beneath the temple, having unique properties for plant and marine life and for healing the stagnant waters of the Dead Sea.	The river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and of the LAMB, through the street of the city. It is the Word of God for world redemption, including that of Israel.
5.	Literal fruit trees will grow on the river banks, bearing all manner of fruit for food and medicinal leaves for human maladies.	*On either side of the river, the tree of life bearing fruit"* for man's redemption. The millennial Ecclesia of mortal saints will be spiritually nourished by the Lamb and his Bride.
6.	The literal sanctuary waters flow into the Dead Sea, and the stagnant waters, there since time immemorial, are made fresh and the sea will teem with fish of all kinds.	The spiritual water from the throne flows from the NEW JERUSALEM into the stagnant sea of sinful humanity. Its purifying effect will turn men's hearts to the living God.
7.	The mortal Levitical priesthood—sons of Zadok—supervised by "the prince" and aided by the Levites, provide ritual worship for Jewish Christianity and the Gentiles who join them. It will be for all peoples on special occasions. This worship flows to the throne of God and of the Lamb.	The immortal saints are with the LAMB as priests after the order of Melchizedek. Symbolised by the jasper walls of the New Jerusalem they convey the LIGHT and the gospel water of life to all peoples, including the Jews. They are the infallible teachers. Messiah is the only GREAT HIGH PRIEST.
8.	The nations bring into Israel's Jerusalem their material wealth *"like an overflowing stream." "Your gates shall be open continually; day and night . . . that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations with the kings led in procession* (Isa. 60:11).	The nations are to bring to the New Jerusalem their spiritual gifts. "*Its gates shall never be shut . . . they* (kings of the earth) *shall bring into it the glory and honour of the nations"* (Rev. 21:25-26). This "glory and honour" is their loyalty, praise, thankfulness and worship. The Lamb offers them eternal salvation.
9.	For Israel *"I create new heavens and a new earth . . . I create Jerusalem a rejoicing"* (Isa 65: 17-18). *"As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you"* (Isa. 62:5)	*Then I saw a new HEAVEN and a new earth . . . the holy city, NEW JERUSALEM, coming down out of heaven . . . as a bride adorned for her husband"* (Rev. 21:1-2). The "BRIDE" is made up of redeemed spiritual "Israelites."
10.	The 12 tribes of Israel attain their inheritance in the land.	The "144,000" are drawn from the twelve *"tribes of spiritual Israel"* and they INHERIT THE EARTH.

This table indicates how designedly the Revelator has used the land and the Jerusalem city with its temple as foretold for national Israel, to furnish the symbology of a new eternal Israel after the Spirit. This is the New Creation in full maturity, of which Christ was the beginning. The two Israel orders will co-exist in perfect unity until the mortal order, who keep the covenant, merge into the immortal NEW JERUSALEM. Sin and death will then be no more; priesthood will no longer be needed and *"God will be all and in all*," or as the RSV reads: *"that God may be everything to everyone"* (1 Cor. 15:28). Even the all-commercial city of Ezekiel's Israel has its counterpart in the spiritual Israel of the Apocalypse. The analogy appears to end at

its four-square-ness and its twelve gates or exits. No mention is made of walls and it most likely has none, since even Jerusalem will be "without walls."

Israel for the World and the World for Israel

The emphasis of the sacrificial law in Israel will be on joy and thanksgiving; not on Israel's sinfulness as in the wilderness and temple worship. God's mercy will be magnified in their midst when they recognize their Redeemer and mourn over him.

His magnanimity in that hour will be greater than that of Joseph who freely forgave his brethren, being moved with love toward them. *"Who is a God like thee, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? . . . because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion upon us"* (Mic. 7:18-19).

Israel's age-old exclusiveness and pride will vanish, as their Arab brethren come to offer sacrifices on the LORD'S altar and find acceptance from Israel's King. They will see foreigners and strangers in Jerusalem, there to identify themselves with Israel's temple worship. Israel's heart will be enlarged in the LORD'S universal and steadfast love for all peoples. The temple worship, with its law of holiness, will engender a holy nation which will become an example to all the world.
For this reason Israel will be honoured and all nations and peoples will come to seek the LORD at Jerusalem. *"This is the law of the temple: the whole territory round about upon the top of the mountain shall be most holy . . ."* (Ezek. 43:12). The prophets and righteous men of the Old Testament displayed a reverence toward God and His holiness which we grace-loving Gentiles find difficult to match. Both holiness and grace will be embodied in the new covenant for Israel. *The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness . . . abundance of salvation, wisdom and knowledge"* (Isa. 33:5-6).

VI: EVENTS TERMINATING THE MILLENNIAL REIGN (REV. 20)

The Final Destruction of Evil and the Last Resurrection

CHAPTER 45 THE LOOSING AND DESTRUCTION OF THE DRAGON (Revelation 20:3, 7-10)

Nations Deceived by the Modern Dragon

The Gogian hordes have already been identified as Russia (U.S.S.R.) and her satellite nations, who invade Israel and meet their doom in the Arabah south of the Dead Sea. Scriptural testimony has been cited, linking up this notable destruction with the initial and decisive act of binding the Apocalyptic dragon. *"And he* (the Christ-angel) *seized the dragon, that ancient serpent . . . and bound him for a thousand years . . . that he should deceived the nations no more, till the thousand years were ended"* (Rev. 20:2-3). An important distinction is drawn here between the "dragon" and the nations and peoples that are deceived by him. A specious and godless ideology is an essential feature of the apocalyptic dragon. It started with the ancient serpent in Eden; was found powerfully seated in pagan Rome and has turned up in this 20th century as Soviet Communism under the sign of the hammer and sickle.

A godless political philosophy may be harmless enough confined to a textbook, but in the hands of a dictatorship, bureaucracy or both, the "dragon head" is formed. The head then infuses the ideology into the "body" constituted by the people over which it rules. After the dragon was removed by Constantine, the Roman Empire still comprised the same peoples and territories; but the pagan hierarchy and its pagan-patron emperor were ousted from the seven hills and their religion destroyed. This first necessitated the wholesale destruction of the pagan military might by Constantine.

John is told that the modern dragon is bound, *"that he should deceive the nations no more till . . ."* thus indicating that prior to his binding he had deceived them and their peoples with his doctrine. Godless Communism is a deceitful philosophy foisted on the peoples of Russia and the iron curtain countries by a reign of terror and intrigue. Anything which is a declared negation of the Creator is considered in Scripture as idolatry and as part of the serpent psychology in Eden. The papal false prophet is likewise to be judged as a master deceiver in another direction. He will deceive the nations into opposing the Lord from heaven.

The major deception practiced by the modern dragon is its atheistic teaching, its anti-semitism and final determination to exterminate God's chosen people. His re-emergence after a thousand years will result in a still greater deception of the nations. Like the beast and the false prophet before him he will deceive and incite the nations to knowingly oppose the King of glory and his saints. This is a more evil deception that that by the false prophet who should, but will not, realize he is opposing the LORD'S Christ. From these considerations the "dragon" may be defined as the godless ideology itself and the "powers-that-be" who espouse and practice it. Where armed might is used to sustain it this too becomes part of it. In all this the reader should keep in mind the fundamental principle announced in Eden by God to the serpent: *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel"* (Gen. 3:15). The final and fatal head bruising of the serpent seed will occur at the close of the Millennium. Both before and at the close of the Millennium the woman's seed bruises the serpent (dragon) by destroying its armies. In both cases the dragon shows up as a confederacy of nations in opposition to God.

The Probably Extend of the Post-Millennial Dragon

Following the dragon's binding John is shown the first resurrection. He then proceeds: *"And they* (saints) *shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be loosed from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea"* (Rev.20:6-8). The phrase, *"nations which are at the four corners of the earth"* recalls the *"four angels standing at the four corners of the earth"* (Rev. 7:1). The soundings of these four first trumpet angels released the Huns, Vandals and Goths to invade the Western Roman Empire between 395 and 490 A.D. These tribes stretched across Europe from Germany to the Urals, which may be taken as a general guide to where the *"four corners of the earth"* might be apocalyptically situated.

The location of "deceived" nations if further confirmed by the names, GOG and MAGOG. These names are only mentioned elsewhere in Scripture by Ezekiel (chaps 38 and 39), already identified as Russia's pre-millennial confederacy against Israel. Over the last sixteen centuries considerable changes of names and localities of nations in Europe have taken place. These changes were by reason of national development and conquest and Russia as a nation was non-existent before the 9th century. Because wars between nations will cease during the Millennium, it would seem that national boundaries will in general remain static throughout the Kingdom age. We may therefore look to Russia's vast territory and its peoples as the "GOG and MAGOG" of the apocalyptic prophecy.

Marxist Socialism was announced to the world in 1848. The Russian Revolution of 1917 gave birth to the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory. Out of experimentation and struggle for power there emerged the ruthless, crafty but practical Stalin, self –named "man of steel." Installed as absolute dictator of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, there vanished the dream of "proletarian brotherhood." The Soviet Union stands today as a nation of 260 million occupying a sixth of the world's land mass. High in technological development, she is now the most formidable land power of all time with global ambitions of conquest. Her deep penetration into the Middle East can no longer disguise her determination to dominate the Arab world, and establish a chain of naval power along the shores of oil-bearing Arabian states from Algeria to Iran.

A second Communist giant is emerging in Asia, having its Stalinist counterpart and boasting in its 700 million revolutionaries. The rest of the world is blessed for the time being by a bitter rivalry-feud between these communist giants. Partly territorial, partly ideological, this feud is heightened with competitive national ambition to dominate the communist world. Both are pledged in "armed struggle" to the extermination of "Capitalist-Imperialism" and its "running dogs." "We should support," said Chinese Chairman Mao, "whatever the enemy opposes and oppose whatever the enemy supports." Anti-semitic spleen is common to both and particularly directed against Israel as a nation. They libel her existence as serving American and British capitalism.

Communism now dominates nationally over one-third of the world's 3600 million inhabitants. Its propaganda tentacles, scientifically organized for mass appeal to insurrection, reach out to nations great and small. It is a hard fact that traditional feudal and industrial oppression, still existent in undeveloped countries and sponsored by false religion, has served to push Communism to the forefront of world ideologies. The analytical genius of a Jewish Marx forged an aggressive weapon, to be shaped and sharpened into a mighty instrument of conquest in the hands of revolutionary leaders. The once virile ideologies of Christian Orthodoxy and Mahomedanism are now withering on the stem of unbelief and modern permissiveness. Communism, in contrast, appears as the most powerful and virile political philosophy of the 20th century, and by human standards is in the world to stay. Only the Lord's coming will

bind it and seal it up in a pit. *"And they marched up over the broad earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; But fire came down from heaven and consumed them . . . "* (Rev. 20:9). As we cast an eye across the map of Europe and Asia to note the vast extent of land powered by the communist regimes, the term

"broad earth" (breadth of the earth—R.V.) has a special significance for this part of the global surface. There is ample justification for looking once more to his broad expanse of territory and peoples in northern Europe and Asia, as the final revolt area of the Lord's millennial reign.

The Millennial War against Darkness

History in the divine sense is a record of ceaseless warfare and struggle between good and evil, light and darkness. Goodness and light imply recognition of, reliance on, and faith in a Creator whose will and purpose are declared in the Hebrew Bible. Evil and darkness are dedicated to self-worship, denial of the Creator's existence as revealed in the Bible and a spurning of moral obligation as a law God. It is a part of God's purpose that there should be this ceaseless conflict across the gulf which separates light from darkness.

Up to date it has been the aggressive majority against a passively resistant minority; organized might against spiritually armed dispersion. It is substantially the story of the Old Testament, of Christ in the Gospels, of the first century Ecclesia in its formation. It is the record of centuries of saint testimony and martyrdom pitted against Daniel's terrible fourth "beast" dominion. Apart from all this world history is largely meaningless.

To define the dragon in history as well as in the millennial age, it is necessary to recognize the two main compartments into which God has divided darkness. Paganism is one and false Christianity the other. Paganism is a deliberate denial and rebellion against the God of Heaven. False Christianity, at essence, does not deny God's existence but has usurped His glory while perverting His truth and precepts. The latter system will be utterly destroyed at the Lord's coming, while the former will be reduced to impotence. Daniel saw the papal beast *"slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but THEIR LIVES WERE PROLONGED for a season* (appointed duration) *and a time"* (Dan. 7:11-12). This reference by Daniel is to those former pagan world empires and peoples incorporated into pagan Rome, and whose latter day embodiment is to be seen in "*Gog and Magog."*

The Scriptures instruct us that nations will continue to exist as such throughout the Millennium: *"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation . . . "* (Isa. 2:4). *"For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish"* (Isa. 60:12). *"Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem"* (Zec. 8:22). *"He who conquers . . . I will give him power over the nations"* (Rev. 2:26). *"For thou dost judge . . . and guide the nations upon earth" (*Ps. 67:4)*. "Satan . . . will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth"* (Rev. 20:8*). "By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it"* (Rev. 21:24).

It is part of God's vindication, during the thousand years, that the Gentiles should worship Him and his Son whom they despised. The Gentile nations (along with the rulers of Israel) mocked and crucified the Son of God, then persecuted His chosen race. In order to vindicate His holy name God will allow the Gentiles to retain their national identity. Their dominion will be "taken away" but as nations they must serve, obey and pay homage to His exalted Son. As NATIONS they must also serve and bless the Israel whom they despised and spitefully abused.

God's revelation to Paul showed that Christ would finally deliver the Kingdom over to the Father, but only *"after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he* (Christ) *must reign untl he has put all his enemies under his feet"* (1 Cor. 15:24-25). There is little doubt that Paul is alluding specifically to the same final revolt as that of Rev. 20:9. While there are nations there is some rule, power and authority left, even though these nations submit and pay their homage to the King in Jerusalem. *"When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him* (God) . . ." (1 Cor. 15:28). This process of subjecting all things to the rule of the great King will last for the millennial duration. Nations must learn to submit to his rule and if any disregard the sword of his mouth, they must finally be destroyed by fire. It is of this destruction that the apostle Paul is writing.

It would be a mistake to think of the Millennium as an age of perfect bliss and righteousness. There must be some temptation, some trial; a contrast between right and wrong that can be seen and experienced. How else could character be developed which would qualify the redeemed for eternity? It is Satan in world dominion that is bound. As long as mortality continues so long will the sin principle continue to operate in individuals, communities and nations. There will, however, be powerful restraint on evil doing with an equally powerful inducement to good living and holiness.

Divine Purpose in a FINAL INSURRECTION

The 20th chapter of the Revelation is a parenthesis inserted between chapter 19 and the beginning of chapter 21, and the sequence of events there revealed was commented on in our chapter No. 35, entitled "Binding the Dragon." We repeat these for the sake of clarity:

1. Gog and Magog—"dragon, Devil and Satan"—is bound by Messiah when he descends from heaven and rescues beleaguered Israel.
2. The first resurrection occurs shortly afterwards and the saints "come to life" and begin to reign.
3. After a thousand years Satan is loosed to deceive the nations—Gog and Magog--into revolt. Fire devours the rebels and Satan is destroyed.
4. The "second" or last resurrection then takes place and the post-millennial "third heaven" is ushered in.

This is the nearest the Revelation takes us to the Apostle Paul's *"third heaven,"* which concerned things unlawful for Paul to utter. The passages quoted above from 1 Cor. 15:24-25, 28 appear as part of Paul's special revelation from God, but still falls short of the *"third heaven"* itself. The 21st chapter of the Revelation continues from Rev. 19:9, will all that follows to the end of the book having reference to the millennial reign of the second heaven."

It can be quite difficult at times to see things as the God of heaven views them. Some would see this massive revolt of nations as a break-down of Christ's universal dominion and a negation of his final triumph over sin. We may be certain that it is not for lack of power that Christ suffers the dragon to live in a bound condition. Such is the King's infinite power that he could exterminate him in the *"lake of fire,"* just as effectively as he will have done to the beast and the false prophet. But the pre-millennial destruction of the dragon is not part of God's purpose; but rather that he be left to tempt and deceive the nations who harbour rebellion against the Most High God. The fatal bruising of the serpent's head is to transpire just before DEATH itself is "*thrown into the lake of fire."*

Shortly prior to the final resurrection Satan is unloosed from his prison. The King of kings will have an infallible "intelligence system." Any plot to overthrow his Theocratic Government would be known to him right from its secret inception. We may assume that the great King will have certain secret enemies throughout his long and triumphant reign. Some may bow down to him because they fear his mighty power, particularly toward the end of his reign. The Psalmist informs us that the King defends the cause of

the poor and crushes the oppressor. He pities the weak and needy saves them from oppression and violence (Psalm 72). This could arouse secret resentment and envy among certain rulers, especially those who have traditionally oppressed their peoples.

Across the broad expanse of the Soviet Union and China, we are reminded of the age-old tyranny and oppression that has pervaded these countries. Those apocalyptic expressions have already been reviewed, which seem to indicate the stronghold of Satan's operation when he is released. The national symbol of China is the dragon. It is not clear from prophecy what role she might play in the pre-millennial conflict unless it be to fulfil Dan. 11:44. China could be envisaged as one of the last great powers to be brought under the iron rod and sceptre of the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem.

A Call for National Dissolution

This golden age of man will be one of great universal knowledge, not only *"the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,"* but also of His future purpose with the earth. Out present dim comprehension of the post-millennial world will be dispelled by a prophetical illumination of the *"third heaven"* and its unbounded glory for the redeemed. It will be universally realized when the final mortal dispensation of mankind is about to close. The immense spiritual and mystical city of God, the NEW JERUSALEM, will then have been filled to capacity with those who entered through its open pearl gates. For them it needs only a *"resurrection to life"*—a putting on of immortality—to number them with the "144,000" first-fruits. This will be the end product and harvest of the Millennium, the primary function of which is eternal life and redemption for mankind.

Toward the end of the thousand years it will be common knowledge that all nations of the world, who serve the Lord in Jerusalem, must cease to be nations any longer. Their King on Mount Zion may even serve them notice, that their national identity must be submerged in the great impending change-over to an immortal world. Here it would seem is the key to the plotted revolt against *"the camp of the saints"*—the NEW JERUSALEM and the *"beloved city" of Jerusalem*—where they dwell. Those nations and their rulers, who bring their glory and honour into the holy city and walk by its light, will willingly yield their nationhood to the new order. They will esteem their eternal salvation and that of their people far above any mortal kingly status.

There are evidently other rulers and peoples who are not so disposed toward the impending change-over. These are defined as "unclean" and practice abomination and falsehood. Such will not be allowed into the Holy City (Rev. 21:8). Though this is descriptive of the ungodly of all ages, it refers to some who are contemporary with the NEW JERUSALEM, and would aptly define those who will surround the beloved city to destroy it. Jesus said that outside the city there *"are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters and everyone who loves and practises falsehood"* (Rev. 22:15). Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life *"reside"* within the city.

Circumstances Suggest a Likely Motive

Now we are not told why and with what motive a great horde of people, armed to destroy, should come up and surround Jerusalem. For those who find it difficult to accept the fact of this revolt, the following motive is presented as one likely to fit the circumstances involved. The insurrection is said to be the result of a tremendous deception by *"Satan,"* who succeeds in persuading a number of nations to join in the plot. To clarify the situation so briefly presented to us the Satan may be de-personalised in the words of Paul: *"The course of this world . . . the prince of the power of the air,"* which he further defines as *"the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience"*(Eph. 2:2). A nation whose rulership is steeped in this evil and godless principle may be called *"Satan"* (adversary) and *"Devil"* (false accuser). Similarly a basically evil man

may be called Devil or Satan; as Jesus said of Judas Iscariot, *"Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil."*

When the beast and the false prophet are taken it will be the false prophet, as spiritual head of great Babylon, who is the deceiver. He it will be who *"had worked the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image"* (Rev. 19:20). Similarly the *"Satan"* who deceives the nations, God and Magog, *"to gather them to battle"* is bound to be an evil genius such as Germany's Hitler. He would be a liar, false accuser and adversary to the great King. The "*dragon"* of pagan Rome--its rulers and hierarchy—was called *"the accuser of our brethren"* and *"the deceiver of the whole world."* Being cast down by Constantine, the dragon pursued the woman in great wrath *"because he knows that his time is short!"* (Rev. 12:12). This situation has its parallel in the final bid of the resuscitated dragon for world dominion.

Toward the conclusion of the golden age, if not before, it may be assumed that the rulers of the neo-dragon nations will not be bringing their honour and homage into the holy city. Being unregenerate, they will not be allowed to enter the spiritual gates of the NEW JERUSALEM. Their homage to the LORD of hosts will be token only and mingled with jealousy. The LAMB and his saints will be fully aware of this, since motives cannot be hid from them. These Gogian rulers would also know that they would have no lot or inheritance in the New Jerusalem. They may not even believe in the impending change-over to an immortal, God-in-all, "heaven" on earth. They will certainly be out of harmony with it, possibly considering they have nothing to lose by revolting.

In Deity's grand purpose it will need still another crisis in human history, still another battle of light and darkness in which God's supreme holiness, righteousness and power will be vindicated in the eyes of all flesh. Mortal saints then living (there will be vast multitudes of them) will see and fear and behold the salvation of the Lord. It will be the greatest God-defying episode of all history. The best government the world has ever seen or experienced will be challenged by inherently evil men. This audacious challenge will be made in the face of unbounded world prosperity; amidst the praise and devotion of nations and peoples for the wonderful material and spiritual benefits dispensed by Jerusalem's beloved King.

The reasoning of the rebels appears to be: "Let us seize world dominion while we have the opportunity, before this change comes about if come it will. If we destroy Jerusalem with its king and rulers, we can prevent this thing happening and the world will be at our feet." It is not difficult to imagine "wizard" of mass propaganda and deception whipping up public opinion, denouncing the Theocratic Government in Jerusalem and belittling the power of its king to dissolve their nationhood. Gog and Magog's great hordes would be stirred to swift preparation for battle; then to march up over the "broad earth" to surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city.

Ever since the flood men have not ceased to build their towers of Babel, in order to defy divine power. *"And the LORD said . . . this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they purpose to do will now be impossible for them"* (Gen. 11:6). In these words God was doubtless looking down the corridors of time to view the Babel towers of all human history: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Rome of the past; the pre-millennial Gog and Babylon the great and finally this neo-dragon to close the book of human history. All will have imagined the vain thing against the LORD or against His Anointed. Always, the forces of darkness are the aggressors; the forces of light the besieged. It is the *"Devil and Satan"*—the spirit that works in the children of disobedience—that gathers the destroyers. Around the Eternal City he makes his last throw for world dominion, *"but fire came down from heaven and consumed them . . ."*

The leader who deceived them, together with the course of this world"—the spirit of disobedience within them—will be "*thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were . . .*" (Rev.20:9-10). So dies SIN with mortality and DEATH, never to plague the earth again.

CHAPTER 46 THE DEVIL AND SATAN

The Ancient Serpent, Which is the Devil and Satan

There are three great empires esteemed by the Almighty to be the very essence of *"Devil and Satan,"* linked with that ancient serpent. Throughout history the dragon had its phases of triumph and defeat. Three such phases may be recognized with the defeat of the third still future. The dragon's ascendency was found in the Assyrian Empire, Pagan Rome and today is to be seen in Godless Russia. In the case of the first two their eclipse was followed by a change of power to a false spiritual ideology:

1. Assyria fell and became Babylonia in 609 B.C.
2. Pagan Rome fell and became Papal Rome in 312 A.D.
3. Godless Russia will fall. Will she then revert to Greek Catholicism and ally herself with Babylon the great?

The old Assyrian lion became the Babylonian lion by being *"made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it"* (Dan. 7:4). Nebuchadnezzar and other Babylonian kings, through their association with Judah's Daniel, were forced to acknowledge the God of Israel and to recognize His power. This recognition was mingled with gross superstition, idol worship and exalted pride. They fittingly typified the latter-day Babylon still to come; even as the barbarous and godless Assyrian typified Communist Russia of our times. This third dragon manifestation, being eclipsed at the Lord's coming, will be followed a thousand years later by a fourth and final dragon ascendency.

A closer look should now be taken at the apocalyptic association of these four dragon powers with *"that ancient serpent, the Devil and Satan."* To understand this one must avoid the still lingering concept of a personal immortal devil, be he phantom, creature or fallen angel. Nothing is more foreign to the general context of Scripture or more confusing to its interpretation, than this imported Greek philosophy and superstition into Christianity. Sufficient it is that Jesus endorsed the literality of the Genesis record of Adam, Eve and the serpent; also that he applied the names Devil, Satan and serpent to men, peoples and nations.

Sometimes too, these names of personification are used in Scripture to express a yielding to temptation or for the human mind that succumbs to it. The "devil" entered Judas Iscariot when he decided to betray his Master. Peter was a "satan" to Jesus when he opposed God's will concerning the Lord's atoning work. Satan means adversary which Peter was to Jesus. The Edenic serpent, though literal, prophetically symbolized that principle of sin and rebellion against the Most High which actuates the carnal mind of mankind. It was first evident in Cain the murderer and found full expression before the flood, when the earth was filled with violence.

"That ancient serpent" refers to the same sin principle as it emerged from Eden—the principle of lying and deceit which implanted itself into the thinking of men and nations. Jesus said to the Pharisees: *"You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires . . . When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies"* (John 8:44). Here is an obvious reference to the serpent in Eden, whose serpent disposition motivated the Pharisees.

"Devil" should be thought of as a *"false accuser,"* a calumniator; *"Satan"* as an "adversary" or "in opposition to"; and *"serpent"* as lying subtlety or crooked thinking. The true meaning of the two first personifications being realized, the characteristics of the Edenic serpent may be appraised in individuals, communities and nations. Virtues and vices are personified throughout the Bible. This form of speech is common to eastern languages and is part of their idiom. *"Satan"* is a Hebrew word left untranslated and *"Devil"* has been left in its Greek form, from *"Diabolos"* (root meaning "to strike through as with a dart"). While these two words have definitions of things abstract and appear in some verses translated "adversary" and "false accuser," they are mostly left as personifying SIN in its aggregate.

A Deceiver of Men and Nations

The Scriptures speaking of unregenerate man testify that *"the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt"* (Jer. 17:9). It is this principle of evil, envy and rebellion against the God of heaven that is personified. Unrestrained by the spirit of God and His Son, it drives humanity into moral degradation and into insatiable lust for power and possession. It is revealed in its worst form as a mass deceiver. It is thus seen as a philosophy, ideology or political doctrine expressed through a cult and involving mass indoctrination. This constitutes the ultimate expression of *"that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan."* To be deceived by the Devil and Satan is to fall down and worship him and that means open rebellion against God. *"Satan will be loosed from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations . . ."* (Rev. 20:7-8).

The same devil, personified, once stood at Jesus' elbow and made this appeal to the Son of God: *"Again, the devil took him* (Jesus in spirit) *to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me"* (Matt. 4:8-9). Jesus refused to be deceived for his will was to worship his Father, the only true God. He parried the thrust with the words, *"Begone, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you service"* (Matt. 4:10).

The kingdoms of the world and their glory, which Christ beheld in spirit, were ruled over by the Roman dragon—the Devil and Satan. The same Satan manifested in Empire dominion crucified the Lord of glory. Jesus testified to Pilate his own ultimate kingship from God and refused to bow down to Caesar. The same *"dragon"* dominion, with Satan the deceiver in latter-day dress, is to be bound by the Lord at his coming. It is Satan nationalized as *"prince and power of the air"* working in the sons of disobedience.

Nimrod—Seed of the Serpent

The existence of the dragon has already been accounted for from the end of the Assyrian Empire to its re-emergence at the close of the Millennium. But always, *"the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan"* links the dragon manifestation with Eden. To complete the chain of evidence it is profitable to trace the origin of the fiery serpent worship in the Assyrian Empire. Assyria appears to be the first nation to be established after the flood. *"Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord . . . The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar* (Babylonia). *From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Jr, Calah and Resen . . ."* (Gen. 10:8-11).

This Nimrod was the grandson of Ham the son of Noah and his name means "subduer of the leopard." He was not only a mighty hunter, but a builder of cities and nations and a rebel against God. He has been identified with reasonable certainty as Sargon I (2300 B.C.), this being a throne name. He was the first king of Assyria as Nimrod must have been. Josephus, the Jewish Historian, informs us:

> "Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was . . . a bold man, and of great strength of hand . . . He said he would be avenged on God, if he would have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the water to be able to reach! and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! . . . The place where they built the tower is now called Babylon" (Antiq. Bk. 1. IV, 2.3).

Nimrod can be traced in ancient history and archaeology as the father of rebellion and idolatrous worship. A man of force making weapons for the hunt, he also armed men for conquest. He had a number of alternative names, one being Merodach (to rebel) and he became master of the Assyrian world. His father, Cush, appears from ancient records as the prophet of idolatry and leader of the first great apostasy.

Hislop's "The Two Babylons" presents a wealth of evidence of the identity and the many names given to this deified king, Nimrod—the first in the world. As seen by Hislop, Nimrod was Ninus (the god child) and the "Baal" (lord) of ancient idolatry and Cush his father, the "Bel" of Babylonian worship. "Bel" means "confounder" and his rebellion caused man's language to be confounded.

Origin of "The Great Red Dragon"

The dragon of the Greeks was a large snake and the apocalyptic dragon is *"that ancient serpent."* The apostasy of Nimrod (Baal) and Cush (Bel) was the worship of fire and sun in association with the serpent. The Greek word translated *"red"* in Rev. 12:3 means *"fiery"* as applied to the pagan Roman dragon. The fiery serpent or serpent of fire was set forth as an object of worship under Nimrod. He as Baal (lord) represented the Sun and is regarded in history and tradition as the inventor of fire worship. The Sun was the purifier and giver of life and fire is the earthly representative of the Sun. That is why "Baal" is regarded as the Sun god. Quoting Hislop's "The Two Babylons," p.227:

> In the mythology of the primitive world," says Owen, "the serpent is universally the symbol of the sun. In Egypt, one of the commonest symbols of the Sun or Sun-god, is a disc with a serpent around it. The original reason of that identification seems just to have been that, as the sun was the great enlightener of the physical world, so the serpent was held to have been the great enlightener of the spiritual, by giving mankind the "knowledge of good and evil" . . . we have evidence, both Scriptural and profane, for the fact, that the worship of the serpent began side by side with the worship of fire and the sun."

This accords with Paul's summary, *"Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles"* (Rom. 1:22-23).

The Ammorite god, Molech (king), was only another version of Baal—the god of fire (Jer. 32:35). Children were sacrificed to Molech, being consumed by fire from within the image itself. The pagan Roman god of fire, Vulcan, came down in mythology as the counterpart of Nimrod. The two main objects of worship in the "eternal city" were the eternal fire in the temple of Vesta and the sacred Epidaurian serpent. The latter was said to have been transported to Rome as the guardian god of the Romans, the sun-divinity incarnate.

Sufficient has been said to demonstrate the profundity of divine wisdom in apocalyptically representing pagan Rome as *"The great fiery dragon,"* a products of the mystery of Babylonian worship. Further, that *"the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan*" makes the dragon the very symbol of human rebellion against Almighty God; traceable from Eden through Nimrod and the tower of Babel. The enormity of man's rebellion is indicated in the deification and worship of the very serpent that beguiled mankind to his death. The lie and opposition to God of the Edenic serpent was not only implanted in the human heart, but in effect became an object of worship as a principle of human behaviour.

There may be no visible images and idolatrous practices associated with the second advent and post-millennial dragon. The fire and serpent worship has taken on more sophisticated forms which are just as real in principle in the sight of the God of heaven. The vast expansion of knowledge and science; and power over nuclear fire have served only to enlarge human pride and egocentricity. The 20th Century Nimrods are busy building their high tower to heaven in defiance of the God of Israel. Mankind in general is directing its worship to the shrine of scientific achievement and the image there is the embodiment of man's own wisdom. The serpent, as a symbol of human behaviour, is very much alive and active in our present day world, and especially in the realm of the latter-day dragon.

History is Inescapable

Israel's Yahweh is Lord of history. Biblical history and profane history associated with it records God's dealings with the human race. The landmarks of Israel's history were memorialized in the Law of Moses in order to instruct them and build up their national character. It is equally true for the saints passing through nearly two millennia of history-making events of the Revelation. We may be sure that all of those marvellous supernatural events of the second advent, up to and including the opening of the Lord's temple, will be memorialized in worship and festival. It will be imbedded in the memories of immortal saints for eternity.

The first resurrection will make contemporary in immortality all saints who have lived, right back to Adam. New detailed and accurate histories will no doubt be written by immortal historians and the many blurred pages of the past will come to life. It will be for the benefit of the ensuing generations of a thousand years, that God has dealt thus and thus with the Adamic race. The post-millennial "heaven" will leave behind for eternity seven thousand years of sin, mortality and death. But since it all constituted humanity's road to perfection, the experience of it and the memory of it must remain forever a part of that perfection.

CHAPTER 47 THE SECOND RESURRECTION (Revelation 20:11-15)

"The Resurrection of the Dead"

Bodily resurrection is fundamental to the Jewish faith as taught in "Moses and the Prophets." It was accepted by the Pharisees with whom Jesus never had to dispute it. A modern Jewish writer, Will Herberg, wrote in "Judaism and Modern Man," pp229, 230 (paperback):

> "The symbol 'resurrection of the dead' expresses the depth and the dimensions of Hebraic religion in relation to the destiny of mankind more adequately perhaps than any other concept . . . It appears . . . that what is destined to fulfilment is not a disembodied soul that has sloughed off its body, but the whole man—body, soul and spirit—joined in an indissoluble unit . . . Then at last does life lose its ambiguity . . . in the transfigured existence of the 'world-to-come' . . . it is not a new 'place' that is promised, but a new time, a new age."

Jesus came not only believing in a resurrection, but as the very author of it. "I am the resurrection and the life" is what Jesus told Martha. He became the first-fruit of the resurrection.

The Bible does not teach universal resurrection. Enlightenment in God's Word brings moral responsibility, which in turn makes man amenable to divine judgment. *"A man who wanders from the way of understanding will rest (*remain AV) *in the assembly of the dead"* (Prov. 21:16). Paul explained the principle: *"All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law"* (Rom. 2:12). In God's merciful justice, those who transgress His law in ignorance are left in the grave. Of the earth's teeming millions up to date, the vast majority would be *"those who have sinned without the law."*

There is in Scripture no hint of more than one resurrection until we come to the Revelation of Jesus Christ. If Jesus knew it when on earth he was completely silent about it. To the apostles and first century believers it was simply *"the resurrection"* or *"a resurrection"* of the dead, discussed in the context of *"Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ."* The other or "*second"* resurrection was held in reserve as part of *"the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him."* It had to do with those things revealed about *"the new heavens and the new earth"* as God's great "harvest dispensation" for human redemption. The first century believers had sufficient "meat" to digest in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus, with the power of the Holy Spirit to encourage them. When the power and authority of the Spirit faded with the death of the apostles and the cross receded into written record, the Lord "CAME" to the last apostle, John, with the wonderful vision of the new heaven and the new earth and of future kingship and priesthood for saints.

Just and Unjust Raised Simultaneously

The foundation statement on resurrection was made by Jesus during his ministry in which he said: *"The hour is coming when all* (addressing enlightened Jews) *who are in the tombs will hear his* (Jesus) *voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the RESURRECTION OF LIFE, and those who have done evil, to the RESURRECTION OF JUDGMENT* (damnation A.V.)" (John 5:28-29). This simultaneous raising of good and evil doers accords with God's words to Daniel, *"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince . . . and many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt"* (Dan 12:1-2). Paul, before Felix echoed the teaching of the Jewish fathers in the law: *"Having a hope in God . . . that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust . . ."* (Acts 24:15).

Resurrection is a positive thing designed by God to turn dead human bodies, or what remains of them, into live beings who will never die. The whole process is comprehended in the words of Jesus, "RESURRECTION OF LIFE"; but those who are made to live only to have judgment pronounced and executed upon them, come forth to a *"Resurrection of Judgment."* In the rejected the process is not complete for they are only made mortal and are subject to the "second death." The term *"judgment"* implies that both just and unjust must emerge from the grave mortal; otherwise it would not be true that *"this mortal nature must PUT ON immortality"* or that *"We shall not ALL sleep, but we shall ALL be changed"* (1 Cor. 15:53,51). Paul is speaking only of those worthy to receive immortality. The recipient, whether worthy or not, must be made aware of the Judge's decision while in a state of mortality. This is borne out by the Lord's words: *"Then the king will say to those at his right hand, Come . . . inherit the kingdom . . . Then he will say to those at his left hand, Depart from me, you cursed! . . . And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life"* (Matt. 25:34,41,46). Whether it be the King himself or his angels who make the pronouncement, it matters not.

"The Rest of the Dead"

The FIRST resurrection has already been dealt with under that title in Chapter 21. It concerns the class who "CAME TO LIFE" and reigned with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4). At this point John introduces a parenthesis: *"THE REST OF THE DEAD did not COME TO LIFE until the thousand years were ended"* (20:5). He continues in verse 6, *"Blessed and holy is he who shares in the FIRST resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years"* (20:6). To many students of the Apocalypse the words *"the rest of the dead"* have proved difficult to interpret. Who are *"the rest of the dead"?*

(a) Are they the "unjust dead ones" of the past, who are not raised at the first resurrection but are reserved till the last one?
(b) Are "the rest of the dead" those who will live and die during the Millennium; both the just and the unjust?
(c) Or are they those just ones only who live and die during the Millennium; who were born either too late or believed too late to be included in the FIRST resurrection?

The term, 'SECOND RESURRECTION,' does not appear in the Revelation; but the FIRST resurrection of verses 5 and 6 clearly implies one more—a second resurrection—or we do violence to our English text. We read without a break in verses 4 and 5, *"They CAME TO LIFE and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended."* There appears no alternative but to accept that *"the coming to life"* of "THEY" (defined in verse 4) and the *"coming to life"* of *"the rest of the dead,"* are two distinct resurrections separated by a thousand years. This makes a *"first"* and a *"second"* resurrection.

They "Came to Life"

"Resurrection" is a translation of the Geek *"Anastasis"* meaning *"a standing or rising up."* The word in itself does not mean: "rising to immortality"; yet the accepted meaning of the word *"resurrection"* in the New Testament is in face "a rising to immortality." Of the 41 times the word *"resurrection"* occurs in the New Testament, there are 39 instances where the context shows it to refer to a resurrection to eternal life. Such a meaning conveyed:

23 times, simply as *"resurrection";* 13 times as *"resurrection of (or from) the dead";* Once as *"resurrection of the just"* (Luke 14:14); Once as *"resurrection and the life"* (John 5:29); Once as *"resurrection of life"* (John 5:29). In the remaining two references it is *"resurrection of judgment"* (John 5:29) and *"resurrection of . . . the unjust"* (Acts 24:15), alluding to resurrection which is "not to eternal life."

Under the heading "LIFE," the New Bible Dictionary" (1962) has this to say:"

> "The Old Testament ideal of the good life has in the New Testament an Eschatological fulfilment as RESURRECTION-LIFE."

Since it is the only true life, it may be called simply "LIFE."

This is verified in the following passages:

"I am the resurrection and the life . . . though he die, yet shall he live: (John 11:25).

"Reign in life through . . . Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17). *"Those who have done good, to the resurrection of life"* (John 5:29).

"As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22).

The *"resurrection of judgment"* is negative and incidental to the real purpose of resurrection; which is to bestow *"life"* (eternal) on the just. Resurrection to judgment can only serve to testify to the subject his unworthiness for *"life,"* and to effect punishment on such an unfaithful servant. That is why two references only are found to this kind of "resurrection." In Paul's notable discourses on resurrection in the 15th of 1 Corinthians and 1 Thess. 4:13-18, the apostle confines his discussion to those assumed worthy of eternal life. The word *"resurrection"* is not used in the latter discourse. On these premises it can be seen that John's vision of the FIRST RESURRECTION (Rev. 20:4-6) is confined to those worthy ones who "CAME TO LIFE." This is borne out by the statement: *"Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection!"* The vision is plainly that of the redeemed and their reward.

Difficulty has been made of the words" *"he who shares"* (hath part A.V.) to support the idea that only the just are raised at the first resurrection. To *"share in the first resurrection*" is clarified by the words in the same verse: ". . .*but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years"* (20:6). The unjust cannot share such a wonderful reward, nor can it be said of them, THEY CAME TO LIFE; for their fate is inferred by the words about the redeemed: *"Over such the second death has no power"* (20:6). The *"second death"* is said to be the *"lake of fire"* (20:14). The evidence already presented shows the pre-millennial *"lake of fire"* to be the "great earthquake" with its equally great tribulation. Into this lake of fire the beast and the false prophet will be cast, and the *"tares"* or *"weeds"* from the first resurrection will be gathered in "bundles" to be burned.

This is further confirmed by Paul's defining of the two classes that are to be punished, *when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord"* (2 Thess. 1:7-9). There is no valid reason for excluding from these, the dead ones *"who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesu;"* especially in view of the strong evidence already cited that such will be raised along with the righteous dead. There is a vital principle of divine justice involved here. The King will say to those on his right, *"Come . . . inherit the kingdom . . ."* and to those on his left, *"Depart from me, you cursed . . . into eternal punishment . . ."* Obviously those at his right hand, who inherit the kingdom, are the raised dead together with the living righteous. It is inconceivable that those at his left would be limited to the living unjust at the Lord's appearing. The righteous must be justified in the presence of those, their unjust contemporaries, and the unrighteous of all past ages are made to realize the grounds of such vindication. This is the clear import of the judgment scene depicted by Jesus when the *"sheep"* and the *"goats"* are assembled before him. It is to be regarded as part parable and need not happen in just that manner; but the principle involved is vital.

Identifying "the Rest of the Dead"

The statement THEY CAME TO LIFE" has been shown to be applicable to none other than righteous saints, resurrected to eternal life. John's introduction to the first resurrection (20:4) does in fact show that only the rewarded righteous ones are there considered. Now we are told that THE REST OF THE DEAD will *"come to life"* at the end of the thousand years (20:5). Since this could not be said of those who come forth *"to the resurrection of judgment,"* it can apply only to the righteous dead ones who sleep in Christ. From the evidence before us, answers may now be made to the three questions posed above concerning *"the rest of the dead."*

(a) The answer it No! This is because: 1. Scripture makes the unjust dead to rise at the first resurrection along with the righteous dead: 2. According to New Testament usage of the term, the unjust dead cannot be said to "COME TO LIFE" at resurrection.
(b) The unjust dead of the millennial age could not be those who "come to life" in the final resurrection. Moreover John's vision is concerned only with the righteous of both resurrections. The answer to the question is in the negative.
(c) THE REST OF THE DEAD are those righteous ones who live and DIE during the Millennium, because: 1. The unjust dead of the Christian dispensation and Old Testament times will be raised at the first resurrection; 2. Only the righteous dead can COME TO LIFE at the last resurrection. The unjust come forth to the second death and not to "LIFE."

John would have *"the rest of the dead"* well in mind from his previous visions. He would think of the great multitude which came out of tribulation and the Son of man with the sharp sickle. He it was who reaped the "*harvest"* of the earth before the Armageddon wine-press was trodden. John would recall the voice from heaven which told him to write about this "harvest" class. *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!"* (Rev. 14:13).

No More Death

There is a dramatic introduction to the scene of the second and final resurrection, *"Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it; from his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them"* (Rev. 20:11). What are we to understand by the phrase *"earth and sky fled away:?* This indicates the close of the millennial age. It means that death is about to be abolished and that this must introduce a new order on the earth. Paul explains it thus: *"Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ."* The apostle then leaps forward in time by a thousand years and continues: *"Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death"* (1 Cor. 15:23-26).

The destruction of death can only come about by RESURRECTION. It needed the resurrection of Jesus to destroy the power of death over himself, and to set in motion the destruction of death which plagues the human race. Death will be destroyed for the "144,000" first-fruit saints when they *"come to life"* in the first resurrection. Millennial harvest must follow the first-fruits; therefore mortality, conquest over sin and salvation from death must continue throughout the Millennial. There is still a life or moral transformation for mortals to achieve, with a hope of resurrection. The destruction of death for those who *"come to life"* in the final resurrection, will mean the complete abolition of DEATH from the earth. No death, then no sin; no sin, then no priesthood; therefore no literal temple or temple worship with its sacred district, for all of these are rendered obsolete.

“Earth and Sky Fled Away”

The great white throne seen by John is still the throne of God and of the Lamb. It is the millennial throne of final judgment and the final act of the Lamb’s triumph over death. Christ, the King, is the chief Judge at this last resurrection and the immortal “144,000” will be there to assist him.

The millennial order is seen by John to be winding up. All mortal rulership and nations, formerly subject to the King’s rule and patronage, will have terminated. The tremendous rural and industrial activity of the thousands of millions of earth’s mortal inhabitants will then have ceased. The joyful sounds of an earthly but ordered society, vibrating with life and living, rejoicing in material and spiritual blessings and enthusiastic in worship, will then be hushed. The vast majority will be aware of the great change that is about to transpire.

Even the immortal rulership of Messiah and his saintly host must then undergo important changes. The NEW JERUSALEM—the Lamb’s WIFE—as the very symbol of eternal glory, will continue; but when death is destroyed the LAMB’S work is finished so far as the Revelation informs us. The *“tree of life”* yielding its spiritual fruit and leaves, and the river of the water of life for salvation will then have run their course. The gates of pearl may then be shut, for the vast influx of salvation seekers are about to find their eternal inheritance within the walls of God’s great symbolic city. So John beheld God’s great white throne with the Lamb seated thereon, from whose presence, John says, *“EARTH and SKY fled away, and no place was found for them.”* The wonderful *“second heaven”* is seen to be passing out, as the THIRD HEAVEN dawns to ETERNAL DAY. The throne is set for final judgment.

The “Harvest” Resurrection

To return to the resurrection as John beheld it: *“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done”* (Rev. 20:12). The immortal rulers of the golden age will have recorded everything. Infallible memories will outdo the computer age and are symbolized as books. There will be no questioning or laying of charges; but judgment will be tempered with mercy for all who love the Lord and delight in His law. The GREAT ASSIZE will be handling a vast throng possibly numbered in thousands of millions.

Just as the angels will assist Christ to judge in the first resurrection so will the immortal saints act as judges in the final one. A comparison between first and second resurrections is as first-fruits to harvest. Any attempt to assess by calculation the number born during the Millennium produces a staggering total; even if pre-millennial tribulation halves the world’s population. Those born during the Millennium could be one hundred times greater than those born from Adam to the second advent. Universal knowledge of God’s law will also make practically all millennial citizens responsible to judgment. Hence the final resurrection is described by John as one involving vast numbers: *“And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done”* (Rev. 20:13). The words which follow express the LAMB’S FINAL TRIUMPH OVER DEATH: *“Then Death and Hades* (the grave) *were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; and if any one’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:14-15).
Any idea of a literal lake of fire may be promptly dismissed. It is symbolic of any consuming judgment ordained by God to destroy the wicked. Rome’s *“lake of fire”* will be the wrath of the peoples and nations who had been deceived. The “second death,” even by natural causes, is the lake of fire awaiting those resurrected ones not recorded in the book of life.

The R.S.V. translators, realizing that Death and Hades (the grave) are personified in the Revelation, commenced the words with capitals. As man's two greatest enemies they are said to be cast into God's lake of fire for complete destruction, never to plague mankind again. Paul's words find their fulfilment: *"Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is thy victory O death, where is thy sting?" . . . "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* 1 Cor. 15:54-57). Those saints still alive at the close of the Millennium are not mentioned in John's account of the final resurrection. As with the first resurrection of Rev. 20:4; their presence at the judgment is taken for granted. Paul explains that those who *"are alive and remain"* find themselves standing with those who are raised from the dead (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:15-17). From this point onwards, all are judged and the just undergo bodily change to immortal nature. Through this process it can be said of them—*"the rest of the dead"*—that they CAME TO LIFE when *"the thousand years were ended."*

This tremendous throng of redeemed ones may then look back at the fulsome beginning of the Millennial Ecclesia of saints and recall that it was written of them, *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth . . . that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them"* (Rev. 14:13). The corresponding comfort and hope for saints living today is: *"Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ . . . and reign with him a thousand years."*

VII: HOPE AND CONSOLATION

Chapter 48 THE PHILADELPHIAN ECCLESIA

The Two Women of the Apocalypse

Back in chapter 32 the anti-typical Philadelphian Ecclesia was recognized as having been taken out of the "total" Christian Church, delivered from pagan Rome by Constantine. This separation was effected by the angel from the sun's rising who sealed *"the servants of our God upon their foreheads . . . out of every tribe of the sons of Israel"* (Rev. 7:3-4). Those sealed were true spiritual Jews; while the *"tribes of the sons of Israel"* constituted the total Church. The great majority left unsealed of the *"tribes of Israel"* became the anti-typical Laodicean Church. Her "kingdom of God" became the Roman state, causing her to say, *"I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing . . ."* whereas the Lord said, *"You are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked"* (Rev. 3:17). It was at that time that Christ, the "*AMEN, the faithful and true witness,"* spued lukewarm Laodicea out of his mouth (3:14).

The sealing of *"the servants of our God"* was carried out while the first four "trumpet" invasions of Rome were held in suspension by the sealing angel (Rev.7:1). In a period of peace after Constantine's victory over paganism the separation occurred (8:1); and the PHILADELPHIAN woman comprising the "sealed Israelites" fled into the wilderness, there to be nourished of God. Meanwhile the "Laodicean" woman remained exalted under the patronage of the Roman Emperor, as will be seen by her boasting of Rev. 12:10-11. An early enmity was evident between the two women as the prayers of persecuted saints ascended from the golden altar before the divine throne. When the Christ-angel took the "fire" of saint-affliction from off the golden altar and threw it on the earth, the ultimate judgment of the Laodicean woman was prophetically symbolized; even to the consummation of the last great earthquake of the 7th Bowl (Rev. 8:5).

To the Angel of the Church in Philadelphia

With this development of the two apocalyptic women in mind, let the reader consider the Lord's remarkable letters to the two churches of Asia Minor. See how his words so aptly apply to the true and the apostate divisions of Christianity, especially in the ultimate sense. The Laodicean woman made false claims to the holding of Peter's Keys to open or shut the "doors of heaven" to the souls of men, but the *"holy one . . . who has the key of "David"* (see chapter 35, p.187) kept an *"open door"* of fellowship with his beloved *"Philadelphian" brethren:*

- "Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut" (Rev. 3:8). The Laodicean woman was powerless to shut this door between Christ and his true brethren, either by papal edict and excommunication or by the terrible inquisition which came later.
- "I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name" (3:8). The Laodicean woman had power to kill by sword and fire. The Philadelphian woman, with little power to retaliate, was forbidden to do so by her Lord. She remained true to her trust, neither did she worship the beast or its image.
- "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan (adversary) who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and learn that I have loved you" (Rev. 3:9). "Those of the synagogue of Satan" are of the anti-typical Laodiceans—the unsealed of the "tribes of Israel" claiming to be true spiritual Jews. At the same time the Philadelphian brethren were to them as heretics, worthy only of destruction.

- "Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell upon the earth" (3:10). However these words applied to the early Philadelphian church of Asia Minor, they guarantee for the anti-typical Philadelphia exemption from the great tribulation for the whole world, and the "lake of fire" into which it will be plunged. This catastrophe will come upon the Laodicean woman and the best while the Philadelphian woman stands in glory with the Lamb on Mount Zion. It is for her the grand consolation for faithful service in the wilderness tabernacle and for all saints since the days of Adam. "I John, your brother, who share with you in Jesus the tribulation and the kingdom and the PATIENT ENDURANCE" (Rev. 1:9); these Philadelphian brethren were John's true companions.
- "I am coming soon (quickly A.V. and R.V.); hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown (stephanos)" (3:11). It should be noted that Jesus thrice repeats the words "I AM COMING SOON" in the last chapter of the Revelation. The only other occasion is to the Philadelphian Ecclesia. It is a standing warning and exhortation, important to all generations, but vitally so to those who see the day approaching. Sharing "the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance" is the only way to hold fast and win the crown (victor's laurel) of righteousness.
- "HE WHO CONQUERS, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall he go out of it (Rev. 3:12). A pillar is more than a stone in a building; it helps to hold the building aloft. It is not a symbol of static inactivity, but of an immortal ruler and priest in a universal Theocracy. There will be the joy of indefatigable service in blessing mankind, free from the inhibitions and frustrations of mortality. Since immortality is infinitely more than "eternal" mortal youth there is no question of boredom or tiredness.
- Further for "he who conquers," "I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name" (3:12). This is the only reference to the "new Jerusalem" prior to John's vision of its descent from heaven, recorded in the 21st chapter. The Lamb's coming with its transcendent blessings and rewards for the redeemed finds special emphasis in his letter to the Philadelphians.

The Blessings of Tribulation

The Philadelphian Ecclesia in anti-type was born out of the great pagan persecution of the Christian Church, and the Constantinian "earthquake" which followed in its wake. It is evident that the true Church within the total Church could never have survived the pressures of apostasy from within and the severe pagan persecution from without. The separation of true from false came in the remarkable way it did, that the purity of the Christian faith should be preserved in the faithful minority. Not only was the Philadelphian Ecclesia born out of persecution, but it persisted for more than fourteen centuries because of persecution, not by pagan Rome but by Roman Christendom.

Despite its profession the liberated *"Laodicean"* Church, lifted up with pride and self-sufficiency, had closed its doors to the real Christ of the Gospels, substituting another of their own making. The Lord ever merciful said, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne"* (3:20-21). The Lord's invitation is to those of genuine heart to come out of Babylon, renouncing the papal kingship and the worship of its image, that they might share the throne of the Lamb in his Kingdom.

Throughout its prolonged existence, "Philadelphia" comprised small groups and communities of worshippers scattered through Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and further afield. Under different names and in widely separated localities they have worshipped in the Lord's spiritual tabernacle in the wilderness; always in opposition to Roman Christendom and repudiating her claims of apostolic succession. Often deprived of civil rights and made fugitives through religious persecution, these communities received little mention in profane history. The records have largely been coloured by Church influence to represent

them as heretical sects who were enemies of ecclesiastical authority and Christian teaching. Their continued survival in one form or another is recognized by Christ throughout the Apocalypse. They were his first line witnesses.

After the French Revolution these Philadelphian brethren were seen by John standing beside a sea of glass, in thankful rejoicing to God for their deliverance from papal persecution. The smooth sea for them was mingled with the *"fire"* of the seven last plagues on Rome (Rev. 15:1-2). That an extension of the Philadelphian Ecclesia is extant today there can be no doubt. Paul declared that there would be those *"who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord"*: also the Lord said the angels go forth to sever the just from the unjust at his appearing. There is therefore a link up, however few in number, between those who remain alive and those who were standing beside the sea of glass (15:2), *"who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name."*

Where then shall the seeker after redemption look for a community of people identifiable as the Philadelphian Ecclesia of the last days? The reader will by now have some comprehension of what John meant by sharing the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance. In the final chapter of the book Jesus declares: *"And behold I am coming soon. Blessed is he who keeps* (hold fast) *the words of the prophecy of this book" (*Rev. 22:7). One cannot *"hold fast"* the words of the prophecy unless he entertain a rational interpretation of its symbology in the light of historical fulfillment, and perceives in its future world-shaking events the Kingdom and power of Jesus Christ. Such a one will naturally share the hopes and aspirations of the Philadelphian Ecclesia in the wilderness, who conquered the beast and its image. He will also repudiate that system of Christianity called Laodicean which to this day approves the deeds of its fathers. Neither can one keep the words of the prophecy unless his life, conduct and fervent expectations accord with its burning message of divine integrity and justice.

Daniel the prophet and the apostles Paul and John, in their letters, made early Christians aware of the great apostasy to come, while the Lord in his Revelation confirmed and greatly elaborated their predictions. The system would therefore be easily recognizable to those genuine Christians who witnessed its emergence. The Philadelphian Ecclesia found itself in opposition to practically everything that ecclesiastical Rome stood for. The Catholic Church fathers, from Tertullian in the second century to Origen of the third, had already created in embryo the erroneous fundamental doctrines of the Apostasy. It remained for successive Church Councils from Constantine's day onwards to debate, elaborate, establish and confirm them by Church and State decree as Catholic dogma. The decisions of these theological assemblies compromised Christian doctrine with Greek and Pagan philosophy, until the whole concept of Apostolic Christianity became perverted and unrecognizable. To all this was added the gradual moral declension paving the road of expediency to great power and authority.

The Heritage of Protestantism

The early fathers of the Reformation, John Wycliffe (1320-1384), Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564) were orientated in Roman Catholic doctrine. The first two were Catholic priests and Calvin a Catholic curate at 18 but left the church at 25. Notwithstanding the great and courageous work of these men and those who followed them, they carried over from Catholicism those cardinal doctrines of the Creeds formulated in the councils of Rome. What protestantism repudiated was more in the nature of Roman externalisms, enumerated by England's Bishop Hooper as "The impious Mass, the shameful celibacy of the clergy, purgatory, images, relics and miracles." Added to these repudiations were of course the inevitable papal claims of authority, apostolic succession and infallibility.

On the negative side, Christ's future literal Kingdom on earth was lost to ecclesiastical Rome through its alliance with the State and its anti-semitic prejudice. According to Renwick there were other reasons also:

> The extremism of Montanism produced some violent reactions. Because of the vivid descriptions given by them of a millennial epoch of sensual enjoyment, the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming, with which this was identified, was laid aside by the church as a whole. Once prophetism was discredited, Christ came to be regarded as far away, and the clergy were conceived as having his affairs in their hands, and doing his work on earth through the sacraments. This led to the exaltation of the ministers of the Church. Especially after the time of Cyprian (250 A.D.), they were regarded as priests offering again the sacrifice of Christ on the altar." (The Story of the Church, pp.35,36)

Again it was the misfortune of Protestantism to inherit the "kingdom vacuum" of the Catholic Church, together with its rejection of Bible prophecy as an essential ingredient of the Christian Faith. Like Rome, they are wrapped up with nationalism and politics and their "kingdom" is very much of this world.

The Day of Decision

The 6th and 7th bowl prophecies portray a latter-day Christendom potentially set for a collision course with the returned Christ, and her long historical record lacks any convincing evidence that she would act otherwise. If Christendom taught and loved the Lord's appearing and Kingdom, she would not be overtaken by his thief-like advent. If she believed the Old Testament prophets she would be looking for the personal return of Israel's Messiah. As the already perilous times increase in severity and tempo, alarmed people will be groping for some anchor of hope amidst the prevalent distress and perplexity. Conviction and faith in the declared purpose and plan of the Most High God provides the only anchor that will avoid ultimate personal ship-wreck, when the storm really breaks.

Each of the Lord's seven letters to the churches terminates with promises of the most sublime rewards "TO HIM WHO CONQUERS." From these, the transcendent blessings in store for faithful worshippers in the wilderness tabernacle may be comprehended. In view of the fierce tribulation which lies ahead for all the world, let the reader contemplate the unique prospects of the Philadelphian Ecclesia. The true woman, having passed through her wilderness persecution, is now attended with the present dangers of a prosperous and pleasure loving world. Signs are nevertheless evident that the great international, industrial and social upheavals predicted by Jesus are on their way to distress the nations in great perplexity. The powers of the international "heavens" are already being shaken, some to their very foundations. This notable sign now rapidly developing, when superimposed upon the Jewish sign, will be followed by the Lord's veiled presence in the Jerusalem "heaven" with power and great glory (Luke 21:25-27). Israel will be saved and the saints redeemed by this remarkable presence; but the political clouds will effectively hide the Lord's identity from the world and the nations. *"But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?" (*Malachi 3:2).

CHAPTER 49 IN CONCLUSION – ABOUT THE GREAT KING

A Complete Delegation of Power

The outstanding feature of the Revelation is the unique greatness and authority of Jesus. He is set so far above every name that can be named, except the Father himself. There is demonstrated throughout a generous sharing by the Eternal One of His Glory with the Son of His love, but it amounts to much more than that. God's glory is something which His creation gives back to Him. Because so few of mankind believe in God or worship Him, there is now little of God's glory on this earth that could be shared with His Christ. The Father has appointed His Son the vehicle of His glory, emitting it as a powerful lamp shedding its light. *"For the glory of God is its LIGHT and its LAMP is the LAMB."* In other words *"He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power"* (Heb. 1:3).

This complete delegation of power and authority from Father to Son was announced by Jesus after his resurrection, and confirmed by revelation to Paul and the other apostles. The Father set His seal to it by giving to the Son "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST." The grand plan is God's and His Christ the executor of it. If God's *"will be done on earth as it is in heaven,"* then His holy name and His meaningful titles must be venerated in the eyes of men, even as they are glorified by the angels in heaven. Such titles as *"Lord God the Almighty," "Lord of hosts," and "King of kings and Lord of lords"* express the infinite power of God to men and angels. Unless these are upon men's lips in worshipful acknowledgement of God's supreme might and man's utter dependence upon His favour, then they are redundant and meaningless and God is dishonoured. Only a fraction of one percent of the world's population now honour and revere these titles as of the God of heaven. They mean nothing to the vast throng of careless sinners whose god is pleasure and self-indulgence; nor to the worldly-wise and the sceptic.

The transcendent Christ will bear these titles as *"the arm of the Lord"* extended from heaven to earth, that all men may see and acknowledge *"the light of the knowledge of the GLORY OF GOD in the face of Christ"* (2 Cor. 4:6). *"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory"* (Isa. 6:3). There was a two-way glory prayed for by Jesus: *"glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee"* (John 17:1). The glorification of Jesus at the right hand of the Father has prepared the way for the Son to glorify the Father on earth for a thousand years. It can truly be said of Jesus, *"Your throne is the throne of God"* (Ps. 45:6 Marginal rendering R.V. and R.S.V.).

When holiness is ascribed to *"the Lord God the Almighty*" and worthiness to *"Our Lord and God,"* such homage is received by the Son of God who is the visible occupant of the apocalyptic throne. There is a veiling of separate identities for the millennial duration, which entirely harmonises with the language of the Old Testament and the apostolic letters. To those divine titles which incorporate Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse, there can be added from the Old Testament, *"Lord of hosts"* (Isa. 6:3, 5; John 12:41), *"Mighty God"* and *"Everlasting Father"* (Isa. 9:6) as applicable to Christ in his messianic role.

The Alpha Title

There is a millennial glory which accrues to Jesus as the Saviour of men. *"The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father"* (John 5:22-23). The LAMB is the natural title that will perpetuate in the hearts of men the efficacy of the Lord's sacrifice and suffering to save men from death. It will be as pleasing to men and nations, as to the Father of all flesh, that His Son should be known and adored by countless millions as the LAMB.

The apocalyptic visions of John set the divine seal to this title, which will commend itself to every creature in heaven and on earth. *"To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb . . ."* and he sits upon the

throne as King of kings and Lord of lords. *"Power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing"* belong to the King by virtue of those mighty deeds which made him the Lamb of God. But the LAMB is not only a memorial name to merit the praise and gratitude of mankind. The harvest of human redemption must be gathered and the blood of the Lamb will not have lost its appeal after 2000 years. The Alpha title will stand as a constant reminder to men and nations that the prize of eternal life is for those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates" (Rev. 22:14).

We cannot escape the divinely intended blending of Father and Son into an intensive unity of Spirit, expressed by Jesus when praying for the unity of the Christ Body: *"that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us"* (John 17:21). That oneness of Father and Son finds expression in the names of both God and the Lamb being impressed in the foreheads of redeemed saints (Rev. 3:12). *"There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship* (serve) *him; they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads"* (Rev. 22:3-4). This represents true mystery of GOD-MANIFESTATION in the millennial age.

The Unchangeable Christ

The question may well arise in the mind of the reader, Does the Revelation present a Universal King with the same appealing qualities of character as displayed in the Gospels of God's suffering servant? There he was courteous, kind, compassionate and loving. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and his great heart went out to humanity in all their physical and mental sufferings, which he seemed to make his very own. To those whose conscience felt the burden of sinfulness he was ever understanding and forgiving. He had power to forgive sin and heal disease and where one resulted from the other he freely did both. *"Surely,"* said the prophet, *"he has born our griefs and carried our sorrows,"* and he did it with a sympathy and compassion beyond human experience. His magnanimous mind could move from the speaking of weighty parables and sublime precepts to the blessing of little children, then to the profound theme of giving his life for the sin of the world.

His prime mission was to save human souls eternally and to die for their sins according to the Scriptures. In this he came to show God's character to men; for God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. He patiently endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, never losing temper or indicting men in anger; but always maintaining his personal dignity while respecting that of others. On occasions he looked around at his enemies in anger because of their hardness of heart. He loved his nation and the common people whom he saw as sheep having no shepherd. He was a friend of publicans and sinners, many of whom became his disciples. *"This is my commandment,"* said Jesus, "*that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you"* (John 15:12-14).

He saw the Jewish religious leaders as having corrupted the spirit of the Law of Moses, and by their petty legalities had imposed heavy burdens on the people.
Their perversity and pride, and above all their hypocrisy, provoked the Lord to a withering condemnation of their unrelenting wickedness. He tore away their mask of piety, starkly revealing their hypocrisy and iniquity.

This same responsive, loving and warm-hearted Son of God, so vibrant and pulsating, so holy in sinless perfection having suffered in temptation and death, is now a High Priest and Mediator *"touched with the feeling of our infirmities."* So awesome will be the majesty and power of his coming that we, like John, may

well fall at his feet as though dead: but if he lays his right hand upon us saying *"Fear not,"* as he did with John, our joy would be full. We are reminded that *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever"* (Heb. 13:8). The Revelation defines these phases as *"who was"* and *"who is"* and *"who is to come"* and in all three the Alpha memorial name, which is the LAMB, guarantees the same sublime and magnanimous personality who trod this earth and faced the cross nigh two thousand years ago.

If this presentation has awakened in the reader some sense of faith and love for the appearing and Kingdom of Jesus Christ, then let him seek out a body of men and women already dedicated to such a hope and conviction. Let such a one be assured that the modern *"Philadelphian" Ecclesia* will be one which couples the Lord's appearing and Kingdom with his Messiahship of the Jews and the restored throne of David. Only baptism by total immersion in water, accompanied by a personal belief *"in the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,"* can introduce a repentant believer into the true Body of Christ. There he may share with his fellow-pilgrims *"the kingdom and the patient endurance,"* suffering whatever tribulation necessary to gain a *"crown of righteousness*" at the Lord's coming. King David's hope will then be his: *"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the POWER, and the GLORY, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the KINGDOM, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all"* (1 Chron. 29:11). Jesus said, *"Surely I am coming soon."* And with John we say, *"AMEN.* COME, LORD JESUS!"

The End

Figure 4 - The Revelation at a Glance

CHRIST IN GLORY AMID THE SEVEN CHURCHES	Rev. chap. 1 to 3 EXISTENT CHRIST
CHRIST ENTHRONED IN HIS KINGDOM WITH ELDERS AND LIVING CREATURES	Rev chap. 4 Christ is projected into the Kingdom age in vision.
CHRIST SEEN AS A LAMB NEAR THE THRONE; ACCOUNTED WORTHY TO OPEN THE SCROLL	Rev. chap.5 THE LAMB projected into the Kingdom age in vision

The <u>Existent Lamb</u> opens the scroll with its <u>seven seals</u>

A.D.

98	1st Seal	Rev. 6:1,2	White horse and rider with bow – Gospel proclaimed in the Roman Empire for 80 peaceful years.
183	2nd Seal	Rev. 6:3,4	Red horse with rider taking peace from earth. – Bloodshed and civil war in The Roman Empire.
212	3rd Seal	Rev. 6:5,6	Black horse and rider called with balances. – Severe famine in the Roman Empire.
235	4th Seal	Rev. 6:7,8	Pale horse and rider called 'Death' & 'Hades'. – Murder and violence in the empire. Emperors murdered.
303	5th Seal	Rev. 6:9-11	Souls under the altar cry out 'How long!; - Saints persecuted by Roman pagan emperors, Diocletian and Galerius along with whole Christian Church.
311	6th Seal	Rev. 6:12-17	<u>A GREAT EARTHQUAKE</u>: Sun black, moon like blood – CONSTANTINE overthrows PAGANISM, exalts CHRISTIANITY.

THE LAMB ON HIS THRONE RECEIVES HONOUR AND GLORY – SHEPHERDS GREAT MULTITUDE OF BELIEVERS OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION	Chap. 7 Continuous 'sealing' of Saints out of the Apostate Church of Constantine

329	7th Trumpet	Rev.8:1-6	SEVEN TRUMPETS emerge announcing Invasions of Rome and the Roman Empire
395	1st Trumpet	Rev. 8:7	Hail, Fire and Blood. – Huns and Goths (Alaric) invaded and afflicted Western Third of Roman Empire.
429	2nd Trumpet	Rev. 8:8	Burning mountain cast into the sea. – Roman fleet destroyed by the Vandals.
450	3rd Trumpet	Rev. 8:10-11	Star (Attila the Hun) fell from heaven. – Desolated Western third of Roman Empire
476	4th Trumpet	Rev. 8:12-13	One third Sun, Moon and Stars smitten. – Odoecer, king of Haruil, invades Rome and deposes Emperor.
632-972	5th Trumpet (1st Woe)	Rev. 9:1-12	A STAR falls to earth; smoke and locusts arose from pit. – Saracens successively invade E. Rome.
1063-1453	6th Trumpet (2nd Woe)	Rev.9:13-21	Four 'angels' released from River Euphrates to plague and kill. – Turkish Invasions of Eastern Roman Empire. Constantinople taken 1453; Empire extinguished.
1789	6th Trumpet extended	Rev.11-12	<u>A GREAT EARTHQUAKE</u> . – tenth of papal 'city' falls. The French

		REVOLUTION lost FRANCE to the papal dominion.
1792	7th Trumpet (3rd Woe)	Rev.10:7 SEVEN BOWLS (vials RV) released as plagues on Papal kingdom.

CHRIST AGAIN SEEN IN GLORY WITH THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD HAVING BECOME THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND HIS CHRIST.	Rev. 11:15-19 Vision of KINGDOM Following blowing of 7th TRUMPET
DESCENT OF RAINBOWED CHRIST-ANGEL TO ANNOUNCE 'LITTLE SCROLL' JUDGMENTS ON PAPAL ROME – THE BOWLS OF THE 7TH TRUMPET	Rev. 10:1-2 The Timing of the vision is prior to the 1st bowl but the 'Lion roaring' of V.3 and the SEVEN THUNDERS suggest actual descent from heaven is for Israel's deliverance.

1792	1st Bowl	Rev.16:1-.2	Poured on the 'EARTH' producing foul sores on Beast worshippers. – French post-evolution civil and foreign more.
1795	2nd Bowl	Rev.16:3	Poured on the 'SEA' making it as blood. – Naval victories of Great Britain against Papal sponsored navys.
1796	3rd Bowl	Rev.16:4-7	Poured into rivers and fountains, burning waters to blood. – Napoleon invaded Northern Italy.
1805	4th Bowl	Rev. 16:8-9	Poured on the 'SUN' to scorch men. – Napoleon invaded Austria, seat of Emperor of 'Holy Roman Empire.'
1808	5th Bowl	Rev. 16:10-11	Poured on throne of Beast and darkened his kingdom. – Napoleon seizes papal states in Italy, arrests POPE and takes him prisoner to France. Papal States annexed to KINGDOM of ITALY in 1867 due to Garibaldi.

The Israel interlude in the Revelation

While the 1st BOWL of the 7th TRUMPET found immediate fulfilment because the little scroll was 'open,' THE SEVEN THUNDERS WERE SEALED UP INDICATING THEIR FULFILMENT WAS RESERVED TILL LATER. John was not allowed to write what they said. THE RAINBOW ANGEL with the voice of a ROARING LION was 'THE LION OF JUDAH' SUGGESTING THE SEVEN THUNDERS AS SEVEN WARS FOR ISRAEL'S LIBERATION terminating with the

OVERTHROW OF GOG – THE DRAGON BINDING EVENT of Revelation 20:1.

THE SON OF MAN COMES in His Glory, and all His Angels with Him (Matt.25:31)
Delivers ISRAEL, then sits on **His Glorious Davidic Throne**

THE RESURRECTION TAKES PLACE (Rev. 20:4).

THE LAMB appears on **Mount Zion** with **His '144,000' REDEEMED FIRST FRUITS** to be organized as Living Creatures and Elders	Rev14:1-5 They sit as a **Court of Judgment upon ROME**.

The 6th Bowl Rev. 16:12-16 Stage is set when **Ecclesiastical Roman Woman – Babylon the great** is seated on a 10 Horned Beast.

6th BOWL poured on Great River Euphrates, drying up its Human Waters which were under the Woman. Rev. 17:1-15

The Eternal Gospel proclaimed by the FLYING 'ANGEL' in MID HEAVEN. Rev.14:6-7. This, with the two angels following (14:8-9) and the LORD'S VOICE from JERUSALEM, Convert or Alienate Great Multitudes of Rome's Adherents, thus 'Drying Up' the Waters of Babylon's Euphrates.

Three demonic spirits proceed from the DRAGON, BEAST and FALSE PROPHET. In response to 'DRYING UP;' inciting 10 Kings to WAR AGAINST CHRIST.

The LAMB as KING of Kings unrecognized by the world, appears in the **Jerusalem 'HEAVEN'** seated on a **WHITE HORSE OF WAR**, His Army of Saints following (19:11-16) **MORTAL 'HARVEST SAINTS'** are gathered before **WINEPRESS TREADING**

The Beast and the kings of the EARTH and their ARMIES gather at **ARMAGEDDON** to make war against the **WHITE HORSE RIDER**. Rev.19:19

The 7th Bowl Rev. 16:12-16. Poured 'INTO THE AIR' (It is Done)

There were Lightning, Loud Noises, Thunder and **a Great Earthquake.**

The great wine press trodden at **Armageddon**; The armies destroyed and the **beast** (Ruler) and **false prophet** (Papacy) taken Captive. (Rev. 19-15-20).

CHRIST REVEALS HIS IDENTITY TO THE NATIONS

Rev.18:1 (See Ps.2:4-11) "I saw another angel coming down from HEAVEN having GREAT AUTHORITY; AND THE EARTH WAS MADE BRIGHT WITH HIS SPLENDOUR. AND HE CALLED OUT WITH A MIGHTY VOICE, **'FALLEN, FALLEN IS BABYLON THE GREAT.'**

This is Jesus coming from his Father's heaven, In power and great glory, after 40 years wrapped in the political CLOUDS of the 'JERUSALEM HEAVEN.'

THE GREATEST 'EARTHQUAKE' EVER is initiated by the Lord's MIGHTY VOICED DECREE ON BABYLON'S FALL. (18:1-2). The peoples of Europe and beyond, do his bidding in their great wrath for the gross deception practiced on them by the Woman and Her False Prophet.

*"For God (through Christ) has put into their hearts to carry out his purpose (of destroying Babylon: . . ." "they hate the harlot . . . and burn her up **with fire."*** (Rev. 17:15-17)

And Chapter 18. ***Into this 'Lake of Fire' the Beast and False Prophet are cast.***

THE 144,000 REJOICE Praising God for victory over the Harlot. (19:1-2)

The mortal 'harvest' saints 'A great Multitude 'cry "Hallelujah! FOR THE LORD OUR GOD THE ALMIGHTY REIGNS." (19:5-7). They rejoice over the **Bride.**

The Lord said “It is done.” “Behold I make all things new.”

“**I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH”** Rev. 21:1,5

The Lamb’s Universal Millennial Reign is introduced.

The Holy City, New Jerusalem DESCENDS Rev. 21:2-4 & 9-21

From Heaven as Lamb’s bride

ITS TEMPLE, THE LORD GOD THE ALMIGHTY Rev.21:22

AND THE LAMB. Worthy the Lamb who was slain, to receive Power and Wealth and Wisdom and Might and Honour and Glory and Blessing! Rev. 5:12

Chart 1 Apocalypse

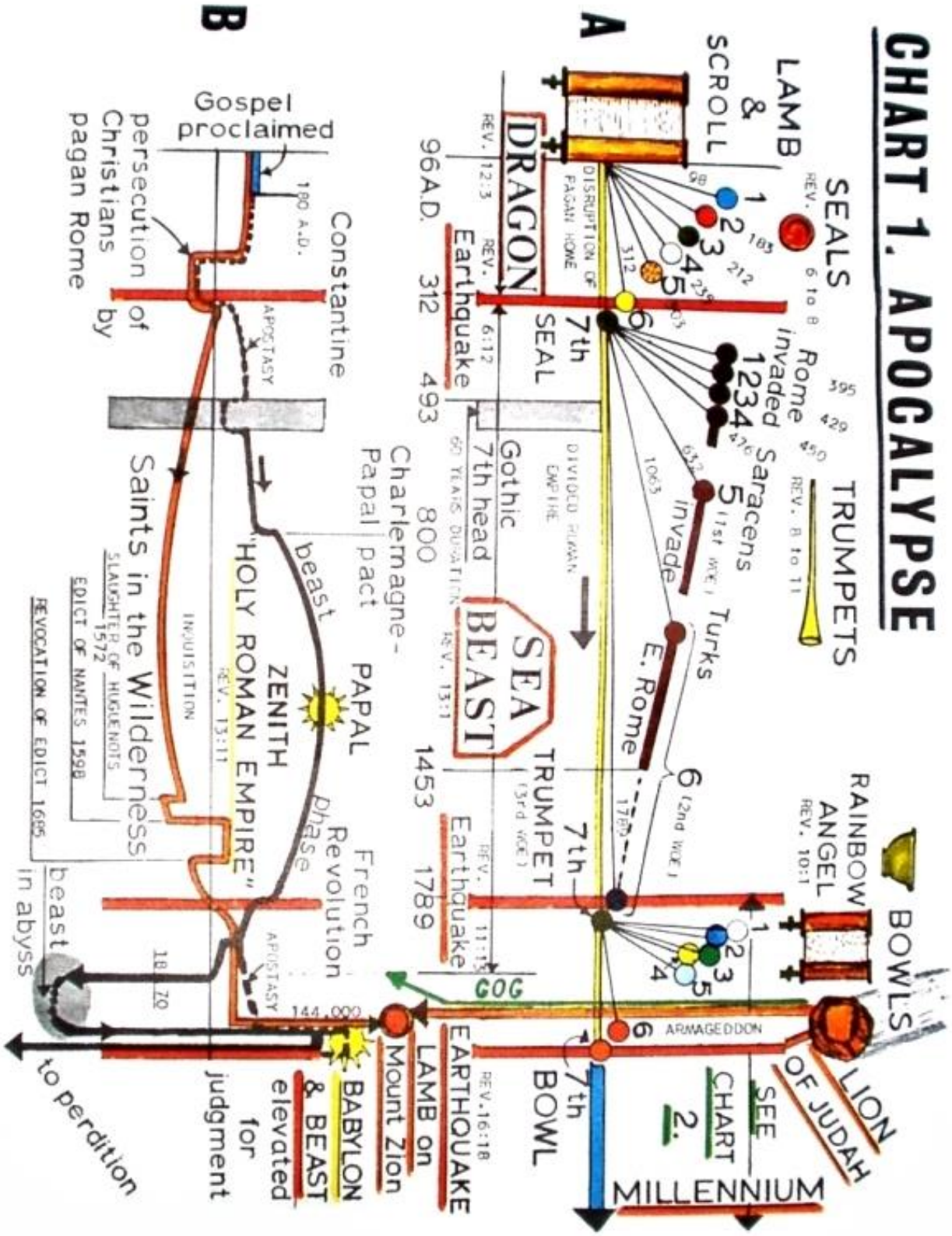
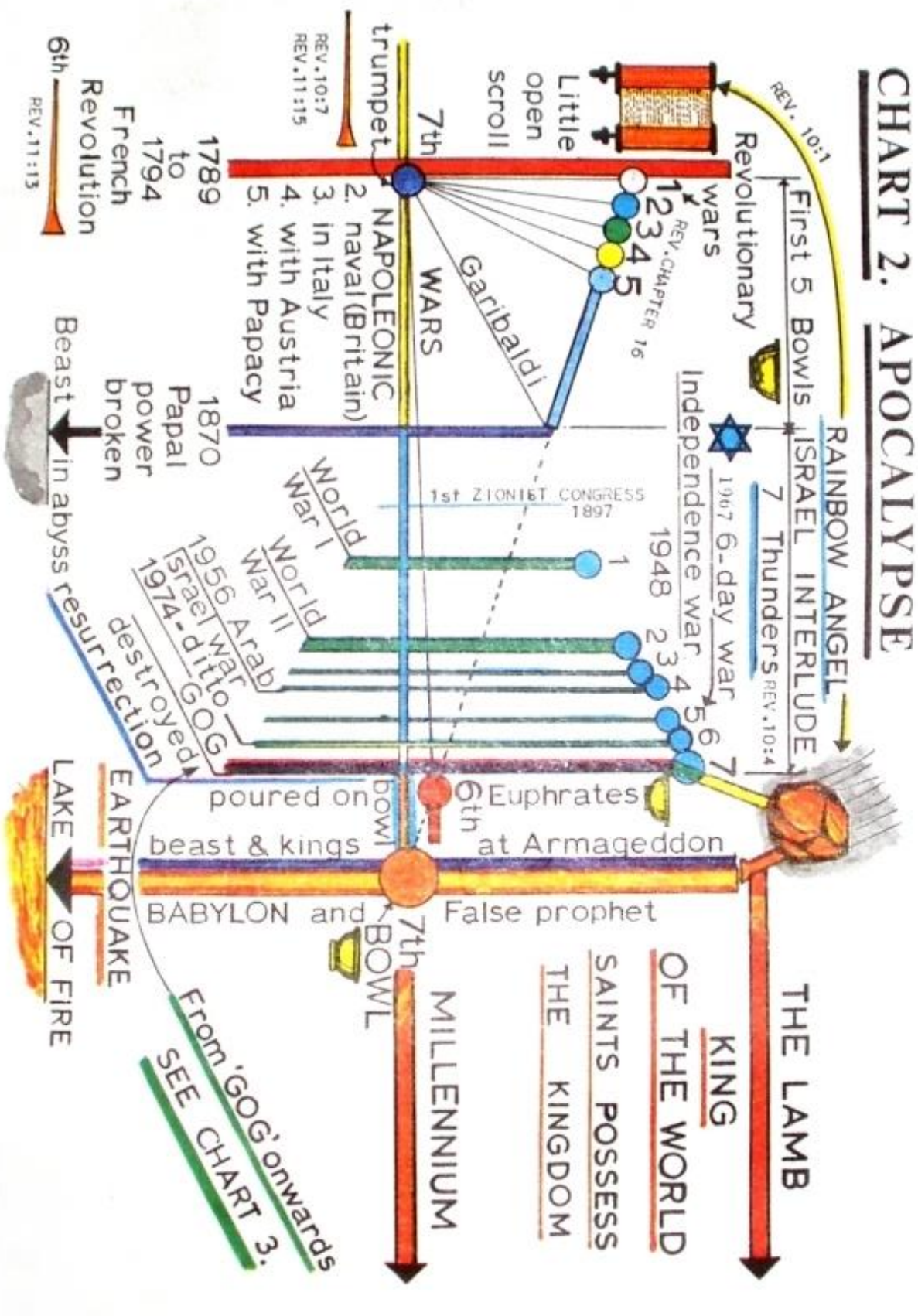


Chart 2 Apocalypse



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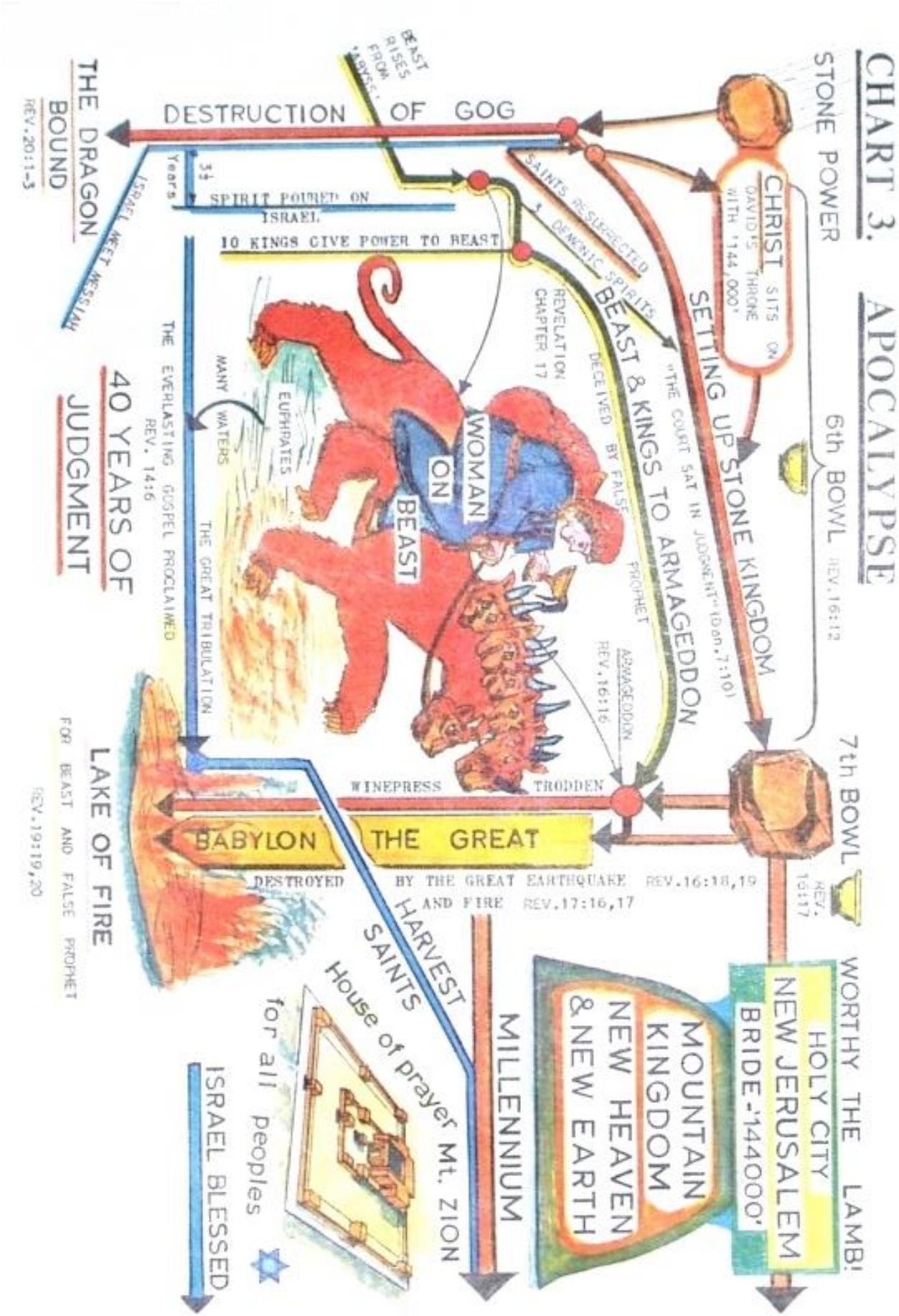

Chart 4 Apocalypse

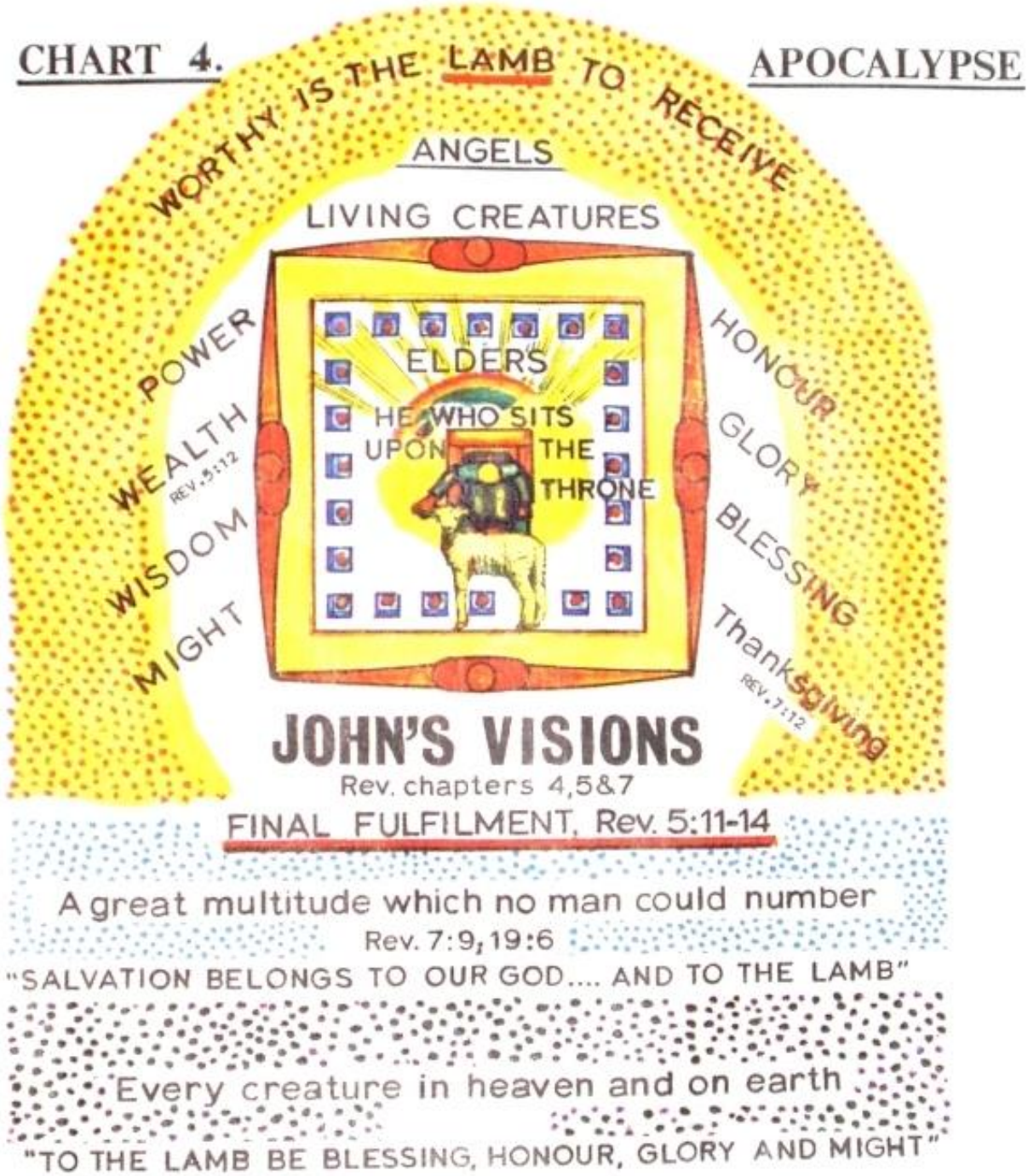

Figure 5 - The Western & Eastern Roman Empires – a Chronology

Bishops, popes, emperors and kings since Constantine

BISHOPS OF ROME		EMPERORS OF ROME (6th IMPERIAL HEAD)	
Sylvester I	314-335	311-337	CONSTANTINE I & Licinius till 324
COUNCIL OF NICEA	325	337-340	Constantine II, Constantius II, Constans
		340-350	Constantius II, Constans
Julius 1	337-352	350-361	Constantius II
Liberius	352-366	361-363	Julian (pagan emperor)
		363-364	Jovian
		364-375	Valentinian I & Valens, with Gratian from 367
Damasus I	366-384	375-378	Valens, Gratian & Valentinian II
		378-395	THEODOSIUS I (the Great), with Gratian & Valentinian II to 383, Valentinian II and Arcadius 383-392, Arcadius and Honorius 392-395
Siricius	384-399		
(AMBROSE, Bishop of Milan)			

395 PARTITIAN OF ROMAN EMPIRE INTO EAST AND WEST

BISHOPS	6th Head	WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE EMPERORS in Rome		EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE Dragon EMPERORS in Constantinople	
Anastasius I	399-401	395-423	Honorius	395-408	Arcadius
INNOCENT I	401-417	425-455	Valentinian III	408-450	Theodosius II
Boniface I	418-422	455-456	Petronius Maximums, Avitus	450-457	Marcian
POPES		457-461	Majorian	457-474	Leo I
LEO I (Great)	440-422	461-465	Libius Severus	474	Leo II
COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON		467-472	Anthemius, 472 Olybrius		
Hilary	461-468	473-474	Glycerius		
		474-475	Julius Nepos	474-491	Zeno
Lesser Popes		475-476	Romulus Agustuius (deposed)	491-518	Anastasius
Omitted from List		**END OF WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE**			
		GOTHIC KINGS IN ITALY (7th Head)		**DYNASTY of JUSTINIAN**	
Simplicius	468-483	**475-490**	Odoacer (V-regent to Zeno)	518-527	Justin I
11 popes fill in the		**493-526**	The ODORIC (Ostrogoth)		
period of GOTHIC kings		**526-534**	Athalaric (boy)	527-565	JUSTINIAN I partly healed deadly

		534-539	Vitiges		wound to 6th head by ending Gothic
Vigilius	537-555	**540-553**	Totila (Gothic reign ends)		reign in ROME
Benedict I	575-579				
Peiagius II	579-590			565*578	Justin II
GREGORY I Grt.	590-604			578-582	Tiberius II
BONIFACE III	607-607			582-602	Maurice
Vitellan	657-672			602-510	**PHOCAS**
Gregory II	715-731		The short lived 7th Head ended when Justinian vanquished the Goths in Italy. Through Justinian decree "THE SETTLEMENT OF OF ITALY," at papal; request, Eastern Emperors administered Italy from Ravenna in Nth Italy	610- 641	Heracllus
Stephen III	752-757			641-668	Constans II
Stephen IV	768-772			668-685	Constantine IV
Adrian I	772-795			685-695	Justinian II (banished)
LEO III	795-816			695-698	Leontus
Leo IV	847-855			698-705	Tiberius III
Nicholas I Grt.	858-867	**554-759**	Eastern Ex-Archate at Ravenna (Italy) with vice-regent	705-711	Justinian (restored)
Adrian II	867-872		with vice-regent for oversight of Italy	711-713	Bardanes
John VIII	872-882			713-716	Anastasius II
John XII	955-964			716-717	Theodosius II
Nicholas II	1059-1061		Jurisdiction of Eastern Rome over Italy ceased with the papal revolt against Leo III, followed by the Lombards taking over Eastern Rome.	717-741	**LEO III**
GREGORY VII	1073-1085			741-775	Constantine V & Copronymus
Urban II	1088-1099		Ex-archate in Italy in 750, Pepin later took the Ravenna estates and presented them to the Papacy in 759	775-780	Leo IV
Paschal II	1099-1118			780-797	Constantine VI
Cailistus II	1119-1124			797-802	Irene
Adrian IV	1154-1159			802-811	Nicephorus I
Alexander III	1159-1181			811-811	Strauracius
INNOCENT III	1198-1216			811-813	Michael I
GREGORY IX	1227-1241			813-820	Leo V
Gregory X	1272-1276			820-829	Michael II
BONIFACE VIII	1295-1303			829-842	Theophilus
Clement V	1305-1314			842-867	Michael III
JOHN XXIII	1316-1334			867-886	Basil I
Gregory XI	1370-1378			886-913	Leo VI & Alexander
Martin V	1417-1431			912-959	Constantine VII & Porphyrogenitus
Nicholas V	1447-1455			919-944	Romanus I Lecapenus
LEO X	1513-1521			959-963	Romanus I

Clement VII	1524-1534
Paul III	1534-1549
Julius III	1550-1555
Paul IV	1555-1559
Pius V	1566-1572
Gregory XIII	1572-1585
Innocent XI	1676-1689
Clement XIV	1769-1774
PIUS VI	1775-1799
PIUS VII	1800-1823
Leo XII	1823-1829
Pius VIII	1829-1850
Gregory XVI	1831-1846

POPES

Pius IX	1846-1878
Leo XIII	1878-1903
Pius X	1903-1914
Benedict XV	1914-1922
Pius XI	1922*1939
PIUS XII	1939-1958
JOHN XXIII	1958-1963
Paul VI	1963-1978
John Paul I *	1978-1978
John Paul II	1978-

*passed away same day as the author, 28/9/78, under suspicious circumstances

963-963	Basil II & Constantine VII, sons of Romans II
963-969	Nicephorus II
969-976	John I Zimskies
1025	Basil II dies, Bulgar-octonus
1028	Constantine VIII dies
1028-1034	Romanus III Argyrus
1034-1041	Michael IV
1041-1042	Michael V, Calaphates
1042-1055	Constantine IX Monomachus
1055-1056	Theodora
1056-1057	Michael VI Stratiotious
1057-1059	Isaac I Conmemus

EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE

1059-1067	Constantine X Ducas
1067-1071	Romanus IV, Diogenes
1071	Constantine XII
1071-1078	Michael VII Ducas
1078-1081	Nicephorus III Botaniates
1081-1118	Alexius I, Comnenus
1143-1180	Manuel I
1180-1183	Alexius II
1183-1185	Andronicus I
1185-1195	Isaac II (dethroned)
1195-1203	Alexius III
1203-1204	Isaac II & Alexius IV
1204	Alexius V Ducas
1204-1222	Theodorus I Lascaris
1222-1254	John III Ducas Vatatzes
1254-1258	Theodorus II Lascaris
1258-1261	John IV Lascaris
1259-1282	Michael Viii Palaeolous

1282-1328	Andronicus II
1328-1341	Andronicus III
1341-1376	John V Cantacuzenus
1341-1354	John V!
1376-1379	Andronicus IV
1379-1391	John Vi restored
1390	John VII
1391-1425	Manuel II
1425-1448	John VIII
1449-1453	Constantine XI Dragases
1453	CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY MAHOMET II BROUGHT AN END TO THE EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE