

**The  
Book of  
Revelation  
Explained**

**Volume Four**

**Earl R. Borders**

**The Book**  
**of**  
**Revelation Explained**

**Volume 4**  
**Chapters 12-14**

**Earl R. Borders**

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## FOREWORD

As I present Volume 4 to the church, allow me to refer to the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:1. There the Apostle begged, "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me." As this fourth volume goes to print, it is the year of our Lord 2012, I was called to the ministry by the Lord in 1972. Thus, this is my 40<sup>th</sup> year since "he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Timothy 1:12). As this milestone has arrived, it has given me cause to reflect and reminisce.

I have always had a heart and desire for the Revelation. As a young man prior to ever having any knowledge of truth, I can remember trying to read Brother F. G. Smith's *The Revelation Explained*, which was given to me by a dear neighbor of a relative of mine. I must confess at that time of my life, its understanding was hidden to me. At the tender age of eighteen God, in His faithfulness, brought me in contact with the truth and saved me. I then had the great privilege of both hearing Brother Emerson A. Wilson preach these truths as well as reading and studying his books. As mentioned, on December 20, 1972, the Lord called me to preach. In February 1973, at the age of nineteen, I preached my first series of messages from the Book of Revelation.

Around 1981-1982 I began to feel a pressing burden for an up-to-date book on the Book of Revelation. There were books that dealt with a series or two but none since a 1955 revision that dealt with it in its entirety in seventh-seal light. I initially desired that elder brethren more capable than I would feel this burden and assume this undertaking. Unfortunately, none did so. Brother Wilson and others were called from the shores of time, thus greatly increasing my burden. It came to my realization that "a living dog is better than a dead lion" (Ecclesiastes 9:4). The lions were all dead, but there was still a tremendous need for these truths to be set forth. So, in the eighties I began to work on what has become these volumes of *The Book of Revelation Explained*.

It has, in reality, been a lifetime's work. I am gratified, yet humbled, to have been called to such an important task. I keenly realize that the caliber of scholarship of my writings is nowhere in league with many of my dear brethren who wrote previously. However, if the Lord can say of me and my feeble efforts, as He did of the one who anointed him, "[he] hath done what [he] could" (Mark 14:8), it will be sufficient.

This fourth of six volumes covers Chapters 12-14. These chapters are at the heart of understanding truth and sadly the source of a whole host of erroneous, false, and yea even damnable teachings. This volume is the most lengthy yet of the series and necessarily so because of its subject matter. I trust this volume will be a benefit to your knowledge of truth and spiritual growth. In these past forty years, the Lord has been very faithful to me and as the song writer penned "through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come." The Lord has been faithful to my soul all of these years, and I desire to be faithful to your soul. The truth contained in this book is not designed to "wrestle against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12). We are not against individuals, but working to expose the falsities that work against the welfare of men's souls. I trust you will take it as such.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Pastor Roger L. Decker for his continuing support in the preparation and printing of these volumes. Sister Sheri Strelecky has worked tirelessly to edit the manuscripts and make them available in their present form. Without her dedication and labors, this volume would not be before you. I want to express my appreciation to Brother Russell Orr for providing the drawing on the cover of this volume. I also want to acknowledge the transcribers, typists, editors, proofreaders, and printers—all of those without whom this book would not be possible.

So without further adieu, I humbly present for your edification Volume 4 of *The Book of Revelation Explained*. May God use it to His glory and to enlighten precious hearts.

Brother Earl R. Borders  
Newark, Ohio  
December 2012

## PREFACE

You will notice that *The Book of Revelation Explained, Volume 4*, begins with Chapter 12, not Chapter 1, and ends at the conclusion of Chapter 14. This is to correspond with the chapters in the Revelation. Chapters 1-3 cover the introduction to the revelation and the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia and are explained in *The Book of Revelation Explained, Volume 1*. Chapters 4-8 cover the truths preceding the seal series and the opening of the seven seals and are explained in *The Book of Revelation Explained, Volume 2*. Chapters 8-11 cover predominantly the sounding of the seven trumpets and the witness series and are explained in *The Book of Revelation Explained, Volume 3*.

The chapters of these volumes are designated in this manner for ready reference sake. Thus, when studying a chapter in the Book of Revelation, you will be able to turn to the same numerical chapter in the corresponding volume of *The Book of Revelation Explained*. We trust this format will aid and facilitate your study.

# The Time Delineation of the Revelation

There are seven series in the Revelation. They carry us from the morning-time portion of the Gospel Day to the evening time or the seventh-seal period of time. The Revelation retraces the Gospel Day seven times. It does this by taking us (through the vehicle of these series) through the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day. It portrays the Spirit of God working through the seven periods of the Gospel Day, carrying the truth into all the earth (Revelation 5:6; 1:20).

	A.D. 33	A.D. 270	A.D. 530	A.D. 1530	A.D. 1730	A.D. 1880	A.D. 1930
	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
1	C. 2	(Chapter 1 is an introduction to Series One)			C. 3		
2	C. 6	(Chapters 4 & 5 are an introduction to Series Two)				C. 7	C. 8:1-2
3	C. 8:2-13				C. 9		C. 10
4		C. 11					
5	C. 12	C. 13				C. 14	C. 15
						C. 16	C. 17
						C. 18	C. 19
6	C. 20						
7	C. 21:1-8					C. 21:9-16	
						C. 22	

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## Introduction to the Revelation

**Revelation 1:1** The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

**2** Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

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

**4** John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

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

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

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

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

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

### The Battle for the Soul

This passage of Scripture text records the introductory verses to the Book of the Revelation. The series that we will be studying in this book commences with Chapter 12. However, as we begin to enter into our study of the second half of the Book of Revelation, I think it would be beneficial to preface our study with a fresh introduction to this apocalyptic writing. It is necessary to be reminded of some basic, rudimentary truths concerning the Book of the Revelation. It is absolutely essential that we understand some things if we are to rightly divide this portion of the Word of Truth. This is the reason we want to draw our focus to these introductory verses and study an introduction to the Revelation.

As we begin to give consideration to the Book of Revelation, keep in mind that perhaps no other portion of the sacred Scriptures is as misunderstood, mistaught, and misconstrued. But it need not be so. God certainly never gave His Word to be a source of confusion. The Apostle Paul penned in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion." Confusion enters in when the minds of unregenerate men and men devoid of a revelation of truth begin to try to divide the Word of Truth. They do not truly have the Teacher to give them that precious revelation. When the Revelation is rightly divided, it is not confusing; but it dispels confusion.

As we begin to consider this apocalyptic writing, the first questions that must be addressed are: Why the Revelation? What is the need for the Book of Revelation? Why did God, in His infinite wisdom, see fit to incorporate this particular writing within the canon of sacred Scripture? The answer to these questions is most basic. We each have a most priceless possession—our soul. Jesus said in Matthew 16:26, "For what is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" This verse conveys the thought that each of us is entrusted with a never-dying soul. At the same time, we must remember that there is an enemy of our soul. As verse 26 denotes, that enemy desires to cause you and me to exchange the welfare of our soul for something of far less value. Because of that, we are engaged in a battle over the destiny of our souls.

In 2 Corinthians 10:4 the Apostle Paul penned, "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [the Greek says '*fleshly*'], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)." The Apostle Paul was letting us know we are engaged in a warfare. The warfare is over the welfare of our soul, and that warfare is propagated by spirits. In closing out the Ephesian epistle, the Apostle used the famous analogy concerning the whole armor of God. Ephesians 6:12



reads, "For we wrestle [again, intimating that we are engaged in a battle] not against flesh and blood [not against human components; we are not against the people who comprise various beastly systems, but we are against the spirit that promotes those systems and holds people in bondage], but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [the Greek says '*wicked spirits*'] in high places." Wicked spirits are what produces and promotes this warfare.

These spirits take on physical forms. We read in 1 Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits." Although Paul prophesied and warned about seducing *spirits*, when John came off the Isle of Patmos, this condition was already working in full sway. John wrote in 1 John 2:26, "These things have I written unto you concerning *them* that seduce you." Those spirits picked up bodies along the way, and they began to work through individuals and through systems.

In 1 John 4:1 John admonished, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try [the Greek says '*test*'] the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets . . . ." Notice, this verse starts out with "spirits," but those spirits took on human forms: "false prophets." They worked through human manifestation—through men, through women, and through religious systems devised by men. These spirits picked up bodies. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:9, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

In 2 Corinthians 2:11 the Apostle Paul said, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." If you study that word "*devices*" in the Greek, you will find that it means "thought-out schemes and plans." Satan is a master schemer, and some of the schemes and devices and plans that he has used down throughout the annals of time will be these things that we study in the Revelation, such as: the great red dragon (Revelation 12:3); the leopard-like beast (Revelation 13:1-2); and the beast that came up out of the earth (Revelation 13:11). These are some of the devices that Satan has employed to work against the welfare of men's and women's souls. The Lord does not want us to be ignorant of Satan's devices. His Word is designed to bring light and understanding to us. The Psalmist declared in Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; [What is light? This is a parallelism; the second expression gives you the understanding.] it giveth understanding unto the simple." Light is understanding that the Word brings to us. Our understanding is enlightened so that we can see what is working about us, what desires to be working on us, and how we can have victory over it.

### **The Knowledge of the Truth**

God desires that we obtain and maintain victory, but to do that, we must be aware of the devices that Satan employs. We also must know the truth, because things are not always as they appear. When we get over to Revelation 13:11, we will find that the beast which came up out of the earth had some lamb-like features. It took on some appearances of Christianity, until it opened its mouth. Then it "spake as a dragon." So we cannot always judge by appearances. That is why Jesus said to "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24), not with the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear. In other words, do not judge through the fleshly avenues, but use some old-fashioned Bible truths and Holy Ghost discernment.

God desires that His people have a knowledge of the truth. Many times people struggle and say, "I wish I knew what God's will for my life was." If you will read God's Word, that will end the mystery. First Timothy 2:4 says, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." God's will is that all men be saved, and to stay saved, you must come to the knowledge of the truth. There is more to the experience of salvation than just gaining it initially.

When a mother goes through labor and delivery to have a baby, that is not the end. A birth is just a beginning. A birth is a commencement. When you and I are born again, that is not the end of it. We are not fixed, set, and sealed for eternity. Paul said in Philippians 3:13, "I count not myself to have apprehended." Too many people today act like they have apprehended. Their attitude is: "Well, I've got it. This is it. I'll just sit down and wait on the Glory bus to come by, and I'll step on." That is not how it works. There is more to this than just being born again, than just receiving an initial experience. You have to feed, maintain, protect, and guard that experience. There is an enemy who is endeavoring to devour your experience.

Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober [in other words, have presence of mind, pay attention, be alert], be vigilant; because your adversary [he is not God's adversary, but he is your adversary] the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about,

seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith . . . ." How are you going to "resist [him] stedfast in the faith" if you do not know what the faith is? That is why you need to know truth; the truth and the faith are the same thing. If you do not know the truth, how are you going to resist him? And if you cannot resist him, your experience is going to be devoured. That is why you need to sit under the truth. If you can know what the truth is, what the faith is, then when the battle comes, when the enemy appears, you will know how to resist him.

Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, [What is the truth? 'Thy word is truth' (John 17:17).] and the truth shall make you free." What does the truth make you free from? Some feel that it is sin, but "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Truth makes you free from error, free from falsity. Truth exposes Satan's devices, these false systems produced by false spirits that want to devour our experience, devour the truth out of our lives, and carry us off captive into some false system. (Dear one, you can be carried off to Babylon and still sit in a Church of God congregation. Babylon is not just a place; it is a spiritual condition. You can be carried off into captivity while sitting under the straightest truth God can send out. It is determined by what you do with it. Although Judas was in the very presence of Jesus, Satan [Luke 22:3] filled his heart.) The Lord does not want us ignorant of Satan's devices, so He sends truth to reveal the maneuvers of the enemy. Thereby, we cannot only be saved but also have a knowledge of the truth that will enable us to maintain a victorious experience until our eyes close in the finality of death.

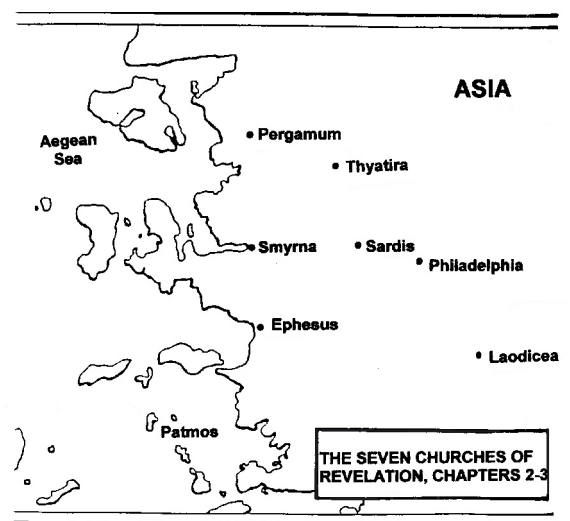
### "His Servant John"

As we look at this introductory chapter, let us establish a little background concerning the Revelation. Certainly we realize that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16); ultimately God is the Author of every portion of the Scripture. But as we look to the human authorship of the Revelation, it is necessary to understand who wrote this particular Book of the Bible. The answer is found at the end of **verse 1**: ". . . *his servant John*." The question may arise, "Which John?" John was and remains a very popular name. So **verse 2** further identifies him as the one "**Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ.**"

To further understand who this was, let us turn to John's Gospel and see if we can find a similarity of expressions. John 21:24 says, "This is the disciple which *testifieth* of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his *testimony* is true." Then 1 John 1:1-2 reads: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and *bear witness*, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Notice that verse 2 uses the words "bear witness." Later in this epistle, we read language very similar to **Revelation 1:2**. First John 5:8 reads, "And there are three that *bear witness* in earth . . . ." Back up to verse 7. It states, "For there are three that *bear record* in heaven . . . ." So, we find a great similarity in writing style and language.

When **Revelation 1:1** speaks of "**his servant John**," whom **verse 2** describes as "**Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ**," these are descriptive phrases letting us know that this was none other than John the Apostle, that beloved disciple who leaned upon our Lord's breast. (Not only did John write the Book of the Revelation, but he also wrote the Gospel of John, and First, Second, and Third John.)

Next, let us look at where the Revelation was received. **Revelation 1:9** tells us, "**I John, who also am your brother . . . was in the isle that is called Patmos.**" At this juncture in history (in the proximity of A.D. 96), there was a time of severe persecution besetting the church. John was a candidate for martyrdom under the persecutions of the Roman Emperor Domitian. They tried to martyr John by boiling him in oil, but the oil would not boil him. Then John was banished to this island. "**Patmos**" is a barren, rocky little island



that is crescent shaped, ten miles long by five miles wide, and is located forty miles off the coast of Asia Minor. They thought they had sent John there to die, but God wanted him there to receive the Revelation. Possibly John was so busy, this was the only way to give him the Revelation message. John might have thought he was banished there to die, but he was put there to receive **"the word of God."** More specifically, this verse tells us what aspect of the Word of God: **"for the testimony of Jesus Christ."**

If you turn to Revelation 19:10, you can read what **"the testimony of Jesus Christ"** is. The last phrase of that verse says, ". . . for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." John was there on the Isle of Patmos to receive the Word of God, but more particularly, most of that aspect of the Word of God was yet prophetic. When John received the Revelation in A.D. 96, much of that yet laid ahead.

While John was on **"Patmos,"** God used the panorama of the skies to give him a vision that He wanted John to relate and record. We must remember as we study the Book of the Revelation that John was receiving a vision. In Revelation 9:17 John said, "And thus I saw the horses in the vision." John never left the Isle of **"Patmos"** during the entire time he was receiving the Revelation. Although he spoke of seeing a new Jerusalem and being carried away, it was all spiritual. Likewise, it was spiritual when Ezekiel spoke of being carried away in Ezekiel, Chapters 40-47, and when Jesus was tempted in Matthew, Chapter 4. When Satan took Jesus up on a pinnacle where He could see all of the nations, it was not a literal pinnacle. The temptation was in His mind. So when John said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10) and "immediately I was in the spirit" (Revelation 4:2), he was speaking of experiences that he had while he was in the Spirit. This truth has not changed. The only way we are going to receive the truth that John saw is through the Spirit of God. Spiritual truth still comes through the avenue of the Spirit. He is still the Teacher (John 14:26).

History tells us that the Roman Emperor Domitian died in A.D. 96 and that the succeeding emperor, known as the Humane Nerva, recalled John. John resettled in Ephesus and wrote First, Second, and Third John, which chronologically are the last books of the Bible. This historical information proves that the Book of the Revelation could not have been written any later than A.D. 96. Secondly, it tells us, chronologically speaking, the Revelation is not the last book of the Bible. It is important to understand that the Bible is not arranged in chronological order, but rather in literary fashion. It is much like a library categorized by its subject matter.

### **The Revelation Is Not a Hidden Book**

As we look closely at our text, it is essential that we understand this is **"The Revelation of Jesus Christ"** (verse 1). It was not John's revelation, but Christ's revelation. It was not John's message, but Christ's message. This is a **"Revelation"** of truth that came from the Lord. There are many misconceptions concerning the Book of Revelation and even concerning the word **"Revelation."** This word in the Greek is the word *apokalupsis* and it comes from two Greek words: *apo*, which means "away from" and *kalupsis*, which means "a hiding or veiling." When you put the two words together as a compound word (*apokalupsis*), it means "an un hiding or a taking away of the veil, an unveiling, or a revealing."

Often religious leaders rise up and say, "The Revelation can't be understood; it's a hidden book." Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together." If God wanted it hidden, why would He have given it? It was hidden before He gave it. If He wanted to keep it hidden, there was no need to give it. God would not have let John see it; He would not have instructed him to write it; and He would not have kept it preserved if it were to be a hidden book. This is contrary to the very semantics of the word *apokalupsis*. I repeat, this word means "an unveiling, a taking away of the veil, a revealing." If you look up the word **"Revelation"** in *Webster's New World Dictionary*, the definition is "something disclosed, revealed; an enlightening." *Webster's Bible Dictionary* says "revealing truth."

Isaiah prophesied that this would occur in Isaiah 29:10-12, which reads: "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, [Isaiah was talking about a disobedient people who would not listen to the Lord, who grieved His Spirit, who would not honor the truth. So He poured out upon them a spirit of deep sleep.] and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. [You cannot see anything when your eyes are covered. That does not mean it is not there; it means you cannot see it.] And the vision of all is become unto you [Who is the 'you'? It is the ones whom the spirit of deep sleep has closed their eyes.] as the words of a book that is sealed, which

men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed [ministers are telling people, 'I can't understand the Revelation; it is a sealed book']: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." The reason they cannot see is because their eyes have been closed. There is a spirit that has put a deep sleep on them, because they have lost the Teacher (if they ever had the Teacher). The Teacher is the Holy Spirit.

Let us look at some other places in the Bible where this word "**Revelation**" is employed and see how it is used. In Galatians 1:11-12 Paul said: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Here we find the same Greek word *apokalupsis*. If this word means "something that is hidden," does that mean Paul did not know what he was preaching? How foolish would that be? Paul was saying it was revealed or unveiled to him; it was made known to him. As a matter of fact, this phrase in Galatians 1:12, "the revelation of Jesus Christ," is the exact same phrase as our text in **Revelation 1:1**, which states, "**The Revelation of Jesus Christ.**" It is the same phrase with exactly the same verbiage and the same Greek word. It means the same thing: "revealed, made known, uncovered, unveiled."

Let us look at a few more examples. We read in Galatians 2:1-2: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, [Does that mean Paul did not know where he was going? Does that mean it was sealed to him where he was to go? No! It was *revealed* to him where to go.] and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles." It is the same Greek word. Romans 16:25-26 tells us: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the *revelation* of the mystery [not a hiding of something already hidden, but, the revelation—the unveiling or uncovering—of that which had been a mystery], which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest . . ." Those things that had been kept secret since the world began are now being made manifest.

To see how these things are being made manifest, turn to Titus 1:3. It says, "But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching." God manifests His Word through preaching. He wants to make things manifest that have been kept secret since the world began. We live in a glorious period of time, the brightest period of time in human history. Revelation 10:7 tells us when the voice of the seventh angel began to sound, "the mystery of God should be finished." God is uncovering, or unveiling, it all. We live in a glorious day, a brilliant day, a day of dazzling light!

### **Ears to Hear and Eyes to See**

I trust you are beginning to see that the "**Revelation**" is not a hidden book, but rather a book of revealing. Even our Scripture text bears this out. **Revelation 1:3** states, "**Blessed is he that readeth** [what benefit would there be to read something you could not understand?] **and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.**" How are you going to hear "without a preacher" (Romans 10:14)? Not only that, but how is he going to preach if he cannot understand it? And how are you going to keep what you cannot understand? How could God hold you accountable if you cannot understand it? James 4:17 says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." There has to be a knowledge.

So the "**Revelation**" is to be read, heard, understood, and kept. Now what is its effect? **Revelation 1:3** tells us, "**Blessed is he . . .**" The effect of the "**Revelation**" is to bless the church. When people hear this Revelation message and do not get any blessings, the reason is they are not hearing with an ear to hear. That word "**hear**" means "heed," and when people do not heed what the Spirit saith, it will not bless them. It will blister them instead. It is all according to which side of it you are on. In Deuteronomy Moses said, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose . . ." (Deuteronomy 30:19). Paul said he was "the savor of life" unto some and "the savor of death" unto others (2 Corinthians 2:16). Jesus said, "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). It is the same message, the same Gospel. Whether it blesses us or not is all according to what we do with it.

In Matthew 13:16 Jesus said, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." If you have an eye to see the truth, you are a blessed individual. There are many people who have eyes, but they do not see anything. That is why Jesus said to "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve" (Revelation 3:18). People are losing their vision today: vision of what the church is and of what Babylon is. If these truths are not heralded, then the enemy begins making inroads

and spirits start working, bringing in Babylonian activities, Babylonian thoughts, and Babylonian practices. The enemy brings all this in ever so deceptively and slyly.

We read in Luke 10:21-22: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." This lets us know it comes through revelation. It is a blessed thing to be one of the "babes." In other words, it is a blessing to be one who has experienced the new birth, to be in a position where one can receive the truth.

### "The End of the World"

Another misconception concerning the "**Revelation**" is that some people say, "It is not hidden, but it is just sealed for now." Let us read some Scripture to prove that it is not a sealed book in our day. It was in the Old Testament era, but it is not today. Daniel 12:4 reads, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, [Notice after the word *book* is a comma. It is not a period.] even to the time of the end." This tells us that in the time of the end, it is not going to stay sealed.

When is "the time of the end"? First Corinthians 10:11 makes it a little clearer what the time of the end is: "Now all these things happened unto them [the preceding verses tells us these are Old Testament events] for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come [present tense]." When is the end of the world? It is this New Testament dispensation. When did the end of the world commence? Hebrews 9:26 states, "For then must he [the antecedent of that pronoun *he* reverts to verse 24—Christ] often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." When did "the end of the world" become "now"? When Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That is when the end of the world, Biblically, commenced, and the new dispensation was ushered in. The New Testament is the last dispensation of time. That is why it is referred to as "the end of the world."

Look again at Daniel 12:4, which reads, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: [In other words, to the time when Christ would usher in a New Testament dispensation. What would happen then?] many shall run . . ." When Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He gave man the ability to engage in a Christian race. Look at Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Paul was talking about the Christian race.

The Hebrew letter tells us, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). If you read Hebrews, Chapter 11, you will see that the contrast is between the Old Testament brethren and the New Testament brethren. Who is running the race? The New Testament brethren. When is the book to be unsealed? It is for the New Testament brethren.

The last part of Daniel 12:4 tells us that "knowledge shall be increased." Jeremiah 3:15 says, "And I will give you pastors . . . which shall feed you with knowledge." God promised this: "I will give you." Then in Ephesians 4:11 we find, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." What are they going to do? Feed you with knowledge so that knowledge will be increased. We know this is so, for Ephesians 4:13 reads, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

I trust you can see that the "**Revelation**" is to be a blessing, not a sealed Book. It certainly was sealed in the Old Testament era, but it is not in our day. As John came down to the closing portion of this apocalyptic writing, he wrote in Revelation 22:10, "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."

## The Lamb of God Has Opened the Seals

Another misconception is that the "**Revelation**" is not for now, but it is for eternity. It is true that some of the scenes portrayed transpires over in the eternal realm, but there are those of the persuasion that the seventh trumpet and the seventh seal do not occur until way over in the eternal realm somewhere. When you read and rightly divide the Word of Truth, you will find that when John saw the book sealed with the seven seals, he wept. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:5-6).

In Revelation 6:1 the Lamb began to loose the seals. Then Revelation 8:1 says, "And when he [the antecedent of that pronoun reverts you to Revelation 6:1—the Lamb] had opened the seventh seal . . ." All seven seals were opened while Christ was still a lamb, and He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) only while time is still standing. When time reels into eternity, He will not be a Lamb but a Judge. He is coming "the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28). In other words, the second time He is not coming to deal with sin.

While time is still standing, while salvation is still being offered, while redemption's plan is still in force, the Lamb has opened each of the seals. That Lamb is a figure of Jesus (John 1:29). That portrait of Him as a sacrificial lamb shows He offered Himself as a sacrifice to deal with the sins of mankind. While time is still standing, He is a Lamb. When He appears again, He is coming as a Judge, not as a Lamb. Second Timothy 4:1 tells us He "shall judge the quick [or the living] and the dead at his appearing." There will not be any sacrifice for sin any longer.

### The Scope of the Revelation

The next question we should look at is "Who is the Revelation for?" **Revelation 1:1** answers this question: "**The Revelation** [unveiling, revealing, uncovering] **of Jesus Christ**, [Jesus is 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). This book is a revelation of truth to help us stay in the way and maintain our spiritual life. That is its whole purpose.] **which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.**" The Revelation is for "**his servants**" (plural), not just John. If John were the only one who needed to know it, there would have been no need for him to have written it down. Who are "**his servants**"? Romans 6:22 says, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness." Everyone who has been made free from sin and has their fruit unto holiness is who this Revelation is for.

Do not let the devil sell you a bill of goods, telling you that because you are not educated, because you did not go to a seminary or college, you cannot understand the Revelation. If you are free from sin, if you have your fruit unto holiness, the Revelation is for you, and God wants you to understand it. God wants you to have a revelation of this truth. Remember, the brother who originally received it (John) was an "unlearned and ignorant" man, but he "had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

What is the scope of the Revelation? Some believe it is all out in the future somewhere, beyond time, and others believe it is all back in the past somewhere. Some say, "It was just a code the morning-time church used to talk among themselves." If that were so, we would not need it now. And if it is all out here beyond time, we would not need that either. So what is the true scope of the Revelation? We read in Revelation 1:19, "Write the things which thou hast seen [past tense], and the things which are [present tense], and the things which shall be hereafter [future tense]." The Revelation incorporates all three tenses. When John was on the Isle of Patmos and received this revelation in the proximity of A.D. 96, some of this was already past. Much of it was yet future, and some was transpiring while he wrote. It was past, present, and future. So the scope of the Revelation is all inclusive—some of it is behind us, some is occurring in the time in which we live, and some yet lies ahead. (If nothing was out ahead of us, if this has all passed, then Jesus would have split the clouds already. Some yet lies ahead. It goes from the inception of the church on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 33 and takes us all the way down through to the consummation, or the end of human history.)

### Salvation Is Offered Throughout the Seven Periods of the Gospel Day

Some have difficulty understanding that the Gospel Day is comprised of seven distinct time periods. As a matter of fact, the sixth-seal brethren tended to break this Gospel Day down into four major epochs: the morning time, the dark

age, the cloudy day, and the evening time. However, the Scripture gives more explicit detail than that. Failing to divide the Revelation into seven distinct periods causes much of the Revelation to become subject to question. In **Revelation 1:4** John spoke of "**seven churches**" and "**seven Spirits.**" Yet, Ephesians 4:4 tells us, "There is one body [the church], and one Spirit." Unless we begin to rightly divide the Word of Truth, as 2 Timothy 2:15 tells us, it can lend itself to confusion.

John wrote in Revelation 5:6 of a "Lamb [Jesus Christ; John 1:29] . . . having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." The seven eyes are clearly defined as "the seven Spirits of God." To understand what the seven horns are, turn to Luke 1:69. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, prophesied, "And hath raised up an horn of salvation." Salvation is represented by a horn. Many times the word *horn* merely means "power." Several renderings offer that phrase as "the power of salvation." How many salvations are there? The Bible makes this clear in Acts 4:12, saying, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is only one salvation, one horn of salvation. In Luke it is employed in the singular. There is one body, one Spirit, and one salvation. Yet, John wrote about "**seven horns,**" "**seven churches,**" and "**seven Spirits.**" How do we properly delineate that?

Revelation 5:6 tells us that all these were "sent forth into all the earth." This tells us that the vicarious work of Christ was to work throughout the balance of human history, until time reels into eternity. The entire balance of human history at that juncture was the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day. Thus, the seven horns, the seven churches, and the seven Spirits are nothing more than the church and the Spirit offering the salvation of God throughout the seven periods of time that comprise this Christian Dispensation. There is just one salvation, but Christ sent it forth to the whole earth, through the balance of human history. Since the balance was these seven periods, He had to have seven representations of the Word, the Spirit, salvation, and the church.

Isaiah also let us also know that this Gospel Day is comprised of seven periods of time. Isaiah 30:26 reads, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days [those seven days are the seven periods that make up this Christian Dispensation], in the day [Second Corinthians 6:2 tells us this 'day' (singular) represents the 'day of salvation,' or the Gospel Day. There are 'seven days in the day,' or seven periods of time in this Gospel Day.] that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." God is working today to bind up the breach of His people, to bring His people together. Revelation 15:2 depicts them standing "on the sea of glass." In other words, they are standing on the Word of God in unity and harmony, with victory, binding up the breaches that sectarian walls provided. This is a picture of the evening time in which you and I are privileged to live.

### **The Seven Distinct Series**

The Revelation is comprised of seven distinct series. Many times this raises the question as to why. Why was it given in this manner? The best way I can explain this is to use the example of a biology book. Often these books have transparencies, beginning with an outline of the human body. As you turn the page, a transparency of the nervous system would lay on top of the human body outline. The next transparency would be the muscular system, then the skeletal system, then the circulatory system, and so forth. When all of the overlays are in place, then you have a complete picture of what comprises the whole human body.

That is just the way the Revelation is designed. Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3, are the seven letters, each one of them corresponding with one of the seven periods of the Gospel Day. Then Chapter 6 begins the series of the seven seals. Chapter 8 begins the seven trumpets series, and Chapter 11 brings you down through the witnesses. Then Chapter 12 starts through the beasts: the dragon, the beast, and the image. Chapter 20 is a series in itself, and Chapter 21 starts another series. So John takes us down through the Gospel Day seven times, in seven distinct series.

This is a common teaching style that the Hebrews used and is known as parallelism. Christ used it often. In Luke, Chapter 15, are the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, and the lost brother. All of these are similar stories but Jesus used the different parables as vehicles to convey different aspects or facets of the truth. The Revelation is divided as follows:

- Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter.
- Series one begins with Chapter 2.
- Chapters 4 and 5 serve as an introduction to the seal series.

- Series two begins with Chapter 6.
- Series three begins with Chapter 8.
- Series four begins with Chapter 11.
- Series five begins with Chapter 12.
- Series six begins with Chapter 20.
- Series seven begins with Chapter 21.

One ancient title given to this book by one scholar was this: "The general history of the Christian Church, from her birth to her final triumphant state in heaven: chiefly deduced from The Apocalypse of St. John, the Apostle and Evangelist." That is a fairly accurately description. This book is the general history of the church from her birth all the way through to her triumphant delivery into Heaven, including the foes that tried to hinder her along the way. It is needful to study what has already happened, because Ecclesiastes 1:9 says that "there is no new thing under the sun." The spirits that produced and motivated these opposing forces in bygone days are working in our day against the saints, against the truth, and against the souls of men. This is why God still desires that we not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

### Symbols Are Used to Convey Truth

It is needful that we understand a couple of other things. What is the nature of the language of the Revelation? Sadly, this is a source of great confusion and great contention among many. We must ever keep in mind, the Revelation is a spiritual book, written to spiritual people, to convey spiritual truths. This is why natural men cannot understand it. Trying to describe truth to someone who is not saved is like trying to describe a rainbow to a blind man. First Corinthians 2:14 tells us, "But the natural man [unregenerate man, man in a natural state] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Truth is revealed by the Spirit.

Jesus, speaking in John 16:13-15, said: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he [the Spirit] will guide you into all truth: [What is truth? John 17:17 tells us that 'thy word is truth.' The Spirit will guide you to understand the Word.] for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." God's ordained manner of revealing truth is through preaching. Yet, it still takes the Spirit of God to anoint the preaching and give understanding.

First Corinthians 2:9-10 reads: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. [Truth does not come through natural senses. You cannot put a Bible under someone's nose and say, 'It is right there in black and white!' Truth is not in black and white; truth is in the Spirit.] But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." There is a disdain in too many circles for anything spiritually deep. For those who feel that way, it would be good to read the Parable of the Sower (Matthew, Chapter 13), because one problem He dealt with was a lack of depth and deepness (Matthew 13:5; Mark 4:5).

What kind of language is used in the Revelation? **Revelation 1:1** tells us it was "**sent and signified.**" That word "**signified**" in the Greek is the word *semaino*, which means "revealed by signs." The word *signs* in *Webster's New World Dictionary* is defined as "a symbol." These are symbolic representations. The woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, the beast coming up out of the earth, the angels, the trumpets, and the Lamb are all symbolic expressions. The Revelation, along with much of the Scriptures, uses symbols to convey truth to us. Why? Truth must be presented in a form that we understand or relate to in order to have something deeper associated to it to give understanding of what was unseen previously.

### The Bible Is Not to Be Taken Literally

Those who believe the Bible is to be taken literally say, "I believe the Bible means what it says and says what it means!" The Bible does not lend itself to being viewed in that manner. Being viewed in that manner is what has made it become seemingly contradictory, thus sowing a world in unbelief. Some have actually cut off their hand or plucked out their eye because they thought that is what the Bible said to do (Matthew 18:8-9). They believed that was what God wanted them to do. This emphasizes the need to rightly divide the Word of Truth. False religion is duping and damning



souls by the multiplied millions. Let us look at it a little further.

To those who believe the Bible literally, let us look at a few Scriptures. Psalm 91:4 states, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." Is God a bird? This verse describes Him with wings and feathers. John 4:24 says, "God is a Spirit." Yet, Psalm 91:4 says He has wings and feathers. How can you reconcile the two verses if the Bible is to be taken literally? These verses show that the Bible is not made to be taken literally. God is not a literal bird; the Psalmist was drawing an image to mind. The same image is used in Matthew 23:37, when Jesus spoke of desiring to gather Jerusalem together as a hen does her brood, under the wings, under the feathers; in other words, into a place of refuge, security, and safety. Jesus was not saying that He was a bird or a hen, but He was bringing to mind an image to convey a truth.

We read in Malachi 4:2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; [Is Christ a literal sun out in the firmamental heavens, a burning ball of fire? Does He have wings?] and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Are we literally a bunch of calves? No! Again, this brings an image to mind; it is not conveying a literal image.

In Matthew 7:15 Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Was Jesus saying that false prophets wear literal sheepskins? In Matthew 12:34 Jesus said, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" Do literal vipers speak? (The only one I know of was back in the Garden of Eden.) Was He speaking of literal snakes? In John 6:53 Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Was Jesus talking about people literally eating His flesh and drinking His blood? Not at all! He was talking about His Word and His Spirit.

John 7:38 tells us, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Do you believe on Him? Is there a literal river coming out of your belly? This is not literal. Jesus was saying that if you truly have this water of life, it is going to flow out of your inward parts, out of your inward being to everyone you can touch, everybody you can get to. You will want them to have the same thing you have.

In Matthew 23:33 Jesus said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Do snakes go to hell? Verse 29 tells us that Jesus was talking to "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" He was not talking about snakes, but He was using that as a metaphor to talk about their nature, how they can be in the midst and yet not be discerned. Often people are unaware of the danger they are in. They think they are safe, then all of a sudden the serpent strikes and injects his poison. You might listen to a preacher on the radio for about fifteen minutes, and he gives a good message, but then he says, "Of course, no one can live without sin." He has injected the poison.

Let us look at one more example in Luke 13:31-32, which says: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox . . ." Was Herod a literal red-tailed, furry, little animal? No, Jesus was talking about the cunning, crafty nature that many politicians have. He was using it to depict Herod's nature.

### **Does the Bible Contradict Itself?**

I have cited several examples because this vital point is the source of much confusion. There are many other Scriptures that we could use, but I trust that you can understand when we rightly divide the Word of Truth, much of it does not lend itself to being taken literally. Furthermore, unless we rightly divide the Word of Truth, it becomes contradictory. Many people believe that the Bible contradicts itself. What has brought this about? When false religion takes a position that is contrary to truth, they are sowing confusion in the hearts of men and women, making unbelievers and infidels out of them.

Let us look at how the Word can appear to be contradictory if not rightly divided. We read in Revelation 9:1, "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth . . ." Isaiah 40:26 tells us that He "bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names." Psalm 147:4 tells us what Isaiah was talking about: "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." Isaiah was speaking about stars. But then Isaiah 40:26 says that "not one faileth," or falls. Revelation 9:1 says, "I saw a star fall," and Isaiah said, "Not one [has ever] faileth." Unless we rightly divide the Word of Truth, all of a sudden it becomes contradictory. The truth is, Isaiah was talking about literal stars in the firmamental realm, and Revelation 9:1 speaks about the ecclesiastical stars that were in Christ's right hand, symbolizing a ministry (Revelation 1:20).

Let us look at another example. In Matthew 5:29 Jesus said, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out . . ."

However, 1 Corinthians 3:17 says, "If any man defile [the Greek actually says '*destroy*'] the temple of God, him shall God destroy." How can these verses not contradict each other? Well, Jesus was not talking about literally plucking out your eye and cutting off your hand, because the problem is not in the eye or in the hand but in the heart. You can pull out both eyes and cut off both hands, yet still have trouble if your heart is not right. Jesus was talking about cutting off those things that hinder you, that work against your experience. Cut off those hindrances that the flesh wants to reach out and grab hold of.

Literalists, because of their contradictions, are making infidels out of the world. The Bible, and especially the Revelation, is a spiritual Book. It has been written in symbols, or figures, to hide it "from the wise and prudent" and to reveal it "unto babes" (Matthew 11:25), or those who have been born again, the children of God. Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:7 that these men are "ever learning." They go to school and get Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees. They are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Why? Because truth does not come through man's avenues; it does not come through the eyes and the ears. It does not come through education but through revelation. The best Revelation preacher I ever heard in my life did not graduate from high school, yet God used him mightily.

### Symbolic Expressions

Let us look at the usage of symbolic language to describe Jesus: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). Is Jesus a Lamb? No, this portrays the sacrificial role Jesus was going to assume. It is symbolic. In John 10:9 Jesus said, "I am the door." Of course, Jesus is not a piece of wood with a couple of hinges and a knob. Jesus was saying that He is the access, the mode of entry. If you want to get in, you are going to have to come by Him. He is the only way you are going to get in; He is the Door. Then in John 15:1 Jesus said, "I am the true vine." Now, on the surface the Bible sounds confusing. Is Jesus a lamb, a door, or a vine? In Revelation 22:16 Jesus said, "I am the root . . . of David, and the bright and morning star." Is He a star or a root? As you begin to study these, you will find that they are all true. Each symbolic expression brings different images to mind, conveying various aspects of truth.

As we begin to study Revelation, it is needful to understand the nature of this book is symbolic. It is a book that uses literal signs—things that we may be familiar with on a natural level—as word vehicles to convey truth. They are symbolic expressions, and we do not have to step outside of the Scriptures to answer any one of them. Isaiah 34:16 tells us, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate . . . his spirit it hath gathered them." For every dark saying in the Word of God, there is another verse somewhere that the Spirit of God will mate up to it, bringing understanding to that dark saying. That is why, as we study the Revelation, we must lay "line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isaiah 28:10).

The question may arise, why use pictorial charts, such as the one in the front of this book? John, according to Revelation 9:17, was getting a vision; he *saw* this. In **Revelation 1:2** John was to "**bare record . . . of all things that he saw.**" In verse 11 John was told, "What thou seest, write in a book." In **Revelation 1:3** we are instructed to read it. He saw it; he wrote it; we are to read it. Then when we read it, we are to draw it so that we can see it as John saw it.

Habakkuk's prophecy in Habakkuk 2:2-3 states: "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run [Who is running? We who are in this Christian race.] that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time [it was not for Habakkuk's day], but at the end [that end is this Gospel Day] it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." John was instructed to write what he saw. We are instructed to read what he wrote. Then when we read what he wrote, we are instructed to draw it so we can see what he saw. That is why we use pictorial charts.

### The Need for References

As we progress through our study of this portion of the Revelation, it is notable that we reference many sources. We utilize *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*; we reference the definition of the words incorporated in the original Greek texts. We avail ourselves of aids, such as *Strong's Concordance and Dictionary of New Testament Words*, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, and many others. Some may question the usage of such reference

items, but we must remember that words change their application over time. Our burden is as John's, when he penned 1 John 1:1, which reads, "That which was from the beginning." Our desire is to get back to the original and the original and inspired intent.

Of late, there has been, in some quarters, a move to only and *exclusively* use the King James Version. However, in reality this adamant stance is shortsighted. The King James is the best English Bible we have, and I use it and believe it should be our mainstay. Some people say, "You should use nothing but the King James." My question to them is this: "If the King James translators put this together in 1611, what was the Bible before that? If the King James is the only Bible, what was the Bible for the first sixteen centuries?" The King James is a good Bible, and I do not use anything else to preach out of. However, although the Word of God is inspired, infallible and inerrant, the King James version is not. We need to understand that it is the *Word of God* that is infallible and not the King James translators. I am in no way disparaging the King James but merely attempting to bring some perspective into focus, and as Isaiah 1:18 invites, I request "Come now, and let us reason together."

The King James Bible is the most accurate English Bible available, but it has some words that were not translated as clearly as they needed to be. Acts 2:27, speaking of Christ, says "thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Christ's soul did not go to hell (Luke 23:43). That should have been translated as "grave." The Psalmist said, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (Psalm 139:8). God is not in hell (Ecclesiastes 5:2). Again, that should have been translated as "grave." The translators did that, not God. God used the right word—*sheol*—but that word in the Hebrew means "grave" half of the time and means "the place of the departed damned" the other half of the time. It requires the context and the Spirit of God to know which meaning is correct. Unfortunately, the English translators in 1611 did not always provide the most appropriate word, and from that has come false teachings and confusion. I believe it is the best English Bible available, but we are still admonished to "study" (2 Timothy 2:15), and to do that requires diligence and appropriate inquiry and aids. Again, I am not disparaging the King James but rather advocating the benefit of aids in our study. As the Apostle Paul requested of young Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:13, "bring . . . the books, but especially the parchments." This substantiates the Biblical recognition of study aids.

I trust after reading this first section, you have a basic understanding or introduction to the Book of Revelation. It is for us, His servants. It is for now, and the Lord wants to use it to bless the church and bring understanding. Men today are attempting to silence it, but Habakkuk 2:3 says that "it shall speak." God wants it to speak so that we are not ignorant of Satan's devices. God wants us to understand the devices of the enemy, the moves the enemy wants to make against the souls of mankind. God has given truth and understanding so that you can "know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

## CHAPTER TWELVE—PART ONE

### The Woman Clothed With the Sun

**Revelation 12:1** And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

**2** And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

#### "A Great Wonder"

In this apocalyptic passage we see a presentation of truth that the Revelator described in **verse 1** as "**a great wonder.**" The word rendered "**great**" here in the English is the Greek word *meGas*, which according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* has numerous definitions. One of those definitions is "things esteemed highly for their importance, of great moment, of great weight; importance." The object envisioned in our text is indeed great, or highly important, for we are envisioning a scene that changed the course of human history.

In **verse 1** we are introduced to "**a woman clothed with the sun.**" As we begin to give consideration to this text, there are several truths that we must recognize. This particular text has had great speculation attached to it as to what the Revelator was truly conveying. Men have speculated and designated this woman to supposedly be various things. The first rule we must remember as we study is that God never gave His Word to generate confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). Whenever confusion arises, a spirit other than the Holy Spirit is working. God's Word is to bring understanding to the hearts of men (Psalm 119:130). Secondly, we must ever be mindful of the nature of the language employed in the Revelation. It was written in symbolic language that does not lend itself to literal interpretation, nor was it designed to do such. These are symbolic expressions.

As a matter of fact, our text reiterates the same truth that is recorded in Revelation 1:1. In **Revelation 12:1** we read that "**there appeared a great wonder.**" (*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "sign.") We know the definition of a *sign* is a "symbol." So what we are seeing depicted before us is a symbolic expression. When we give consideration to this "**woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,**" we find that these are symbolic expressions representative of truths the Lord desires to convey to us. He takes that which is literal, that with which we are familiar, and uses it to convey spiritual truths with which we may not be as familiar.

First of all, it is necessary to dismiss all thoughts of literalism. The human mind is so prone to run to literalism. Additionally, false religious advocates of our day are so pronounced in their literalistic teachings that the minds of men immediately try to give a literal rendition to these Scriptures. This brings about confusion, because it becomes contradictory and unreasonable, throwing the world into infidelity and unbelief.

Let us consider **verse 1** of our text in view of some known facts and see if, indeed, literalism is realistic and practical. We read of "**a woman clothed with the sun.**" The literal sun has a diameter of 870,000 miles, more than one hundred times the diameter of the earth, which is only 8,000 miles across. So this "**woman clothed with the sun**" would have to be more than one hundred times larger than our earth. The sun's mass is equal to that of 333,420 earths, and the temperature at the core of the sun is 25,000,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The surface of the sun is between 9,000 and 11,000 degrees Fahrenheit, or 5,000 to 6,000 degrees Centigrade. (To put that in perspective, steel melts at 1,500 degrees Centigrade.) I trust you are beginning to see that this description in our text does not lend itself to literalism. Another description from our text tells us the "**woman**" has the "**moon under her feet.**" The literal moon is 238,854 miles away from the sun. Now, if she is "**clothed with the sun**" and has "**the moon under her feet,**" her legs are about 238,854 miles long. This is beginning to be quite a large woman, if taken literally.

Our text goes on and lets us know that literalism is beyond reasonable possibility, telling us that this "**woman**" has a "**crown of twelve stars.**" The closest star, known as Alpha Centauri, is 25 trillion miles away. Also, most all stars are larger than the sun. Again, it is clearly evident that this is not to be viewed literally, but rather symbolically. None of these entities described in Chapter 12 (the great red dragon, a war in heaven, and many other things) is describing literal events or literal creatures, but they are symbolic representations.

**Verse 1** tells us this was a "**great wonder,**" and certainly, when this "**woman**" came on the scene, it was a great moment. It changed the course of human history. As you study, you will find the Roman Empire, symbolized by the

great red dragon, was pre-existent to the Christian era. But when the Roman Empire raised up on this "**woman**," Revelation 12:10 tells us that they "cast [him] down," and the power of the Roman Empire was broken. It was defeated, and it became divided by the power of this "**woman**." So we are indeed seeing "**a great wonder**."

### The Third Heaven

Keeping in mind that John was receiving a vision, let us look at where this "**great wonder**" was. Our text declares that it "**appeared . . . in heaven**." This does not have reference to God's Heaven. How do we know? Let us, as Isaiah 28:10 instructs, put "precept upon precept" and "line upon line." Please do not allow preconceived ideas to close your mind against the truth. Look at **Revelation 12:2**. We read that the "**woman**" "**being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered**." This shows that **verse 1** has no reference whatsoever to God's Heaven. Jesus, giving us a glimpse of the realm of bliss beyond time, said in Luke 16:25, ". . . but now he [Lazarus] is comforted, and thou [the rich man] art tormented." Lazarus was comforted; there was no pain in that eternal bliss.

The second reason we know this could not be God's Heaven is because there is no marrying or giving in marriage in God's Heaven (Luke 20:34-36). If the "**woman**" were to be with child without the benefit of marriage, then she is a fornicator; and there will be no fornicators in God's Heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9). When Jesus said the children of the Resurrection are those who will occupy Heaven, He said they "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Luke 20:35), and "neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:36). Yet, once this war commenced in heaven (Revelation 12:7), we read that "they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11). Here were some people that died in this war, and since there is not going to be any dying in God's Heaven, this must not be God's Heaven.

There are many other references throughout this text. Revelation 12:10 says, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation . . ." When did salvation need to come to God's Heaven? The only ones who will be in Heaven are the ones who are saved. You are not going to get to Heaven and then God will send salvation up later. There is no need for salvation to come to God's Heaven. This has no reference whatsoever to God's Heaven!

Notice that Revelation 12:13 states, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman." Now **verse 1** says that the "**woman**" was in "**heaven**." If this is God's Heaven, either the dragon got back in or the woman got kicked out. We need to lay aside preconceived notions and false teachings of the past and take God's Word for the truth that He declares in it.

We must keep in mind that there are three heavens mentioned in the Scriptures (2 Corinthians 12:2). What are these three heavens? The first heaven is mentioned in the Book of Beginnings. Genesis 1:7-8 says: "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven." The first heaven mentioned in God's eternal Word is the firmamental heavens. When Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," it is not speaking of God's Heaven, but it is speaking of the firmamental heaven. Certainly, there is a celestial Heaven in which God dwells. Jesus referenced it when He set forth that model prayer in Matthew 6:9, saying, "Our Father which art in heaven . . ."

To understand what the third heaven is, let us read 2 Corinthians 12:1-2: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." Verse 1 tells us that this third heaven is a position where you "come to visions and revelations of the Lord." It is a spiritual position, an ecclesiastical heaven. Or to put it in the language of Paul, Ephesians 2:6 says, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is in these heavenly places, this ecclesiastical realm, that the Revelation takes place. It does not take place in the firmamental heavens, nor did it occur in the celestial Heaven. Rather, it occurs in this ecclesiastical placement, the spiritual realm. Thus, the Revelation is depicting a spiritual picture.

### A New Day

The Revelation contains seven distinct series. Our lesson text, **Revelation 12:1**, starts series number five, beginning with the prophetic time setting of the morning time of this Gospel Day (A.D. 33). Let us view our context and establish the prophetic time setting. Verse 15 closes out Chapter 11 by introducing the seventh angel sounding. Revelation 11:15-

19 portrays that which transpired under the sounding forth by the seventh angel, which is during the seventh period of time that concludes this Gospel Day. Hence, **Revelation 12:1** starts a new series, taking us right back to the beginning of the Gospel Day. This fifth series, through another form and using another set of symbols, depicts other aspects of this Christian dispensation.

As we continue our study of this portion of the Book of the Revelation, we will approach it from two aspects. First, we will approach it prophetically, giving it its appropriate historical time setting. Then we will approach it practically to show, as with all of the Word of God, its application and relevance to us today. Although we may go back and view that which occurred historically, Ecclesiastes 1:9 lets us know that "there is no new thing under the sun." History is very cyclic. That same verse also reads, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be . . ." By knowing the historic time setting, we will have a point of reference. Although it is vital to understand the position of these texts in the historic scheme, it is also crucial to realize the message which lies behind the symbols and realize that it is practically applicable and vital to us yet today.

Let us establish the prophetic time setting for the beginning of this series and this particular text. **Verse 1** says the "**woman** [was] **clothed with the sun, and the moon** [was] **under her feet.**" Where else are these expressions employed? We read in Song of Solomon 6:10, "Who is she [speaking of the same woman we are studying in our text] that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun . . ." Here the same figurative expressions are employed—the moon and the sun—but the wise man equated them with "the morning." The "**woman**" appeared in the morning, or the morning time, the time immediately after Christ made His advent into this time world. He ushered in a new day, and a new day commences with the morning.

In 2 Corinthians 6:2 the Apostle wrote of "the day of salvation," saying, "now is the day of salvation." Christ came to usher in a new day. The angel, in his announcement to Joseph (Matthew 1:21), told him to "call his name JESUS [which means Jehovah Salvation]: for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus came for the express purpose of ushering in a day of salvation. In Luke 19:10 Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The Apostle Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:19 that when Christ came on the stage of action in His First Advent, a new day dawned. He also wrote that Christ was "a light that shineth in a dark place." That is exactly what this world was when Christ graced the shores of time.

Between the Prophet Malachi and John the Baptizer was a period of 434 years, a time when man did not hear from God, a dark age when no public message was heralded. (This was prophesied of in Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks. Daniel 9:25 speaks of "threescore and two weeks," and no activity was attributed to that threescore and two weeks. When you add two to threescore (which is 60), the total is 62. Sixty-two multiplied by seven [days in a week] equals 434 days. The delineation of prophetic time reckoning is "each day for a year" [Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6]. Therefore, there was 434 years between Malachi and John the Baptizer.)

Going back to 2 Peter 1:19, we read, ". . . and the day star arise in your hearts." When Jesus Christ came on the stage of action, He came as a day star. Revelation 22:16 confirms this: "I Jesus . . . am . . . the bright and morning star." When Jesus came darkness was dispelled and a new day dawned, a new era commenced, a day of salvation, a Gospel Day. When this prophetic day dawned, a new dispensation of time commenced. This is the time in which the "**woman**" "**appeared.**"

### **The Glorious Church**

Let us continue to identify this one that **verse 1** denotes as a "**woman.**" We have seen that Solomon spoke of this woman as well. So let us go back to read further how he described her. Song of Solomon 6:9 calls her "My dove, my undefiled." Evidently there is some association between this woman and a dove. When Christ commenced His ministry, the Holy Spirit descended like a dove (Matthew 3:16). Here, too, is a woman who is filled with the Holy Spirit. We can know that is so, because she is undefiled.

Reading Song of Solomon 6:9-10, notice the exclusive nature of this "**woman.**" "My dove, my undefiled is but *one*; she is the only *one* of her mother, she is the choice *one* of her that bare her. The daughters saw her [singular], and blessed her [not them]; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her [not them]. Who is she [singular] that looketh forth as the morning [she came on the stage of action in the morning time], fair as the moon, clear as the sun,

and terrible as an army with banners?" Jesus said in Matthew 16:18 that He would "build my church" (singular and exclusive). Here in Song of Solomon we see it is prophetically spoken of by the wise man.

In reading this passage we find that the "**woman**" is undefiled, singular, and fair. Speaking of this same "**woman**," Song of Solomon 4:7 says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Who does all of this describe? We read in Ephesians 5:27, "That he might present it [again, singular] to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." This "**woman**" who is holy, without blemish or spot, undefiled, and singular is the glorious church!

Throughout the Song of Solomon the "**woman**" is referred to repeatedly as a spouse, and to be a spouse, she has to be married. Song of Solomon 4:10 reads, "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse . . ." Here is a paradox—a spouse that is a sister. Why is that? It is because the church is both Christ's spouse and His sister. Jesus, speaking in Matthew 12:50, said, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The church is not only His spouse, but His sister as well.

We read in Song of Solomon 4:11, "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb . . ." Here she is referred to as "my spouse." In **verse 2** of our text it is obvious that this "**woman**" is a spouse, or a wife, since she is about to be a mother. (God's way is that a woman get married first and then have the children; 1 Timothy 5:14.) The church is repeatedly spoken of throughout the Scripture in the female gender as a "bride" and a "wife."

### "The Heavenly Jerusalem"

In Revelation 21:9 "one of the seven angels" said to John, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Verse 10 tells us what the angel showed John: "that great city, the holy Jerusalem." What does this Jerusalem represent? Hebrews 12:22 says, "But ye [people in the first century, this epistle was written in the proximity of A.D. 63-69] are come [present tense, these people had already reached it] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn [or the church the Firstborn purchased]." This "heavenly Jerusalem" is a figurative expression denoting the church.

The question may arise, "Why did the Hebrew writer represent the church as a city?" There are many reasons, and one is that we are fellow citizens (Ephesians 2:19). To be a citizen you have to dwell together in one locality, and this locality is the "heavenly Jerusalem." A citizen that is born there and dwells there must also subscribe to the laws of the city and its government. This is one reason for using various representations to bring different aspects of truth to light.

Let us look a little further to see if the heavenly Jerusalem is referring to the church, so we can be certain that is what John was viewing in our text. Revelation 19:7-8 reads: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb [symbolic of Christ; John 1:29] is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her [His wife] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white [there is the wedding garment]: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." If the wedding garment, or the "fine linen," is the "righteousness of saints," then the wife within the garment must be the saints. Christ's wife is a portrayal of the saints, or the church.

In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul opened, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Here Paul was addressing the virgin who was going to be presented to the Husband, Christ. Look to whom this Corinthian epistle was written: "unto the church of God" (2 Corinthians 1:1). This chaste virgin, the bride, the Lamb's wife is the Church of God.

This "**woman**" in **Revelation 12:1** represents the morning-time church, and the context of our text represents a specific aspect of the morning-time church. **Verse 2** says, "**And she being with child . . .**" This depicts the parental phase of the church. The words of the Apostle substantiate this in Galatians 4:26, which says, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." This mother is "Jerusalem which is above," or heavenly Jerusalem, the Church of God.

This portrayal of the parental phase speaks a vital message. Revelation 12:5 tells us, "And she brought forth a man child . . ." She was productive and fruitful, standing as an example of what position the true church is designed to occupy. The true church is to fulfill the role of a mother. When the Lord created Eve, what was the commission? Genesis 1:28 states, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth

... " Genesis 3:20 tells us, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve [Christ is the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:47); Adam's bride came from his side (Genesis 2:21-22), and Christ's bride came from His side (John 19:34) as well]; because she was the mother of all living." Again, Galatians 4:26 says that "Jerusalem which is above . . . is the mother of us all." She is the mother of all spiritual living, and the commission is yet the same today: be fruitful and multiply. Historically, back in this morning time, they did just that. When we get into the study of the man child, we will find that three thousand were born in a day. They were fruitful, and they did multiply.

This portrayal of the parental phase of the church stands as an exemplification on the horizon of time, showing the true position the church occupies. So the questions we must ask are: Why was she so productive? Why was she so fruitful? How did she produce this "man child" (Revelation 12:5)? The secret lies in **verse 1**. When we begin to examine the description the revelator gave of her nature and her character, it gives insight as to how she was and how we may be productive.

### A Reflection of God's Image

**Verse 1** tells us she was "**clothed with the sun.**" We have already found that this is a symbolic expression, but of what is the "**sun**" symbolic? Malachi spoke of this day in Malachi 4:1 as a day "that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Malachi prophesied in verse 2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings . . ." This is a Messianic prophecy, clearly referring to Jesus Christ. When the Sun arises, a new day dawns. From whom did a new day dawn or a new day spring?

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptizer, prophesied in Luke 1:78 "whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us." What will "the dayspring" do? Verse 79 says that He will "give light to them that sit in darkness." To understand who did this, look at the fulfillment of this prophecy. When did this "dayspring" come? When did those who sat in darkness see a great light? In Matthew 4:12 we read that "when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee." Verse 13 tells us Jesus left Nazareth "and dwelt in Capernaum." Then verses 16-17 read: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach . . ." Light sprang up, and people in darkness saw great light, because Jesus—the true light that lighteth every man—commenced His ministry. A new day dawned, a dayspring, a great day arose, the day of salvation.

Peter, relating the account of the Mount of Transfiguration, recorded in 2 Peter 1:19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." When Peter spoke about the "day dawn," we know who this is by the context ("my beloved Son"; verse 17). When Jesus Christ ("the Sun of righteousness"; Malachi 4:2) arose, darkness began to be dispelled. This "**sun**" our text speaks of is Christ and the reality of truth that He ushered in through the New Testament.

Remember, we are talking about "**a woman clothed with the sun.**" Romans 13:14 says to "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Here are a people who had put Him on, who had laid hold of truth; they took hold of it, embraced it, put it on, and adorned themselves in it. When the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 104:2, "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment," he was speaking of the Lord. Read Psalm 104:1. It says: "Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty." Christ is in the image of God, and the church is the projection of that image. Hebrews 1:2-3 tells us that Christ is the "express image of his [God's] person." In John 14:9 Jesus told Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." When we, as the church, embrace the truths and realities ushered in by Christ and the new covenant, we are, according to Romans 8:29, "conformed to the image of his Son." Since Christ is the "express image of his person," then the true church is a reflection of God's image.

In Romans 8:29 we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed [*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'to be copies'] to the image of his Son . . ." Colossians 3:10, describing the experience of salvation, says, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Who "created him"? Ephesians 3:9 tells us that God "created all things by Jesus Christ." So, the new man is created after the image of Christ. When we become a new man, we are renewed, our experience is created in the image of Christ. Just as Christ said, "when you have seen Me, you have seen the Father," the church can say, "When you have seen us, you have seen Christ."



## Light Produces Life

As we study how the "**woman**" is a mother, it is very important that we recognize a vital aspect: the church is in the image of God. When the church embraces the truths and realities ushered in by the new covenant, we are conformed to the image of His Son, revealing that we have taken on the nature of Christ. We are "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Without this there will be no fruit bearing, for light is what produces life. Putting on light cannot be separated from bringing forth life. A people who take hold of light will be productive. John 1:4 says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Light and life are inseparable.

This "**woman**" was a depiction of the parental phase of the church because she was a repository of all of God's luminary agents—the "**sun**," the "**moon**," and the "**stars**." (Genesis 1:16-17 gives us all of the luminary agents.) She took on every aspect of divine light. She was one that "walk[s] in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), and because of that, she was able to produce life.

The "**woman**" has every one of God's luminary agents. This tells us several truths. It reveals that the church is God's repository of light. Outside of the church there is no light. She has all of God's light. Outside of her is nothing but darkness. It shows that the church is a willing recipient of all of the light that God will give her. She puts every bit of light God gives her in its proper place. Taking this light and putting it in its proper place produces life. It produced a man child in the morning of time, and it will do the same yet today.

Second Peter 1:4 tells us, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises . . ." What are these promises? When you are walking in light, or gaining understanding, in other words, taking hold of all of the light God gives and putting it on, 2 Peter 1:8 promises, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful . . ." The "**woman**" was fruitful because she took all the light God gave her and put it in its proper place and acted in accordance. Again, light brings life.

Our text speaks of "**a woman clothed with the sun**." How did she become thus adorned? We read in Romans 13:12-14: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put yet on the Lord Jesus Christ [we put on Christ by putting on 'the armour of light'; verse 12] . . ." Here Christ is equated with light. John's earlier writings state this as well. We read in John 1:1-4: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him [Jesus Christ; Ephesians 3:9]; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

Verses 8-9, speaking of John the Baptist, state: "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Who is this true Light? "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth . . . For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:14, 17). Now here we have Christ, the Light, and the Word all equated, teaching us that if we are going to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14), we must put on the armour of light (Romans 13:12), for that light is the Word. We must take hold of the Word as God enlightens the eyes of our understanding. It is not to merely improve our mentality or intellectual faculties, but it is to help us live better. It is to put us in a position where we can have a victorious experience.

Psalms 119:105 says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." The Word will show you where you are standing. It will show you what position you are in, and what position you ought to be in. Psalm 119:130 says, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding . . ." Light is understanding. This "**woman clothed with the sun**" put on the truths that God had revealed to her and that she understood. Proverbs 6:23 says, "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." Here again light and life are vitally connected. Without the light there is no life. They are inseparable. This is why Christ admonished them in John 5:39 to "Search the scriptures [keep in mind, all they had at the time was the Old Testament]; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." This goes right back to the thought of the Scriptures and the life they bring through Christ.

Light is vital for producing life. It is only by walking in light that we maintain our own experience. Many people

lose their experience simply because they will not keep pace with light. First John 1:7 gives a condition. It reads, "But if we [it is predicated on what we do] walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship . . . ." Once we quit walking in the light, that fellowship is broken. When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, they had fellowship; God walked with them in the cool of the day (Genesis 3:8). They also had His Word concerning the "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it" (Genesis 2:17). When they went against what light they had, their fellowship was broken. When God came walking, they hid (Genesis 3:8). They had failed to walk in the light, and it broke fellowship.

### A Good Foundation

Walking in light is essential. Jesus said in John 12:35: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you . . . ." Now walking is a progression; you cannot stand still and walk. Some might say, "Oh, I am standing where Grandpa stood or where Mom and Dad stood." You had better not be. Do not set your light by the light of those who are dead and gone (Deuteronomy 27:16). A walk is an advancement. As we travel through time, light will become brighter and brighter. As it becomes brighter, we need to keep putting on what God has shown us. John 12:35 continues, ". . . for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." That is the condition of most of religion. They do not have the faintest idea of what they are doing or where they are going, because they will not accept the light.

In our text we see a contrast: "**the sun**" and "**the moon.**" They serve two very different functions. Let us look at Genesis 1:16, which tells us, "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day [the sun; Psalm 136:8], and the lesser light to rule the night [the moon; Psalm 136:9]; he made the stars also." Now we already found that *lights* are representative of the Word. These lights represent a portion of God's Word. The Jewish day began with the night first. You can read it in Genesis 1:5. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." The Jewish evening, or night, came first. (This is further proven by Genesis 1:8, 13, 19, 23, and 31.)

According to Genesis 1:16, the moon was "the lesser light [that was] to rule the night." The moon has no light of its own. It literally derives all of its light from the sun. In reality, it is nothing more than a reflection. It reflects light from the sun. Let us get the spiritual picture before us. What is our text telling us when it speaks of the "**woman**" having "**the moon under her feet**"? That "**moon,**" the lesser light that ruled in the Jewish night which came before this Gospel Day, is representative of the Old Testament. It was indeed a lesser light.

People in the Old Testament lived in such a manner that we cannot live in today. We have greater light than they had. They lived under that lesser light. Let me give you an illustration I learned a long time ago about why not to buy a car at night. I can look at the car and say, "My, that car looks nice," but when the light of day strikes it, I might find that it has dings on the door or the paint might be running because of a poor paint job. The daylight reveals all of those things. When one looks at it by moonlight, those imperfections are hard to see.

The Old Testament era was ruled by the lesser light, the moon, because the greater light (the true light; John 1:9) had not come yet. Psalm 30:5 says, "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Prophetically, the night that they wept in was the Jewish night, the Old Testament era. The joy that came in the morning was the new day that Jesus Christ came to usher in, a day when mankind could have a real experience of salvation. He ushered in the Kingdom of God, which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17).

There are people who believe the Old Testament should be left out. However, spiritually speaking, if you are going to keep your footing, you need a good foundation. This "**woman**" had "**the moon under her feet.**" A good foundation, the Old Testament, was "**under her feet.**" The truth upon which the New Testament was premised was based on the morals, laws, precepts, and principles incorporated in the Old Testament. We read in Hebrews 10:1, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things . . . ." The Old Testament Dispensation was not the very image but a "shadow of good things to come." The Amplified Bible renders it as "a rude outline (foreshadowing)."

In Romans 15:4 the Apostle Paul penned, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime [Paul was speaking

predominately of the Old Testament writings; at this juncture the Pauline epistles and the Gospel of Mark were the only parts of the New Testament written] were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The Old Testament was penned and preserved throughout the annals of time for our learning. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 10, we read about events that occurred in the Exodus. In that same chapter, verse 11 reads, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples . . ." The Greek word is *typos*, or a type. In other words, these accounts in the Old Testament serve as types, or a lesson, showing us spiritual truths by using literal events that occurred. They were penned and preserved because they serve as types.

It is important to understand that Jesus let us know in our text that the **"woman"** did not discard **"the moon."** **Verse 1** says that it was **"under her feet,"** meaning that its principles, moral laws, and precepts were the truths upon which the New Testament is based. Galatians 3:24 speaks of a portion of the Old Testament that we know as the Law, saying, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ . . ." It taught rudimentary truths and foundational principles upon which the New Testament is premised. Let us look at the words of Jesus concerning this matter: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:17-18).

### **Jesus Christ Is the Focal Point**

Although the Old Testament was a lesser light, it was still a light in the midst of darkness. Malachi 4:1-2 states: "For, behold, the day cometh [future tense; it was still a dark, Jewish night] . . . But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise . . ." When did He arise? When He commenced a new day. But prior to that day, it was night—the dark night of Judaism. Christ ushered in a new day, a new era, an era of great light (Matthew 4:16). When Jesus came, He ushered in a new dispensation. We read in Hebrews 9:14-17: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Thanks be to God, He sealed that testament with His blood. He ushered in a new dispensation, because He sealed the New Testament—His last will and testament—with His blood. Christ ushered in a new day. Hebrews 10:20 calls it "a new and living way." The Old Testament alone is still used by those who are under the dark Jewish night. For those who have never embraced the light of Christ, it is still a dark night. Speaking of old Judaism, 2 Corinthians 3:14-16 says: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." Those who are under a lesser light are in that dark Jewish night. But when you come to Jesus Christ, the veil is taken away. You will move from a lesser light to a greater light, and you can be **"clothed with the sun."** You will take His truth (His Word), put it on, and radiate it out.

Let us look at Ephesians 2:20. It says, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." This Scripture reveals to us at least two truths. First, the truths of the Old Testament and the truths of the New Testament are met together in Jesus Christ and hence in the New Testament church. The **"woman"** (the church) is clothed with **"the sun"** (the greater light, the New Testament). **"The moon"** (the lesser light, the Old Testament) is the foundation upon which the New Testament truth is based. It is **"under her feet."** The truth of all ages—Old Testament and New Testament—are united in the church. Secondly, not only are the truths of both eras united in the church, but the redeemed of all ages meet together in Jesus Christ in the New Testament church. How do we know that? Hebrews 12:22 tells us, "But ye are come [not going to come, but have arrived; approximately A.D. 63-69] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." (All of these expressions denote a different aspect concerning the one and self-same church.) Then Hebrews 12:23 reads, "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn . . ." Verse 22 speaks of the heavenly Jerusalem, and verse 23 tells us that it is "the church." But verse 23 also refers to it as "the general

assembly." What does that mean? Most states have two houses of their legislature—the House and the Senate. And when the House is in session, you say, "The House is in session," and when the Senate is in session, you say, "The Senate is in session." But when they are both in session, it is called "the general assembly." The Hebrew writer was telling us that the church is not just made up of the New Testament brethren, but in Christ Jesus all of the ages are brought together. Those of us in this New Testament era look *back* to Calvary, and the Old Testament brethren looked *forward* to Calvary. The focal point of it all was the work of Jesus Christ on Calvary's tree. We are all met together in Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 8:11 Jesus said, "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom . . ." Then in Luke 13:28-29 Jesus said: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." The kingdom and the church are the one and self-same thing. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, ". . . I will build my church . . ." Then in verse 19 He said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom . . ." What good would keys to a kingdom be if you were going to build a church? The keys to the kingdom are the keys to the church. It is the same keys because it is the same thing. We find this to be true in Hebrews, Chapter 12, as well. When verse 28 speaks of our "receiving a kingdom," this refers back to verses 22-23, which talk about the church. The church and the kingdom are the same thing. The only distinction is that the church speaks more to the collective aspect and the kingdom is more representative of the experience, or the individual reign of Christ in the heart. But the people who have the reign in the heart are what makes up the church.

The depiction of the "**woman**" in our text reveals that the church is in the image of Christ, and that the redeemed of all ages find that they are met together in Christ, His Word, and His church. You can read a description of the redeemed of all ages in Revelation 4:6. When John saw a vision of the four living creatures, he said, "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: [In other words, the only way one becomes a living creature, one of the redeemed, is to come in contact with the sea of glass—the Word of God. It is all based on what you do with the Word of God.] and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts [the Greek word is *zoon*, meaning 'living creatures'] . . ."

Revelation 5:8-9 tells us who these living creatures are: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts [living creatures] and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb . . . saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us . . ." These "four living creatures" are the "redeemed." Revelation 4:6, describing these four living creatures, says that they were "full of eyes before and behind." In this New Testament dispensation, we look "behind"; we look *back* to Calvary. The Old Testament brethren looked *forward* to Calvary. They believed the promises; they believed in Him who was to come; and they took faith in those promises. But the point of all redemption of mankind was in Calvary and in Jesus Christ.

### **A True and Faithful Ministry**

Let us notice one final phrase in **Revelation 12:1**. Speaking of the "**woman**," we read that "**upon her head [was] a crown of twelve stars.**" Revelation 1:20 tells us what these "**stars**" are: "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels [the Greek word is *aggelos*, meaning 'messenger'; it symbolizes the ministry of the seven churches] . . ." Thus, "**stars**" represent the ministry. Why do "**stars**" represent the ministry? Think with me for a moment in the natural. Stars appear in a dark night, stars are so fixed that seamen can chart their course by the fixation of a star. By following the light of a star that is stable, settled in the firmamental heavens, seamen can confidently chart their course. That is a picture of a ministry, which God ordained to be stable, fixed in such a way that people could look to them in this sin-darkened world, see the light, chart their course, and arrive safely at their destination.

In Daniel 12:3 Daniel said, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." God's ministry is to be as the "**stars**" and "turn many to righteousness," pointing the way that they should journey throughout the course of life. The wise men asked in Matthew 2:2, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

Again, the "**stars**" (the ministry) are designed to lead men to where they can truly find a place of worshipping Christ.

Our lesson tells us that there were "**twelve stars**." In this prophetic setting of the morning time, they represent the twelve Apostles, which were the crown jewels of the morning-time church. We found that "**stars**" represent the ministry, but here is a particular "**twelve**." Acts 2:42 tells us that the morning-time church "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine." These "**stars**" were in the most elevated position in the body. You cannot get any higher than the "**crown**" on the head.

There are people today who have a real problem with the elevation of the ministry. Well, God made them the "**stars**" in the "**crown**." You cannot get any higher in the body than that. First Timothy 5:17 says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Also, too many times today there is a great disdain for doctrine. People in religion say, "Let's just talk about Jesus." You cannot talk about Jesus without talking about doctrine. Scripture is doctrine (2 Timothy 3:16). Titus was admonished in Titus 2:1 to "speak thou the things which become sound [healthy, wholesome] doctrine." Doctrine is vital to people's spiritual welfare.

There are those who do not want to get into the Revelation; they do not want to go back and study prophecy. One reason is when studying these subjects, you cannot be passive. You have to engage your mental faculties. You have to do, as Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together." Doctrinal truth is vital because there are many winds of false doctrine blowing. Ephesians 4:14 talks about "every wind of doctrine." People who do not get rooted and grounded in doctrine will be carried away by some wind of doctrine.

These "**stars**" were the crown jewels of the morning-time church. They represent a true and faithful ministry in the morning time. They were watchmen on the wall; they were in an elevated position. The Lord said in Ezekiel 33:7, "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." The brethren in this morning time did just that. They were very faithful. Paul said in Acts 20:27, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." He was faithful.

Paul continued in verses 28-30: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Paul, a true man of God, was giving a warning. Paul warned Timothy "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits" (1 Timothy 4:1). Peter warned, in 2 Peter 2:1, that "there shall be false teachers among you." The morning-time ministry was faithful to warn the people.

### God's Agents of Light

We find in our text that adorning the church is all of God's luminary agents. The church is God's repository of light. Babylon (meaning "confusion," or more pointedly "religious confusion") is not the repository of light. Revelation 18:23 says, "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee . . ." Babylon is in darkness. All of God's light is in the church. This "**woman**," the church, puts truth—whether it is Old Testament or New Testament—in its proper position. God's agent of light in a sin-darkened world is a "city that is set on an hill [the Greek actually says '*a mountain*'; she is Mount Zion] cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14). In Ephesians 5:8 Paul said, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

The "**woman**" that our text speaks of (or wife; Revelation 19:7-8) is a people who have put on light. What is her mission? Revelation 12:5 tells us that "she brought forth a man child." (We will study this more fully in the next segment.) The "**woman**" brought forth a babe, a picture of converts. **Verse 2** says that she travailed (or had a burden), but it was light (or understanding) that brought about the travail for souls. Although this occurred back in A.D. 33, the principle is just as true today. Light produces life; they are inseparable.

Our Scripture text provides a symbolic picture of the beautiful New Testament church in the morning time in all of her pristine glory. It is a picture of people who embraced light and truth. They put it on and stood on it and had it always on their mind. In so doing they were reproductive and fruitful. There are Biblical principles involved here. If we will meet these same conditions, we can be fruitful yet today. In 2 Peter 1:8 the Apostle wrote, "For if these things

be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

God desires that we be just as effective and fruitful in the evening time as they were in the morning, if not more so. To do so, we must implement the same principles and lay hold to the same truths that they did in the morning time. If we want to see life produced, we need to incorporate it into our living and walk in it. We must do what God would bid us to do, regardless of the cost, regardless of the opinions of others. Why is this so important? Our fellowship is in jeopardy if we do not. But beyond that, we will never truly be an evangelistic force if our light is under the bushel (something manmade). We must get our light on the lamp stand (Matthew 5:15), in the true church where it can come together as a collective unit and shine forth as a city on a mountain (Mount Zion) in the midst of a sin-benighted world.

## CHAPTER TWELVE—PART TWO

### The Man Child

**Revelation 12:1** And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

**2** And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

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

**4** And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

**5** And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

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

#### "Jerusalem Which Is Above"

This portion of Scripture introduces us to a host of symbolic expressions. The first six verses provide a summation (a synopsis or a summary) of what is incorporated in the entirety of the chapter. Then verses 7-17 provide more explicit detail. We know that this is so because **verse 4** speaks of a confrontation, in essence, of a warfare. Then **verse 7** declares that "there was war." In essence, war is spoken of twice (**verses 4** and **7**). **Verse 6** tells us that "**the woman fled into the wilderness.**" **Verse 14** again speaks of the woman, saying, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness." Certainly these things did not occur twice. There were not two wars, and the woman did not go into the wilderness twice. These things only happened once. Again, to rightfully divide this chapter of Revelation, we need to understand that a host of symbols are introduced in these first six verses, with much more explanatory detail given in the next eleven verses.

In this chapter we want to draw our focus to the expression in **verse 2** that says, "**And she being with child . . .**" and the expression in **verse 5** that tells us "**she brought forth a man child.**" As we begin to give consideration to this text, we must ever be mindful that the Revelation deals in symbolic expressions ("signified," Revelation 1:1; the Greek word is *semaino*, meaning "revealed by signs," which *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines as "a symbol"). **Verse 2** depicts this "**woman**" as a mother. Galatians 4:26 identifies who this mother is: "But Jerusalem which is above [or heavenly Jerusalem, identified in Hebrews 12:22-23 as the church] is free, which is the mother of us all." This mother is "Jerusalem which is above," the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the New Testament church.

The prophetic time setting of our text is at the commencement of this Gospel Day (A.D. 33). Therefore, our text is speaking of something that was produced in the morning time at the onset of this Christian Dispensation. It is needful to keep in mind who the "**woman**" is because some religious advocates try to persuade people that this "**man child**" was Christ. This "**man child**" is not Christ, because the church did not produce Christ. Christ produced the church. Dismiss the thought from your mind that this "**man child**" has any reference at all to Jesus Christ, because this is something that the "**woman . . . brought forth.**" (In the previous study, we identified beyond any shadow of a doubt who the "**woman**" is—the Church of God.)

Isaiah 53:10 states, "Yet it pleased the Lord [this is one of the greatest Messianic prophetic chapters in the entirety of the Scriptures] to bruise him [referring to Christ]; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed . . ." This seed is the "**man child**" that we are going to study about. It was Christ's seed as well as the woman's seed. Why? Because the "**woman**" is the wife, Christ is the husband, and this "**man child**" is what that union produced. A woman does not produce a child of herself. There has to be a union. This "**woman**" is the Lamb's wife. Isaiah 53:10 tells us that "he [Christ] shall see his seed." Then Revelation 12:17 says that "the dragon . . . went to make war with the remnant of *her* seed." This "**man child**" was a product of the union of His seed and her

seed.

Isaiah 54:5, in prophetic language, tells us clearly who the husband is: "For thy Maker is thine husband." Who is the "Maker"? Ephesians 3:9 says, "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." The Maker, or the Husband, is Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Christ is the Husband. Who is being addressed as the "chaste virgin"? Whom did Paul address this Corinthian letter to? Second Corinthians 1:1 tells us it was "unto the church of God." The "you" Paul was addressing is the Church of God. This "chaste virgin," the bride, the Lamb's wife, the Jerusalem which is above, the heavenly Jerusalem are all describing the mother of us all—the Church of God.

This "**woman**" our text speaks of is also spoken of in Revelation 21:9-10, which reads: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." These verses tell us that "the holy Jerusalem" is the heavenly Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church.

Throughout the vision John received of the Revelation, the Lord employed symbols with which a Hebrew would be familiar, alluding back to the prophetic body of literature that contains expressions such as John employed in the Revelation. Let us look at this symbol of the "**man child**," spoken of in **Revelation 12:5**. This is the product of union between the Lamb (Christ) and His bride (the church). Isaiah 53:10 calls it "his seed"; Revelation 12:17 calls it "her seed"; but in reality, it is their seed.

### **A Nation Born at Once**

The Prophet Isaiah proclaimed that "she was delivered of a man child" (Isaiah 66:7). Our text says, "**she brought forth a man child.**" For every dark saying in God's eternal Word, somewhere else is a Scripture that will bring light to it. John saw an overview of the entire vision in the Revelation, but many times he only gave scant details on some of the symbols he employed. But when you lay line on line and precept on precept, you do not have to step outside of God's eternal Word to get understanding of the expressions. Many of the prophets saw a portion of the vision that John saw in its entirety, but many times their portion was more expansive and more explanatory than John's overview.

Again, Isaiah 66:7 tells us the Prophet proclaimed that "she was delivered of a man child." Then in verse 8 Isaiah began to give greater detail so we can understand what was being represented: "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? . . ." When the Prophet spoke of "one day" or "at once," he was prophetically speaking of the Day of Pentecost, the day when the first converts were produced. In this prophetic utterance he revealed who both the mother and the "**man child**" actually are.

Verse 8 continues, ". . . for as soon as Zion travailed . . ." This tells us clearly who the mother is, because we read in Hebrews 12:22-23 that Zion is the church: "But ye are come unto mount Sion . . . unto the . . . church . . ." The Prophet also identified who the children are. The last phrase in verse 8 says that "she brought forth her children." This establishes clearly that the "man child" verse 7 speaks of is "her children," or her converts (plural). Although, these converts are symbolized as a "**man child**," it was not merely one individual. This was a nation ("shall a nation be born at once"; verse 8). A nation is not composed of just one individual. This was a great multitude.

Now let us view this "one day," that Isaiah 66:8 talks about. That one day was the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1 says, "And when the day of Pentecost [that word in the Greek is *pentecoste*, which means "fifty," because it was fifty days after the Passover] was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 1:14 tells us what they were in one accord doing: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." After Peter preached his message, the Spirit of God moved on the scene, and this birthing commenced. Look what was brought forth. Acts 2:41 says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." There is the earth bringing forth in a day. And that was just the morning service. Acts 2:15 tells us it was "the third hour of the day." The Jewish day began at 6:00 a.m. The third hour of the day was 9:00 a.m.

We read in Acts 3:1, "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth



hour." That was three o'clock in the afternoon; it was time for the afternoon service. After the man at the Gate Beautiful was healed, Peter "answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?" (Acts 3:12a). Then he began to preach. When he was finished preaching, Acts 4:4 tells us, "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." The earth was made to bring forth in one day—three thousand in the morning and five thousand in the afternoon. Then Acts 4:5 says, "And it came to pass on the morrow . . ." Then it was the next day.

Indeed, Isaiah 66:8 tells us that "a nation [was] born at once." The earth brought forth, out of these old, "earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7). God raised up a seed (converts), and a nation (spiritual Israel) was born at once. This new nation was the new Israel. A transition occurred when Christ came and ushered in a new covenant. Today false religion believes that God has some special favor or place for old literal Israel, but the Bible lets us know in Romans 11:17-21, they were cut off. The natural branches were cut off because of unbelief. Romans 2:28-29 says: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter . . ."

### The New Israel of God

It went from being a natural birth to a spiritual birth, from being a literal circumcision to a spiritual circumcision, from being a literal Jew to being a spiritual Jew. Jesus said in Matthew 21:43, "Therefore say I unto you [He was addressing the leaders of the Jewish nation—'the chief priests and the elders of the people'; (Matthew 21:23)], The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [the literal Jewish nation], and given to a nation [He was talking about the nation that would be born at once] bringing forth the fruits thereof." What fruits do you have to bring forth to become a part of this new nation? John the Baptizer said in Matthew 3:7-8: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees [the religious leaders of old Judaism] come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." There is the fruit they needed to bring forth.

After Jesus spoke of the need of "bringing forth the fruits thereof," then in Matthew 21:44 He said, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken . . ." What stone was He talking about? Read the context. Verse 42 states, "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures [He was quoting Psalm 118:22], The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner . . ." Jesus was talking about the cornerstone. Ephesians 2:20 tells us that cornerstone is "Jesus Christ himself."

What does Matthew 21:44 mean when it says that whosoever "shall fall on this stone [Jesus Christ] shall be broken"? The psalmist wrote in Psalm 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." These verses are telling us that when someone brings forth fruit meet for repentance and he falls on this stone, Jesus Christ, in old-time Bible repentance, coming with a broken and a contrite spirit, he is in a good position to get a kingdom experience and be a part of this nation, the new Israel of God. When they gained a real kingdom experience, the King moved into their hearts (Colossians 1:27). He made them a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) and gave them power to reign in this life (Romans 5:17); they became a part of this new nation, the Israel of God.

This nation being born in a day, or being born at once, was a spiritual nation; it was a new Israel. In Galatians 6:15-16 the Apostle said: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, [In other words, it does not come through literal activities; it does not come through good works. The Bible says, 'Not of works, lest any man should boast' (Ephesians 2:9). If you are saved, you will work, but you do not work your way into salvation. You are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8).] but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Who is the "Israel of God" in this New Testament Dispensation? "As many as walk according to this rule." What rule? They are a new creature; they have brought forth fruit meet for repentance. They received old-time Bible salvation when they came with a broken and contrite spirit and fell on the Rock, Jesus Christ. These new creatures now have a kingdom experience. Those are the ones who are the Israel of God, the ones who have "power with God" or have "prevailed with God." (This is what the name *Israel* literally means.) This is the nation that was born at once on the Day of Pentecost. This "**man child**" in our text represents new creatures, those who have experienced the new birth from

this mother. They have been born again; they are her converts.

Let us look at an allegory given by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 4:22-31: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman [the two sons were Ishmael and Isaac (Genesis 16:15; Genesis 21:3); the bondmaid was Hagar (Genesis 16:1), and the freewoman was Sarah]. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory [in other words, we are going to use them as a comparison]: for these are the two covenants [the old covenant and the new covenant]; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar [in other words, Hagar and her son Ishmael are going to be likened to the old covenant that was instituted on Mount Sinai].

"For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem [old literal Jerusalem] which now is, and is in bondage with her children [they were in bondage in two ways at this juncture: they were spiritually in bondage and in bondage literally under the Roman yoke to the Roman Empire]. But Jerusalem which is above [or heavenly Jerusalem] is free [this is a new Jerusalem], which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are [present tense] the children of promise. [Paul was likening Sarah to 'Jerusalem which is above,' or the new covenant, and he was likening Isaac to the converts ('**the man child**') that were brought forth in this new covenant by promise]. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman [Hagar] and her son [Ishmael]: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

In these verses Paul equated Sarah with "Jerusalem which is above," the New Testament church (verse 26). Then Paul likened Isaac to the converts of the church (verse 28). When we talk about the "**woman**" and the "**man child**," in one sense they are dual symbols. Both represent aspects of the church. In the same manner Christ is referred to in the Gospel account of John in one place as "the Lamb" (John 1:29) and in another place as "the shepherd" (John 10:2). The two different symbolic expressions are used because they represent different roles, or different aspects, of Christ's character. So it is when our text refers to the church as the figure of a "**a woman**" and her converts as the figure of a "**man child**."

### Kept in the Father's Name

Why is the symbol of a "**man child**" expressly employed? Let us look at this a little closer. In the Revelation (and throughout much of the Scripture), false religion is spoken of in terms of being a harlot. Revelation 17:5 speaks of a mother, and then it designates her daughters as "harlots." What is the significance of this? Many times those born of harlotry do not know who their father is. The mother has had so many men, she does not know which one is the father. Therefore, the children do not take the name of the father, because they have no idea who the father is.

However, in our text we see "**a man child**" depicted. There is a reason this verse does not say, "She brought forth a child," but it says that "**she brought forth a man child**." There is divine significance in every word incorporated in the Scriptures. Proverbs 30:5 says, "Every word of God is pure . . ." "Every word" in the Scriptures has a significance. A "**man child**" born of a lawful union takes the father's name. When a daughter is born, even of a lawful union, eventually she will marry and take a name other than the father's. But a son, a "**man child**," always takes the father's name, preserves the father's name, and perpetuates the father's name.

Ephesians 3:14-15 says: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." The whole family is to be named after the Father. That is why the name of the church is Church of God, not Church of Christ. God is the Father, and it is to be kept in the name of the Father. The whole family—part of it is in Heaven and part of it is in earth—is kept in the Father's name.

Look at how Jesus prayed in that high priestly prayer in John, Chapter 17. This, indeed, is the Lord's Prayer. (Many people say the Lord's Prayer is recorded in Matthew, Chapter 6. No, that is the model prayer.) In John 17:11-12 Jesus said: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, *keep through thine own name* those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name . . ." Again, that is why our text speaks of a "**man child**:" to preserve and to perpetuate the

Father's name. Throughout the Scriptures God's people are referred to as "sons of God" and "son of God" but never as daughters (Philippians 2:15; 1 John 3:1-2). When we experience that new birth, we become a son of God, and we take the Father's name.

When John received a vision of those returning to truth in the evening time and he saw the Lamb (Christ) back in His rightful position as head of the church, Revelation 14:1 says that John saw "an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in [not on] their foreheads." What is *in* your forehead? Your mind. In other words, they had an understanding of truth; the eyes of their understanding had been enlightened concerning the truth. When these brethren came out of Babylon in 1880, preaching the message of the Church of God, these people stood with the Lamb and had the Father's name (God, Church of God) in their foreheads, or in their minds. They had the truth of the oneness of the body of believers, the unity of the faith embraced in their minds.

Why is it vital to possess, preserve, and perpetuate the Father's name? That is a study within itself, but let us look at a few reasons for the significance of a name. Some people say, "Names don't make any difference." If that were true, why don't you put your neighbor's name on your checking account? Or why don't you go into your lawyer's office and put their name on your will? When it comes to ownership of property, when it comes to possession and rights, the name means everything. When it comes to an inheritance, a name means everything. Thus, the name denotes ownership. It also denotes proprietary control. When we say we are Church of God, sons of God, the family of God, we are saying that God is in control; we have been bought with a price; we are not our own; God owns us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20); He is the proprietor; He has the control. That is exactly what a name implies. It denotes who is in control, who is the owner, who has possession.

In many religious organizations, it is not hard to see who has possession. They have men's names; they are under men's control and domination; they are a part of man's possession. The Father's name is not in their forehead, but some other name is in their forehead. They have a mark of the beast that came up out of the earth (Revelation 13:11), or out of the minds of men. The name is important!

These names that the harlot daughters have taken on speak to whose control they are under. But when the church is spoken of in the Bible, it is clearly spoken of as the Church of God. Eight times it is referred to it as the Church of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 10:32; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:13; 1 Timothy 3:5). Three times in the Scripture it says "the churches of God" (1 Corinthians 11:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:4). And one time the Bible speaks of the "church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15). That is a total of twelve times, the Biblical number of perfection or completeness.

### "The Lord's Voice"

Next, let us study the "**rod of iron**" **verse 5** speaks of to see what it symbolizes. This expression is also an allusion back to the Old Testament. Psalm 2:6-9 says: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion [depicting the establishment of the church and Christ as its head; Colossians 1:18]. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Verse 8 speaks of the heathen, and that is exactly what the saints were facing in Revelation, Chapter 12.

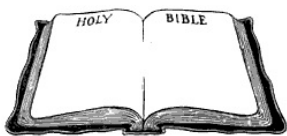
As soon as this "**woman**" appeared on the stage of action, Revelation 12:7 tells us "there was war." When the church came on the stage of action, immediately there was an opposing force. This opposing force was the paganistic religious system of the Roman Empire. The very first foe the morning-time church faced was paganism.

Where was the church's victory? We read in Psalm 2:9 that the heathen would be broken "with a rod of iron," and they were. When we study Revelation 12:9, we will see that "the great dragon was cast out." Revelation 20:2 tells us they "bound him," and verse 3 says they "shut him up, and set a seal upon him." So, we see that they did receive the heathen as an inheritance. They did as Psalm 2:9 says, break them with the "rod of iron." What is this "**rod of iron**" with which the morning-time church broke paganism? Micah's prophecy, Micah 6:9, tells us what still will break paganism and falsity yet today. It says, "The LORD'S voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod . . ." This "**rod**" is "the LORD'S voice," or the Word of God. This is confirmed in Micah 7:14,

which reads, "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage . . ." What is one to "feed thy people," or "the flock," with? "Thy rod." When Paul instructed the ministry "to feed the church of God" in Acts 20:28, what did he say to feed them with? Paul admonished in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word." The flock, or the saints, are to be fed with the Word of God, or the **"rod of iron."** That **"rod"** is what broke paganism into pieces, giving victory, and that is what still gives victory today!

This is the reason why the world and spiritual Babylon are doing everything they can to shut up the Word of God. Why? Because that is where the victory is. In Revelation 15:2 every one of those people who had victory was standing on the sea of glass, the Word of God. Whether they had victory over the beast, the image, the mark, the number, or the name (it did not matter where they came from or what their victory was over), the common denominator was that their victory came through the same source—the Word of God. The enemy is trying to cause us to quiet down on the Word today. Many people say we should package it and make it nice, neat, palatable, and polite. No! I would rather make it powerful! I would rather break those things that are not right in pieces than to make a trophy out of them for people to ooh and aah over. Why do the Scriptures refer to the Word of God as **"the rod of iron"**? Because it is solid, stable, unbendable. It cannot be twisted. It is straight and solid, and it produces a straight and solid people. If one is not straight when the **"rod"** is laid down, it will reveal where he is crooked.

The **"rod of iron"** that was used to shut up and bind the dragon is also spoken of in Revelation 19:13-15. There



Rod of Iron

we see a picture of Christ in the evening time: "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword [the sharp sword is 'the Word of God'; Hebrews 4:12], that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron . . . The sword and the rod represent the same thing—the Word of God. Different symbols are used to merely depict

different aspects, but they both represent the Word of God. This also reveals that the same **"rod of iron,"** which brought victory in the morning time, still brings victory in this evening time.

### The Spirit of Unbelief



**Revelation 12:4** says, "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child soon as it was born." At face value, or literally, this would appear to indicate only martyrdom, and certainly the first century and the morning-time church did, indeed, suffer terrible martyrdom in many cases. Confirming this, Revelation 12:11 tells us that "they loved not their lives unto the death." Under the pagan Roman Empire, every person in the Roman Empire was required once a year to burn a pinch of incense and say, "Caesar is Lord." But the saints would say, "Jesus is Lord." So the battle was on. Terrible persecutions and even martyrdom resulted. The Emperor Nero became a terrible accuser. Revelation 12:10 speaks of "the accuser of our brethren."

Nero did terrible things and then accused the saints of doing them. History is replete with examples of his false accusations. The most famous being his accusing the Christians of setting Rome on fire in A.D. 64.

The spirit behind this **"dragon"** was a spirit of unbelief. **Revelation 12:3** calls it **"a great red dragon."** What does the color red symbolize in the Scripture? Isaiah 1:18 states, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson . . ." Here sin is correlated with red. What particular sin or spirit motivated this dragon? Revelation 6:4 reads, "And there went out another horse that was red . . ." It is notable that on most charts this horse is facing in a direction that is in direct opposition to the spirit of the white horse, or the spirit that produced the church, the Holy Spirit. Another spirit produced the **"dragon"** as an opposing force. We found that **"red"** represents sin, but what particular sin or spirit motivated the **"dragon"**? Jesus said in John 16:8-9: "And when he is come [speaking of the Holy Spirit], he will reprove the world of sin [singular], and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin [again, singular], because they believe not on me [unbelief]." Hebrews 12:1 talks about "the sin [singular] which doth so easily beset us." To understand what the writer was talking about, read the preceding chapter, which speaks of the cloud of witnesses, those who are in the

Who's Who of Faith Chapter. Then the writer contrasted Hebrews, Chapter 11 (faith), with Hebrews 12:1 (the besetting sin). What is it? Unbelief. What spirit rose up and motivated this dragon? It was unbelief.

Let us go back and consider a vivid type. What approach did the first opposing force that came on the scene in the Garden take? When the woman said, in essence, "We will die if we eat," the serpent said, "You will not surely die" (Genesis 3:3-4). There was the spirit of unbelief! Now, Christ is the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47). Just as Eve came from Adam's side (Genesis 2:21-22), so the church came from Christ's side (John 19:34; Acts 20:28). The spirit that motivated the "**dragon**" (which was the first opposing force to the second Adam's wife) was the same spirit that worked on the first Adam's wife: unbelief.

Let us look again at the red horse spoken of in Revelation 6:4. Keep in mind that these horses denote militancy. We read in Zechariah 10:3, "Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in battle." These horses represent instruments of battle. They are depicting the militant phase. These horses also represent spirits. Zechariah 6:1-2 says: "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains [the two mountains are Mount Sinai (the Old Testament) and Mount Zion (the New Testament)]; . . . In the first chariot were red horses . . ." Then Zechariah gave a depiction of the same horses spoken of in Revelation 6:2-8: black, white, red, and pale. In verses 4-5 we read: ". . . What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits . . ." These horses represent spirits.

The pagan Roman Empire had "a great sword" (Revelation 6:4), the sword of state. Romans 13:1, speaking of the powers of state, or the civil government, says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Then verse 4 reads: "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword [the sword of state] in vain . . ." This "**great red dragon**," motivated by the spirit of unbelief, used the sword of state to bring persecution and martyrdom to the saints. The move of this system was to remove the believers if they could not remove the belief. The first attempt came by requiring the saints to burn incense to Caesar and say, "Caesar is Lord," thus removing them from their belief. If that did not work, then the system used the sword of state and removed the believer. We read of this very thing happening to the children of Israel. They had been delivered from Egyptian bondage, but by having a golden calf made (Exodus 32:1-4), they were overcome with paganism right in the midst of their deliverance. It was the same spirit of unbelief.

Under the pagan rulers there were ten specific periods of persecution, according to *Wickersham's Nineteen Hundred Church History*:

1. **Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (Nero)** (A.D. 54-68): This was the emperor who had Paul beheaded.
2. **Titus Flavius Domitianus (Domitian)** (A.D. 81-96): During this time about forty thousand Christians died. Domitian tried to martyr John and banished him to the Isle of Patmos.
3. **Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus (Trajan)** (A.D. 98-117)
4. **Marcus Aurelius Antoninus** (A.D. 161-180)
5. **Lucius Septimius Severus** (A.D. 193-211)
6. **Gaius Julius Verus Maximinus** (A.D. 235-238)
7. **Gaius Messius Quintus Decius** (A.D. 249-251)
8. **Publius Licinius Valerianus (Valerian)** (A.D. 253-260)
9. **Lucius Domitius Aurelianus (Aurelian)** (A.D. 270-275)
10. **Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus (Diocletian)** (A.D. 284-305)

This was, indeed, a time when pagan persecution caused the saints to be martyred, as Revelation 12:11 says, "they loved not their lives unto the death." But let us look a little deeper at the symbolic aspect rather than just the literal features. **Revelation 12:4** tells us that "**the dragon stood before the woman . . . to devour her child as soon as it was born.**" Let us look deeper than just martyrdom, because when the Christians were martyred, they went straight to Glory. This "**dragon**" was not merely after their bodies, but it was after that which made them a child of God. The opposing force (unbelief) was working "**to devour her child as soon as it was born.**" It was after that birth which made them a child. Unbelief was out to devour their experience.

The move of the "**dragon**" spirit was to remove the belief. Now if they could not remove the belief, they would attempt to remove the believer; but the real goal was to remove the belief. We know this is what was working when we consider the letter to the Ephesian Age in Revelation, Chapter 2. Christ told John to take a letter, representing the first period of this Gospel Day (A.D. 33-270), saying, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Revelation 2:4). What happens when love starts waxing cold (Matthew 24:12)? We read in Galatians 5:6, "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." When love begins to cool, faith becomes displaced by unbelief. Again, the spirit behind this system did not want to merely kill their bodies, but it was out "**to devour**" that which "**was born**," that which caused them to be born again, that which caused them to be a "**man child**." It was after their experience.

That spirit is working yet today. As soon as one gets saved and becomes part of Christ's seed, there is an enemy right there, wanting to devour that experience. Unbelief will try to move in on the new convert, saying: "You didn't get anything. You just made a fool out of yourself." Then when the first trial comes along, unbelief says, "Well, if you really got it, this wouldn't bother you." That old spirit of unbelief will start trying to devour your experience.

### Living in the Presence of God

Although the "**dragon stood before the woman**," waiting "**to devour her child**," obviously, the entire "**man child**" that **verse 5** speaks of was not devoured, because Revelation 12:17 says, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed . . ." There was a "remnant of her seed." Evidently they were not all devoured. Also **Revelation 12:5** tells us that the "**man child . . . was to rule all nations with a rod of iron**." Now how can that be if the "**man child**" were in Heaven? If they were martyred and left this time world and went into the eternal realm, how could they be going "**to rule all nations**"? I trust you can see the need of looking a little deeper and thinking beyond just the thought of martyrdom.

How did "the remnant" (Revelation 12:17) keep from being devoured? How did they overcome? The latter part of **verse 5** reads, "**and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne**." As soon as you read that, it is natural to think it means that they were martyred and they were over in Heaven. But in Revelation 4:1-2 John was caught up to the throne, and he was not martyred. He was the only Apostle to die a natural death. John was receiving a vision (Revelation 9:17), and his vision brought him into God's presence. **Verse 5** is not talking about martyrdom. I realize that is what has been taught in times past. Certainly, there was martyrdom in this time period. The saints went through severe persecutions, at least ten seasons of it under the Roman emperors.

The "**man child**" was ruling "**with a rod of iron**," and the enemy was there to devour that experience which enables people to rule. The only way they were able to continue to rule and maintain victory, thereby overcoming this dragon and casting him down, was because they were "**caught up unto God, and to his throne**." They lived in the presence of God. The "**throne**" portrays His presence and glory. Isaiah 6:1-3 portrays the "throne" (verse 1) and "the glory" (verse 3). They operated under the presence of God. They were empowered with the presence of God. They took the Word of God from God's presence, from God's mouth, and that is what they used to overcome the "**dragon**." That is what still brings victory today—being "**caught up unto God, and to his throne**."

How could this "**man child**" in **verse 5** "**rule all nations**" if he was martyred? Where was his power and authority? How can we rule or reign yet today? Only when we are caught up to God and to His throne. Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John all had a vision of it, and none of them was talking about martyrdom. Isaiah 6:1 says, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne . . ." Isaiah received a vision. He was brought into a position of being in the presence of God. He was not speaking of martyrdom. Ezekiel 1:26 reads, "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." Here Ezekiel had a vision of the throne, but he was not martyred. He was not speaking of martyrdom at this juncture.

I want you to catch the picture. How do we rule? How do we reign? It is when we are caught up to God and to His throne. Ephesians 1:20 says, "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Ephesians 2:6 tells us, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The same Greek word is used in both places. The church is where Christ is (Revelation 1:13). He is sitting at the "right hand in the heavenly places" in the church, the same place we are lifted up to: "in

heavenly places in Christ Jesus." That is where we are going to receive the power to reign. When we are "**caught up unto God, and to his throne**" and are in the presence of God, that is where we find victory. That is where the power is. That is where we get the Word at His mouth and are able to subdue everything that is unlike God.

I trust that you can see why these saints were victorious. These morning-time brethren lived and operated in the presence of God; they received the Word at His mouth (Ezekiel 33:7). They took "the reed like unto a rod" (Revelation 11:1), and "they overcame . . . by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). What produces a testimony? The Word of God. The power is produced when we make God's Word our word. Elijah did just that in 1 Kings 17:1, when he said that "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to *my word*." Why did he say that? He knew God's warning in Deuteronomy 11:16-17, which says if the people departed from God, there would be no rain.

God's people need to take the Word and make it, as James 1:21 says, "the engrafted word." This is the only way that we can keep our experience from being devoured by unbelief. This is the only way that we can rule and reign. We must be, as **verse 5** says, "**caught up unto God, and to his throne.**" In other words, we must live in His presence, take the Word from His mouth, make it our word, take hold of it by faith, and then rule in the face of all opposing forces. As Romans 5:17 declares we will "reign in life by one, Christ Jesus." This is what they did in the morning time, and we can do it as well. Acts 10:34 says that "God is no respecter of persons." This is how they overcame. This is how, according to Revelation 12:9, "the great dragon was cast out." According to Revelation 20:2-3, they "bound him" and "shut him up, and set a seal upon him." How were they able to do this? It was because they had a ministry that had a key and a chain (the Word and the Spirit; Revelation 20:1). They overcame "by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). The Word is what produces the testimony. But the Word has to come from God's mouth. All Scripture is given by inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16). When we receive the Word through inspiration, it is the Word at His mouth. That is what brings power and victory.

## CHAPTER TWELVE—PART THREE

### The Great Red Dragon

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

**4** And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

#### Reviewing Symbolism

A vast host of truths is laid before us in this passage of Scripture text, but we want to spend this study looking at the "**great red dragon**" by identifying what this "**dragon**" represents and the spirit that motivated this particular entity or system. As we examine this text, we must be reminded that John the Revelator "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10). In other words, he was under the influence, or the unction and anointing, of the Holy Spirit. Revelation 9:17 tells us that John received a "vision." God used the panorama of the skies, as it were, to allow John to receive a vision of spiritual realities.

We must also recall that the language of this vision is symbolic. That is not novel to the Revelation alone. If you were to study, you would find that the language of dreams and visions down throughout the Bible is symbolic. When Joseph dreamed that the stars, the sun, and the moon all bowed down before him, it was symbolic of his brethren, his mother, and his father (Genesis 37:9-10). When Pharaoh dreamed of seven fat kine and seven lean kine, it was symbolic of the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine (Genesis 41:17-21, 25-30). When Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a metallic image, God was presenting a prophetic time line from the day of Nebuchadnezzar (the head of gold) down to the Advent of Jesus Christ (the stone). (Read Daniel 2:31-45.) When Peter received a vision of a sheet full of all manner of unclean animals being lowered three times, then he was told "three men seek thee," and he found that they were Gentile men (Acts 10:11-21). So much of the language throughout the Scriptures has been symbolic language, especially the language of dreams and visions.

The Revelation is a book of symbolism. Revelation 1:1 says it was "signified," or the Greek work is *semaino*, which means "revealed by signs." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines a "sign" as a "symbol." Even our text (**Revelation 12:3**) states, "**And there appeared another wonder . . .**" *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "another sign." Again, the definition of a *sign* is a "symbol." So we are seeing symbolic expressions in this Book of Revelation.

We found in prior study (Revelation 12:1) that the woman appeared in heaven. Here we find in **verse 3** that "**there appeared another wonder**" (or another sign) right in this same "**heaven**." We must recognize that this is not speaking of God's Heaven. The "**heaven**" in which the Revelation occurs is not the celestial Heaven in which God resides. Rather, as Ephesians 2:6 tells us, it is "heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is an exalted spiritual position, an ecclesiastical heaven. It is a position where we receive spiritual truths. Second Corinthians 12:1-2 talks about a "third heaven," and it reveals that it is a place of "visions and revelations of the Lord," a place where we gain spiritual understanding. The battle is over that which is going to occupy the exalted position in the minds of men: truth or error, reality or falsity, the truth of the church or that which the enemy wants to place in the minds of men.

#### A "Diverse" Beast

The prophetic time frame for the appearance of the "**dragon**" is established because this "**dragon**" appeared as soon as the woman (the church) appeared. Although this "**dragon**" appeared as an opposing force as soon as the woman appeared (**verse 4**), in reality he was on the scene before converts were brought forth. As we give consideration to this "**dragon**," keep in mind, much of the imagery in the Scriptures, and in the Revelation particularly, is an allusion back to the old Hebrew economy. We can read of this "**dragon**" in the Book of Daniel. Daniel received "a dream and visions of his head upon his bed" (Daniel 7:1) in which he saw "four great beasts" (Daniel 7:3). Then, in Daniel,



Chapter 7, we are given understanding of what those beasts represent. Daniel 7:17 reads, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [another rendering says 'kingdoms'], which shall arise out of the earth." So these four beasts represent four successive kingdoms.

Daniel gave understanding by revealing the figurative expressions employed concerning these kingdoms. In Daniel 7:4 we read that "the first was like a lion." In the literal animal kingdom, a lion is referred to as the king of beasts. This kingdom was a kingdom of all kingdoms. This kingdom is found in Daniel, Chapter 2. When Nebuchadnezzar had the dream of a metallic image portrayed that consisted of four different components, or segments, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:37-38: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon (Daniel 1:1). So this first kingdom was the Babylonian Empire. Daniel likened it to a lion that had eagle's wings (Daniel 7:4).



How can we be sure that it represents the Babylonian Empire? If we look into prophecy a little further, we find that "eagle's wings" are referred to in Habakkuk 1:6-8, which states: "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, [This is speaking of the empire of Babylon—the location was in Babylon, the people were Chaldeans. It was the one and selfsame thing. This is verified by Daniel 7:1, which speaks of 'Belshazzar king of Babylon' and Daniel 5:30, which tells of 'Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans.'] that bitter and hasty nation. . . . They are terrible and dreadful . . . they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." Daniel 7:4 tells us that these "eagle's wings," referring to the Babylonian Empire, "were plucked." (We will examine this more closely in our next segment.) Nebuchadnezzar became exalted ("lifted up from the earth"), and God clipped his wings (Daniel 4:25). But we find in Daniel 7:4 that Nebuchadnezzar repented and "a man's heart was given to him"; in other words, he was restored.



The second beast, spoken of in Daniel 7:5, "raised up itself on one side." This kingdom had two sides, denoting that it was a dual kingdom. Daniel 2:39 tells us that this "kingdom [was] inferior" to the first kingdom. This kingdom was the Medo-Persian Empire, which was in direct succession to the Babylonian Empire (Daniel 5:30-31). The third beast is described as "a leopard" (Daniel 7:6). A leopard is noted for its speed, and this represents the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great, because he conquered all of the then-known world by the age of thirty-two years old. Tradition has it that he then sat down and wept because there were no more worlds left to conquer.

After Alexander died, his kingdom was divided amongst his four generals. That is portrayed in the "four wings" and the "four heads" (Daniel 7:6). This succession is confirmed in Daniel 11:2-4, which says: "And now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king [Alexander the Great] shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven [the four generals] . . . ."



For the purpose of this study, we want to focus on the fourth beast. We read in Daniel 7:7, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth . . . ."

This beast represents the same kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a metallic image that had "feet part of iron and part of clay" (Daniel 2:33). This was the fourth successive world empire.



Continuing to describe this beast, Daniel 7:7 says that "it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." One reason this beast was diverse from all the beasts that were before it was because it spanned two dispensations—the Old Testament and the New Testament. All the other kingdoms only occupied one dispensation. Also, though they were pagan kingdoms, they were political or civil powers.

They never violently tried to eradicate a people as this fourth beast. This kingdom was not only a civil power, but also a dominant ecclesiastical power. It became a politico-ecclesiastical power: a civil and a religious power. That is a distinction. So it was "diverse." This beast was identified by "ten horns," the same "**ten horns**" we are introduced to in our text (**Revelation 12:3**). This beast (or kingdom) was the pagan Roman Empire. It appeared on the stage of action just as soon as the church appeared, as far as being an opposing force. Yes, it preceded this time; the Roman Empire came into being about 226 B.C., but as far as an opposing force to the church, it appeared just as soon as there was something to oppose.

### The Second Adam

What is the time setting for the appearance of this "**dragon**" and the woman? Song of Solomon 6:10 lets us know that this woman appeared in "the morning," (A.D. 33). We also know this from studying typology. The Apostle Paul spoke to the morning-time church in Corinth in 2 Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Paul penned this epistle "unto the church of God" (2 Corinthians 1:1). What was the analogy or the comparison that Paul was drawing? He correlated "as the serpent beguiled Eve" to "your minds [speaking to the morning-time church] should be corrupted." The analogy presented is between Eve (the mother of all physically living; Genesis 3:20) being beguiled by the subtlety of the serpent back in the morning-time of Creation and the church (the mother of all spiritually living; Galatians 4:26) being confronted by the serpent in the morning-time of this Gospel Day.

In the morning-time of Creation, the first Adam was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). The first Adam, in one sense, is a type of Jesus Christ. The first Adam had a bride who was taken from his side (Genesis 2:21). When Eve was taken from his side, Adam was in a deep sleep, which is the image of death (John 11:11, 14; 1 Corinthians 11:30). Again, we see here a type of Jesus Christ and how He died to produce His bride. Then Genesis 3:1 tells us that the first opposing force which appeared on the scene was "the serpent." So the literal occurrence, which happened in the Genesis account, is a type, because Christ is the second Adam. In 1 Corinthians 15:45 we read, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Who is the "last Adam"? Verse 47 tells us, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." Christ is that second Adam.

Just as Adam was created in God's image, so was Christ in God's image. In Hebrews 1:2-3 we read: "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person . . ." Christ is in the image of God. Just as Adam was in a deep sleep when his bride came out of his side, so was Christ. We can see this in John 19:33-34, which says: "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already [there is the antitype of Adam's sleep], they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." The blood was for the remission of sins (Romans 3:25), and the water depicts the Holy Spirit (John 7:38-39) that brings regeneration. That is what produced a bride.

The bride of Christ was "purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). His bride came from His side, and she is flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, just as Adam's wife was (Genesis 2:23). In Ephesians 5:29-30 we read: "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body [the church is Christ's body], of his flesh, and of his bones."

Let us look at how the "**dragon**," or the serpent, has attempted to beguile the church. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds [speaking to the Church of God] should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Just as the serpent beguiled Eve back in the Genesis account, Revelation 12:9 tells us the "**great red dragon**" went to deceive the whole world. It is evident from the type as well that this "**dragon**," which **verse 3** speaks of and which verse 9 denotes as "a serpent," was the first opposing force of the morning-time church. It was right there, waiting in **verse 4**, for the "**woman . . . to be delivered**." This "**dragon**" was already on the stage of action in A.D. 33.

## The Influence of This System Reaches to the Evening Time

While the multitudes are looking for some fierce monstrosity to literally appear in the future, this "**great red dragon**" was a system that has already appeared. This was one of those things that Revelation 1:19 describes as "thou hast seen [past tense]." John was on the Isle of Patmos during the time of the authority of this "**dragon**." He had been banished there by the Roman Emperor Domitian. It was the authority of this "**dragon**" that had sent him there.

The question may arise: "If this occurred in the past, if it is merely historical, what is the merit of studying it? What relevance does it have to us today?" We must recognize that each of these systems which opposed the church down throughout the course of this Gospel Day was produced and promoted by spirits. Those spirits are still loose and working. We are facing them in this evening time in which we dwell today. Thus, it is vitally necessary we understand what occurred in bygone ages. As we study this we need to understand what spirits were produced by these systems, what systems were produced, how they worked, and how they operated. This is important because we are facing the same spirit working in similar manners yet today.

We see the influence of this system—"the **great red dragon**"—strewn all the way through the Revelation. In Revelation 13:2 we read that the first beast which rose up got his seat and his power and his authority right from the "**dragon**." In Revelation 13:11 when the beast that came up out of the earth opened his mouth, "he spake as a dragon." We read in Revelation 20:7-8: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan [or in this context, the serpent] shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth . . ." This is speaking about the Protestant era, the time period after the thousand years when this "**dragon**" is loosed.

We can also read of this "**dragon**" in Revelation, Chapter 16, which describes the seventh-seal period of time in which you and I are privileged to live. Verses 13-14 read: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils [seducing spirits; 1 Timothy 4:1], working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them . . ."

God's people are not the only ones who have heeded the message of Revelation 18:4, "Come out of her, my people." These spirits have "come out" (Revelation 16:13) as well. They are no longer merely housed and working in these systems, but they have gone forth to the whole world (Revelation 16:14), working to gather out people *from* truth. They are working to find a way to infiltrate the souls of people who have embraced truth and draw them away from truth. They are gathering together every opposing force *against* truth. These spirits are still working feverishly today. That is why we need to understand them. That is why this study is so relevant to us.

Edmund Burke said, "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it." We must recognize the truth of Ecclesiastes 1:9, which says, ". . . that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Today we are facing the same spirits that gave rise to these systems in the past. As we study, you will find the "**tail**"—the influence and the spirit of this "**dragon**"—reaches all of the way into the evening time. Ministers ("**stars**") today are falling from their exalted position in heavenly places because the spirit that motivated this "**dragon**" is getting hold of them.

## The Adversary and Accuser

When many read in our text of "**a great red dragon**," immediately the thought of literalism begins to arise. When ones read Revelation 12:9, which says that "the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan," it brings thoughts of "This '**dragon**' must be the devil personified." We must be continually reminded that we are dealing in *symbols*. "God is a spirit" (John 4:24). People often envision God as some sort of elderly man in a white robe with a big, long, white beard, sitting on a throne somewhere. No, "God is a spirit." Not only is God a Spirit, but the devil is a spirit as well. Ephesians 2:2 speaks of him as "the prince of the power of the air, *the spirit* that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

When these terms—"the Devil, and Satan"—are employed in Revelation 12:9, we need to rightfully divide the Word of Truth. They are not always to be taken literally. Let us look where else the same Greek words are used. When Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:23, "Get thee behind me, Satan," was Peter actually Satan? Was Peter Satan personified? That

word *Satan* in the Greek means "adversary." Christ was setting forth that Peter at that point had become an adversary to the divine will.

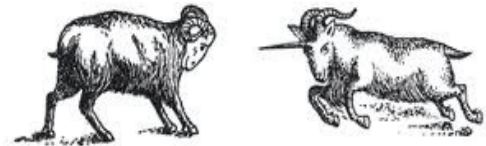
So it is in our text. This "**dragon**" was an *adversary* to the divine will. Revelation 12:9, in the King James version, says "called the Devil, and Satan," but *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* states "called the enemy even that adversary." The interlineary says "accuser and adversary." Look at Jesus' words in John 6:70. He said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Verse 71 tells us He "spake of Judas Iscariot." Was Judas the devil personified? The word *devil* in this verse in the Greek means "an accuser." When Judas sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, he became an accuser. In the Revelation it is the same Greek word; this "**dragon**" was an "accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10). Just as the enemy was using Peter and Judas, so he used this system to work against the cause of God.

Revelation, Chapter 20, speaks of the dragon. Verse 2 reads, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan [again, *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'accuser and adversary'], and bound him a thousand years." Verse 1 tells us he was bound with "a great chain." If you go back to Mark 5:2-4, you will read of a man who had at least a couple of thousand devilish spirits but could not be bound with fetters and chains. This shows that Revelation, Chapter 20, is not speaking of the devil personified, for if they could not bind a man who was devil-possessed, how could the devil himself be bound? I trust that you can see that the devil cannot be bound with a chain. We must dismiss the thought of this "**great red dragon**" in **Revelation 12:3** as being Satan personified. This is a symbolic picture.

### The Great Roman Empire

Of what is this "**dragon**" symbolic? Our text gives us several identifying factors. **Verse 3** says that this "**dragon**" had "**seven heads and ten horns.**" What do these represent? First, let us consider these "**heads.**" When we talk about "**heads**" what does the word *head* represent? Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:3, which state, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." According to *Vine's Expository Dictionary of the Bible*, that word *head* means "authority." When we are talking about these "**heads**" in **verse 3**, we are talking about authority, or in this instance, civil authority. (Yet today we still speak of "heads of State.") When we refer to Christ as the "head of the church" (Ephesians 1:22; 5:22-23), we are saying that He is the authority. Isaiah 9:6, a Messianic prophecy concerning Christ, says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder . . ." What is on the shoulder? The head. What does the *head* represent? Government or authority.

Next our text speaks of "**ten horns.**" What do "**horns**" represent? We read in Daniel 8:5-6: "And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns . . ." Verses 20-21 of this chapter tell us: "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings [or kingdoms] of Media and Persia. And the rough he-goat is the king of Grecia:



The Ram and the He Goat  
(Daniel 8:5-6)

and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king [Alexander the Great]." These "**horns**" represent kingdoms.

As we study, keep in mind that the "**seven heads**" represent civil authority or civil government and the "**horns**" represent kingdoms. This gives insight as to what this "**dragon**" represents. It appeared on the scene in A.D. 33 as the first opposing force to the morning-time church. It had "**seven heads**" of government and "**ten horns,**" or political powers. These are all identifying factors, showing us that this "**dragon**" represents the pagan Roman Empire. Rome, in its pagan form, had seven distinct heads of government. In reality, there was only one head at a time, but there were seven successive heads of government, or types of civil authority, that Rome had in its pagan form.

When John received the Revelation on the Isle of Patmos, it was A.D. 96.

#### The seven distinct forms or heads of government were:

- Regal power
- Consular
- Decemvirate
- Military tribunes
- Triumvirate
- Imperial

Revelation 17:10 tells us, "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, [In other words, five of these heads of government—the regal, the consular, the decemvirate, the military tribunes, and the triumvirate—had already fallen. Historically they had already come and gone.] and one is [the 'one' that was in power in A.D. 96 was the imperial, or the imperial Caesars], and the other is not yet come [that was the patrician, the seventh-and-final form of government that Rome had in its pagan form] . . . ."

The "**ten horns**" spoken of in **Revelation 12:3** were the ten minor kingdoms that appeared when Rome declined and divided. The question may arise, "Why would John say it here when it had not yet occurred?" Isaiah 46:10 answers that question, saying, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God tells the end from the beginning, and He speaks of things that are not yet done.

The last part of **Revelation 12:3** says that there were "**seven crowns upon his heads.**" Notice, the "**crowns**" are *on* the "**heads.**" Later, when we study the first beast (Revelation 13:1), we will find that the "**crowns**" are on the "**horns.**" They moved from the heads of state (the heads of government) over to the ten minor kingdoms (the civil power). Authority moved from the heads of government that Rome had in its pagan form over to the minor kingdoms in the papal era. What do these "**crowns**" represent? We read in 2 Kings 11:12, "And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king." "**Crowns**" denote the power to rule, and the power to rule in our text was on these "**heads,**" or the heads of government, during the time when Rome was in its pagan form.

<b>The ten minor kingdoms Rome dissolved into are as follows:</b>	
• Anglo-Saxons	• Lombards
• Burgundians	• Ostrogoths
• Franks	• Sueves
• Huns	• Vandals
• Heruli	• Visigoths

Why was this "**dragon**" described as "**great**"? It was considered "**great**" because of its vastness of size, because it ruled the then-known world. We see this is true in Luke 2:1, which says, "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Look at Matthew 22:17-21: "Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar [Caesar was the Roman Emperor], or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." What was the superscription? Whose image was on the coin? It was Caesar's. That was the coinage which was used throughout the empire, or throughout the then-known world. It was a "**great**" empire.



When John spoke of the "**dragon,**" the morning-time church knew what was being spoken of. They knew it was the Roman Empire that opposed the morning-time church, for it was Nero who had Paul beheaded, and it was Domitian who banished John. Some of the last words in the last epistle that the Apostle Paul penned prior to his martyrdom are found in 2 Timothy 4:6, which reads, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." The notation in the Thompson Chain Bible at the end of this epistle says that it "was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time."

When we read in Revelation 12:7 that "the dragon fought and his angels," we see that the reason Rome was such an opposition to the early church was not merely because of its civil power but because it also was a very dominant spiritual or religious system. It used the civil authority to back that opposition. Thus, it was a politico-ecclesiastical system, a system vested with both civil and religious power.

### The Spirit of Unbelief

What kind of spirit motivated this system? Notice that it is called "**a great red dragon.**" Why is the color "**red**" used? What does "**red**" symbolize? Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though

your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Sin is symbolized by scarlet or red. To understand what particular sin and spirit pagan Rome was filled with, let us read some accounts in Acts to see what the morning-time church was contending with. In Acts 17:32, after the Apostle Paul preached on Mars hill, we read, "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked . . ." What were they mocking? "The resurrection of the dead." Here Paul was dealing with unbelief.

When Felix heard Paul's testimony, Felix said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25). Why didn't he repent and get saved right then? Unbelief. The common denominator or factor in each of these cases is unbelief. In Acts 26:24 Festus said to Paul, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." What made him feel that way? Unbelief. What was Agrippa's unforgettable statement to Paul? "Almost thou persuadedst me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). Why did he say "almost"? Unbelief still had him bound.

Each of these Scriptures reflects unbelief! Go back to the type—the serpent in the Garden. How did he work? When Eve told the serpent in Genesis 3:2-3: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," the serpent said in verse 4, "Ye shall not surely die." What was he sowing in her mind? Unbelief!

Just as it was in the type (the serpent sowing unbelief in the mind of Eve, the mother of all physical living), so it is with the mother of all the spiritual living, the second Adam's wife that came from His side. What did the serpent confront her with? Unbelief! This is the besetting sin. Hebrews 12:1 tells us, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, [The 'wherefore' reverts the reader to the preceding chapter, Chapter 11. That chapter is known as the 'Who's Who in Faith.'] let us lay aside every weight, and *the sin* which doth so easily beset us . . ." What is that sin? Well, what is it contrasted with? Faith. So that sin is unbelief.

When John the Baptizer heralded that great cry concerning Jesus Christ in John 1:29, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away *the sin* [singular] of the world." What sin was John speaking of? It is the sin of all sins. Jesus said in John 16:7-9, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of *sin* [again, singular], and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of *sin* (singular), because they believe not . . ." There is *the sin* of all sins, the sin of unbelief.

The spirit that motivated this "**dragon**" was a spirit of unbelief. Rome could have been an empire like any other empire, and it would not have been such a major factor. However, the spirit of unbelief that they possessed caused them to rise up against truth. If you look at the Revelation chart, you will see that the "**tail**" of the dragon extends down to the evening time. The reason the "**stars**" are falling from "**heaven**," the reason ministers are losing their exalted positions in Christ Jesus, is because this spirit of unbelief has taken hold of them. They do not believe in holiness, the standard, divine healing, the message on the church, and the message on Babylon as they used to. The prevailing attitude is, "Those doctrines aren't necessary now." (But they are as necessary as they ever were.) Unbelief has taken them in, and they have fallen from their lofty position.

That spirit of unbelief motivated a system back in the morning of time, but the influence, the effect, and the spirit of that system is still working in the end portion of this Gospel Day, the evening time in which you and I are living, the seventh-seal period of time. Revelation, Chapter 1, tells us that the stars were in Christ's right hand. Then Revelation 1:20 reveals that the stars are angels (the Greek word is *aggelos*, meaning messengers or ministers). As long as they were in His hand, they were in a heavenly place, because that is where He is. It was when they got out of His hand and out of His control, when a spirit of unbelief overtook them that they fell from heaven to the earth. In other words, they fell from the exalted level in Christ Jesus down to an earthly manmade, religious level.

Again, we read in Revelation 16:13, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come out* of the mouth of the dragon . . ." Unbelief is no longer merely working in that system. It has "*come out*." It is the besetting sin, and the enemy is yet trying to overcome people with this spirit today. The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." One of the reasons God gave the Book of Revelation was to expose Satan's devices, systems, spirits, and the way he is working against the souls of mankind. It was given to expose the way he has worked against the church down throughout the annals of time and to expose the way he is working today.

## Overcoming This Spirit of Unbelief

Church of God, we have come too far to play around with this spirit of unbelief, to start questioning and opening our minds to things that tend to move us to less godliness. If something is of God, it will take you toward more godliness and more holiness, not more worldliness. Anything that takes you toward more worldliness is not of God. God is not going to tell you to fill your mind with ungodly things. There are spirits behind those things; do not let them get hold of you. An old spirit of unbelief will rise up and say, "That doesn't matter," but it does matter.

The morning-time church overcame the "**dragon**," that spirit of unbelief. They cast him down, and we can cast him down yet today. We can have victory today. We do not have to succumb. We are not ignorant of his devices, and one of the greatest devices he has used throughout time is unbelief concerning the truth of God's Word. He used it on Eve, and he used it on the children of Israel. Why did they not make it into the Promised Land after forty long years of wandering? Hebrews 3:19 tells us "they could not enter in because of unbelief." Unbelief is a deadly spirit. It will devour your experience. Just as this "**dragon**" was waiting to "**devour her child as soon as it was born**" (verse 4), this spirit of unbelief is working to devour our experience as quickly as we are born, if we are not careful. If we do not "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard" (Hebrews 2:1), this old spirit will devour our experience just as soon as we are born.

If this spirit cannot get you when you are a new convert, it will continue working on you when you are an older convert. Unbelief will tell you: "You don't have to attend every worship service. You don't feel well; you're getting old; you're feeling tired. God understands." Unbelief also tells you: "You don't have to pay your tithe. Your bills are piling up, and money is tight. You can't afford to tithe. God understands." Yet, Malachi 3:8 asks, "Will a man rob God?" God cannot bless a thief, but if you will do what you are supposed to and pay what you are supposed to, He will open the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that you cannot contain.

Unbelief is an insidious foe. Hebrews 3:12 warns, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you [he was not speaking to unbelievers but to the brethren] an evil heart of unbelief [when unbelief moves in, it changes the condition of the heart], in departing from the living God." Unbelief will cause you to depart from the living God and will cause your heart to become evil. That is how serious this spirit and sin of unbelief is.

We read in Hebrews 4:1-2: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." It takes more than just hearing the Gospel, you must take faith in what you hear. James 1:22 admonishes, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Unbelief is deadly, but the good news is that the morning-time church overcame this spirit; and so can we. In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 the Apostle Paul penned, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." It will only work effectually when you believe it and receive it as the Word of God. You must receive it not as the word of man nor as the preacher's idea, but as the Word of God. You must believe that it came from God. When you believe it and receive it in that manner, it will produce an effectual work against the enemy's efforts to discount and discredit it. Although this spirit is working yet today, God's Word will give us the victory if we take hold of the truth.

First Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We do not have to be defeated. We are not ignorant of Satan's devices. There is victory for us. Those morning-time brethren took the Word and used it to defeat the enemy. If we will take the Word as the Word of God and not the word of man, we can still overcome all of the power of the enemy. Luke 10:19 gives us this promise: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread . . . over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

There has been not only a rising of unbelief in this day and time in which you and I are living, but there has been a rising of paganistic religions as well. We have never seen paganistic religions rising up on every side as we see them today. This rise of Islam is nothing more than a rise in paganism, and it is all produced by this insidious spirit of unbelief. May God help us "to give the more earnest heed" (Hebrews 2:1) so we can be overcomers against this foe in our day as well.

## CHAPTER TWELVE—PART FOUR

### War in Heaven

**Revelation 12:7** And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

**8** And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

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

**10** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

**11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

**12** Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

**13** And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

### Three Heavens

In this portion of the Revelation, we see a text that has been used to engender much confusion. These verses have been used to propagate a false teaching, an erroneous, yea even damnable, doctrine. We want to focus on **verse 7** and consider the expression "**there was war in heaven.**" Just as the "woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet" (Revelation 12:1) and the dragon, spoken of as "having seven heads and ten horns" (Revelation 12:3), are symbolic expressions, this "**war**" is no less a symbolic expression than any of the other expressions employed in this context. We must ever keep in mind that these are symbolic representations, not literal descriptions.

We must also consider the prophetic time setting of this passage. This "woman clothed with the sun" (Revelation 12:1) appeared in "the morning" (Song of Solomon 6:10), or the morning-time of this Gospel Day (A.D. 33), the time when the church was instituted on the Day of Pentecost. Why is the prophetic time element so important? There are religious advocates who espouse that this text portrays the devil being kicked out of Heaven. But in light of truth, that presents several problems. This text was penned in A.D. 96, and it is describing events that began in A.D. 33. So if, indeed, this is a portrayal of the devil being kicked out of Heaven, did the devil not fall until A.D. 33 or A.D. 96? If that is so, who spoke to Eve through the serpent in the Garden of Eden? Who tempted Christ, which is recorded in Matthew, Chapter 4? On the other hand, if the devil fell prior to this, then why is it described as a morning-time event that transpired in A.D. 33? As we study the Revelation, we must discard some erroneous teachings, and perhaps preconceived ideas, though they are commonly embraced in religious realms, and embrace the truth of God's eternal Word.

The "**heaven**" spoken of in the Revelation is not God's Heaven; it is not the celestial Heaven. The Word of God tells us that there are three heavens. We are introduced to the first one in the Book of Beginnings. In the creative account (Genesis 1:7-8), we read of the first heaven mentioned in the Scriptures: the firmamental or natural heavens in which the sun, stars, and moon reside. Then in Ecclesiastes 5:2 we find that there is, indeed, a celestial Heaven in which God dwells: ". . . for God is in heaven . . ." There is also a "third heaven" that we read about in 2 Corinthians 12:2. The Apostle Paul wrote of a man who was so caught up in the Spirit (actually speaking of himself), he did not know whether he was in the body or out of the body. If you have ever been really caught up in the Spirit to where God gives you "visions and revelations," you will feel like you are not even in this tabernacle of clay.

Paul described it further in Ephesians 2:6, saying, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This establishes beyond any fear of contradiction that the Scriptures teach that there



are at least three heavens. There would have to be three for there to be a "third." Paul told us exactly where this third heaven is in 2 Corinthians 12:1, which reads: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." Therefore, this "third heaven" is an ecclesiastical realm, a spiritual position where we receive "visions and revelations." John was in this heaven. Revelation 4:1 says, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven . . . ." John did not ascend into God's Heaven, but he was receiving "a vision" (Revelation 9:17), an unveiling of precious truth, while "in the Spirit" (Revelation 1:10).

The "**heaven**" this "**war**" transpires in is an ecclesiastical heaven, "heavenly places," or in an exalted spiritual position. In reality, it is a battle over that which is going to occupy an exalted position in the minds of men—truth or error, right or wrong, true religion or false religion. That is what the "**war**" was over then, and that is what it is over yet today.

### Who Is the "Dragon . . . called the Devil, and Satan"?

Since the misconceptions and false teachings attached to our Scripture text are so pronounced and so predominant in the minds of the masses, before we examine what this "**war**" actually was, we must first clear away the confusion and understand what it is *not* describing in this verse. Much of the confusion comes from **verse 9**, which says, "**And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan . . . .**" In our prior study, we identified "**the great dragon**" and the identifying factors that prove this "**great dragon**" represents the pagan Roman Empire; it is not the devil personified. Much of the misunderstanding comes from the fact that **verse 9**, describing "**the great dragon**," says he is "**called the Devil, and Satan.**" Revelation 20:2, speaking of the same event and the same time period, says, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan . . . ." Sadly, when those with natural minds, not directed by the Spirit of God, teach this, they advocate that this "**dragon**" is the devil personified. Could this be true? If so, why do we not see him? Where is he? Have we seen this dragon? Just as "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24), the devil is a "spirit" as well (Ephesians 2:2). He does not wear a red suit, have horns and a long tail, and carry around a pitchfork. (It might be nice if he did; then you could see him coming.) The devil is a spirit being.

As we look at **verse 9**, we find that before "**the great dragon was cast out**," he "**deceiveth the whole world.**" The deception occurred *before* he was "**cast out into the earth.**" In reality, his being "**cast out**" was to end his deception, not begin it. Consider **verse 13**, which says, "**And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman . . . .**" If this is literal, either "**the woman**" was cast out too, or "**the dragon**" got back into Heaven. I trust you can see that we must discard and dismiss viewing this text literally.

Let us raise a few more questions. Proponents of the false teaching that this was the devil getting kicked out of Heaven use several other supposed proof texts. They use Isaiah 14:12, which reads, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . . ." (This was written in the proximity of 712 B.C.) Then they go to Luke 10:18, where Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." (That was A.D. 32.) Then they come to **verse 9** of our text, which states "**And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan . . . .**" (That was written in A.D. 96.) Now when exactly did the devil get kicked out? Was it in 712 B.C., A.D. 32, or A.D. 96? How many times did he get kicked out? Let us just do some sound reasoning together.

If each of these Scriptures speak of the devil falling from Heaven, when did he fall? How many times did he fall? If he fell more than once, how did he get back in? If the first time was in 712 B.C. (Isaiah 14:12), was there no devil between Genesis and Isaiah? If so, then who tempted Eve? Several Scriptures show us that the devil is the tempter. After Christ was baptized of John, anointed by the Spirit, and ready to commence His public ministry, Matthew 4:1 tells us He was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Then verse 3 says, "And when the tempter [the devil] came . . . ." We read in 1 Thessalonians 3:5, "For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you . . . ." Again, the devil is referred to as a "tempter." If he is the tempter, as the Bible plainly states, then what tempted him to supposedly raise up and rebel? If something tempted him in Heaven, causing him to raise up and be cast out, what will keep that from happening to us once we get over to Heaven? If that is the case, is that truly Heaven? If this thinking were true, then we would be subject to temptation in Heaven. The truth of the matter is, we are not going to have to endure temptation in Heaven.

I hope you can begin to see how false these teachings of men are. This **"war in heaven"** (verse 7) has nothing at all to do with the devil personified or with God's Heaven. Our Scripture passage makes this emphatically clear. **Revelation 12:10** tells us, **"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation [when did salvation ever need to come to God's Heaven?], and strength, and the kingdom of our God, [When did the kingdom need to come to Heaven? God sent the 'kingdom' down to earth.] and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."** There is no **"day and night"** in Heaven. This is not talking about God's Heaven, but it is speaking of "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6), an exalted spiritual position.

Speaking of the **"war in heaven"** (verse 7), verse 11 says, **"And they overcame him . . ."** How did they overcome? How were they victorious in this war? **"By the blood of the Lamb."** Now, the power of **"the blood"** is for this world, not for that world. Verse 11 continues, **". . . they loved not their lives unto the death."** Is there death in Heaven? Jesus said there is not in Luke 20:34-36: "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die . . . for they are equal unto the angels." There is no death over there. Do you see how unsound the teachings of false religion are when you begin to lay line on line of God's eternal Word?

In Revelation 12:9 and Revelation 20:2 the words **"the Devil, and Satan"** are rendered in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* as "accuser and adversary." The Greek word for **"Devil"** in our text, according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, means "prone to slander, accusing falsely." This is verified in verse 10, which tells us that **"the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them."** Again, this is speaking of the **"dragon,"** or the pagan Roman Empire. If you study history, you will find that Nero had Rome set on fire, and then he falsely accused the Christians. Whenever there was no rain, the pagan Roman Empire would accuse the Christians, saying they were angering the gods. Rome was an **"accuser of our brethren."**

Let us look at a few more Scriptures where the expressions **"Devil"** and **"Satan"** are used and see if it means the devil personified. In John 6:70-71 we read: "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil [the same Greek word as in our text]? He spake of Judas Iscariot . . ." Was Judas the devil personified? No! When Jesus called Judas a "devil," He was saying that Judas was an accuser. He falsely accused Jesus, betraying Him to the chief priests. In Matthew 16:23 Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan . . ." Now was Peter actually Satan personified? No! The same Greek word is used here and in our text; it means "adversary." Just as this pagan system was an adversary to the church, to God's plan and purpose, and to truth, Peter was being an adversary to God's plan and purpose. Among the Hebrews, the term **"Satan"** was used frequently when meaning an adversary or adversaries.

As a Hebrew, John would have understood the use of the words that the Scriptures employed, because many of them were drawn from the Old Testament. The word "adversary" in Numbers 22:22a, 1 Samuel 29:4, and 1 Kings 11:25 and the word "adversaries" in 2 Samuel 19:22 all mean "Satan" in the original Hebrew. I trust that it is clear that the expressions **"the Devil, and Satan"** in the Revelation have nothing to do with the devil personified, but rather are a symbolic expression of a system that was an accuser and an adversary to the morning-time church.

### **The Devil Was Never in God's Heaven**

Since this false conception of the devil falling from Heaven is so prevalent, let us digress and look at these supposed proof texts in more depth to show what the **"war in heaven"** is not. Isaiah 14:12 states, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . ." This verse is used as proof that the devil was an archangel named Lucifer, who rebelled against God and caused a revolt. They say that there was a war in Heaven, and Lucifer lost and was kicked out of Heaven. That is a fanciful theory, but there is not an ounce of truth to it. It is important to view the surrounding context. Anything can be taught if one isolates a text from the context. But let us read it in the context to understand who is being addressed in this passage.

We read in Isaiah 14:4, "That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon [Nebuchadnezzar] . . ." Then verse 11 says, "Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worm cover thee." False religion wants to say that this is talking about the devil. The devil does not go to the

grave; he does not die; he is not buried. The devil does not have a body that rots and decays and that worms cover and eat. He is a spirit. This has no reference at all to the devil; this is the king of Babylon.

Daniel warned Nebuchadnezzar of this coming fall in Daniel, Chapter 4. If you read the entirety of Daniel, Chapter 4, you will see the king had a dream that troubled him. Daniel came to give the king understanding of the dream. (It still takes a man anointed by the Holy Spirit to rightly divide the Word of Truth. All of Babylon's wise men and soothsayers were useless to Nebuchadnezzar. They did not understand. They could not tell him his dream in Chapter 2; they could not tell him what this dream meant in Chapter 4. Babylon does not have the answer, but God and God's man does.)

When Isaiah 14:12 says, "How art thou fallen from heaven," we can turn to Daniel 4:20 and read of "The tree . . . whose height reached unto the heaven [a figurative expression denoting one was exalted above all others]." Isaiah 14:12 lets us know Nebuchadnezzar fell from that exalted position where he was head and shoulders above all of the then-known world as a world ruler. Daniel 4:22 clarifies who this is speaking of: "It is thou, O king." Isaiah 14:12 refers to this same king: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . ." (The word *Lucifer* merely means "Day Star.") Why was Nebuchadnezzar referred to as a Day Star? A Day Star or a Morning Star is the first thing to dawn, and his was the first great empire to rise. When Daniel was giving Nebuchadnezzar understanding concerning that metallic image, he told him "Thou art this head of gold" (Daniel 2:38b). He was the first of the great successive world empires. His was the first and by far the greatest. That is why it is denoted as "gold," the most precious and the most pure.



The words in Isaiah 14:12, "how art thou cut down to the ground," are a fulfillment to Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 4:23, which says, "Hew the tree down . . . yet leave the stump." Isaiah 14:12-16 reads: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! [This was someone who dwelt amongst nations. This was not a celestial being.] For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven [he was not in God's Heaven], I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this *the man* [not the devil or Satan but rather the man Nebuchadnezzar] that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms."

Let us move to another, supposed proof text that is used by teachers of this false doctrine. Jesus said in Luke 10:18, "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Lightning is not in God's Heaven, and neither was Satan. If you are going to be a literalist, then you are going to have to take this verse literally. If Satan actually was in God's Heaven, then there must be lightning in God's Heaven. Yet, we know this is not true. Lightning is not in God's Heaven; it is in the firmamental heaven. What was Jesus talking about? We read in Luke 10:19, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy . . ." In other words, Jesus saw the enemy brought down to where the disciples could tread on him. The power of the enemy was subject to them. Instead of being in an exalted position, he was brought down to a position under their feet so "that the spirits are subject unto you" (verse 20). When Jesus was talking about "the power of the enemy" (verse 19), He was talking about spirits.

What caused this to occur? Luke 10:1 says, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy . . ." This is the second commission. The first commission can be found in Luke 9:1-2, which states: "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God . . ." They went out to preach the Kingdom of God. The seventy in Luke 10:1 were to do what the twelve were commissioned to do: preach. When they preached the truth, the exalted position that falsity had held in the minds of men was removed so quickly that it was just like lightning coming from heaven. When people received light, Satan lost his exalted position, and they had power over all of the power of the enemy. Luke 10:18 has no reference to the devil personified.

### **The Devil Was Created by Christ**

The devil is a created being. He was created for a purpose. He has never been and never will be in God's Heaven. The Bible tells us that Christ was God's Agent in Creation. Ephesians 3:9 says, "And to make all men see what is the

fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." We read in John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word [Jesus Christ; verses 14 and 17], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things [including the devil; *all* is inclusive] were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Hebrews 1:2 tells us, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son . . . by whom also he made the worlds." In Revelation 3:14 Jesus described Himself as "the beginning of the creation of God." That same verse tells us who began the creation: Jesus, "the Amen, the faithful and true witness."

Colossians 1:13-17, speaking of the work wrought through Christ, states: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him [his dear Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers [that takes in the devil and the demoniac world; that takes in every spirit]: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

The expressions "visible and invisible" spoken of in verse 16 are clarified in Ephesians 6:12. Paul said, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood [or literal things], but against principalities, against powers [the same expressions as in Colossians], against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [the Greek says 'wicked spirits'] . . ." One scholar said this: "The words which Paul used—powers, authorities, world rulers—are all names for different classes of evil spirits." Why would Jesus create such things? It was for the same reason He put the tree in the Garden and said that "thou shalt not eat of it" (Genesis 2:17). For a man to be a *creature* of choice, he has to have the *power* of choice; there must be something alternative to choose. Jesus placed that tree right in the midst of the Garden so man could exercise the power of choice.

Man cannot exercise his love unless there is a choice. It would not be much of a great thing if a man were marooned on an island with only one woman and he said, "Honey, I think I love you more than any other woman on this island." That is not much of a statement when there are no other women on the island. So, God put a tree in the Garden to give a choice. Likewise, He created a devil to give us a choice or an opportunity.

When Colossians talks about "invisible" and "principalities and powers," it is taking us into the realm of spirits. Christ created Satan and all Satanic powers. We read in Isaiah 45:6b-7: "I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things." This includes Satan as well. He is a created being, who was created for a purpose, and he has been a devil ever since his creation. Jesus, speaking of the devil, said in John 8:44b: "He was a murderer from the beginning, [Not from the beginning of the world, but from *the* beginning, from *his* beginning he was a devil. He did not fall and become one, but from the beginning he was a devil.] and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." From the very beginning he was a devil; he was created for that purpose. He was never in God's Heaven.

After reading these Scriptures, I trust the Holy Spirit has enabled you to see the truth. Our text is not talking about an angel of light who rebelled and became a devil. In truth, he has always been a devil. It was after the truth came on the scene that he disguised himself as an angel of light. He did not go from an angel to a devil, but he went from a devil to an angel. Second Corinthians 11:14 says, "And no marvel; for Satan [he was Satan first] himself is transformed into an angel of light." Now, he is not a real angel; he transformed himself. He makes himself appear as though he is bringing light and truth. Can you see how exactly opposite truth is from falsity?

### **The Angels That Sinned**

Some may yet question the Scriptures in Peter and Jude that talk about the angels who sinned or the fallen angels. Let us examine these verses in the light of truth. Second Peter 2:4 speaks of "the angels that sinned." To properly understand this, you must read the context. In verse 1 Peter spoke of "false prophets also among the people" and "false teachers among you." That is what he was referring to in verse 4 when he spoke of "the angels that sinned." We must also recognize that for one to sin requires a choice. James 1:14-15 says: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [the Greek says 'inordinate desire'], and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin . . ."

In order for there to be a conception of sin, the power of choice must have been exercised. Something cannot conceive by itself. For literal, physical conception to take place, two components have to meet. Likewise, sin cannot conceive unless two components meet. It is not sin until you do not do what you know you should do (James 4:17), until you exercise will. Temptation alone is not sin. Christ was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). For sin to be conceived there must be two elements: a knowledge that the temptation is wrong and the will that embraces it.

Concerning the angels that "sinned" (2 Peter 2:4), where did the temptation come from? James 1:14 tells us that it was from "his own lust." John made it a little clearer in 1 John 2:16, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Lust comes from the flesh and from human passions. Therefore, celestial angels are not subject to temptation, and they do not have a power of choice, for if they did, God would have to offer them salvation. First Peter 1:12 tells us that these are "things the angels desire to look into." They cannot look into this; they cannot understand it; they are not partakers. This word *angel* (2 Peter 2:4) in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* in the interlineary section is "messengers." This is not speaking of celestial beings, but of messengers or ministers. These ministers had flesh, and when their flesh rose up, they did not put it down.

According to Peter, these angels were "cast . . . [into] hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2:4). The Greek word for *hell* here is *Tartarus*; this is the only time *Tartarus* is used in the Scriptures and translated in the English as "hell." This is not speaking of hell at all, as we know it. If you study in the Greek, you will find that it means "pits of darkness." This Scripture is talking about a fallen ministry that would not "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), and darkness came upon them. They had come out "of an horrible pit" (Psalm 40:2), but when they failed to walk in the light, their darkness became as chains. They went right back into bondage, into the pit that again holds them in bondage. Hebrews 12:22 tells us that "an innumerable company of angels" are found to be in "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem [the 'church'; Hebrews 12:23]." Celestial beings are not in the church. This is talking about messengers, or the ministry. Likewise, the "angels that sinned" is talking about the ministry as well.

Jude 6 also mentions "angels which kept not their first estate." The Greek word here for *angels* is the word *aggelos* or "messenger." The same Greek word is used in Revelation 1:20, which tells us that *angels* are the ministers of the church. It is talking about a ministry. The words of Jude 6, "kept not their first estate," are in The Amplified Bible as "did not keep (care for, guard, and hold to) their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place." Psalm 90:1 tells us what the proper dwelling place is: "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place . . ." These *angels* abandoned their place. They abandoned God when they abandoned truth. Jude 6 also says that they "left their own habitation." What is the habitation? Ephesians 2:22 reads, "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The preceding verse tells us he was talking about "the building fitly framed together . . . an holy temple" (verse 21). He was talking about the church.

Concerning this ministry that failed to keep walking in the light, Jude tells us, ". . . he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness . . ." Second Peter 2:4 says that it is "chains of darkness." The darkness became a chain. Darkness held them in bondage, because they refused the light. They would not "walk while ye have the light" (John 12:35). There is no greater darkness than once having had light and not walking in it and going into darkness. When this darkness came upon them, it became chains of darkness. This ministry became bound by their own darkness to where they began to call darkness light and light darkness (Isaiah 5:20). They left the true church, the habitation of God through the Spirit. Once that happens the only thing that is left is Babylon, which is "the habitation of devils" (Revelation 18:2). When Jude spoke of these angels, he gave examples of prior individuals who were in that sad condition: Cain, Balaam, and Core (Jude 11). These were all men who had opportunity, men who once enjoyed a good position either amongst God's people (Cain and Core) or enjoyed hearing from God (Balaam). Yet, these men became enemies of the truth and had sad fates.

### **Rome Used the Sword of State**

As we begin to give consideration to this "**war in heaven**," we need to identify who was engaged in this conflict, what its outcome was, and how it occurred. In reality this was not a literal war, except to the extent that when pagan

Rome could not win the war in the realm of ideas and spiritual truth, they resorted to persecution and martyrdom, attempting to enforce their beliefs with the power of the sword of state. Although "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Corinthians 10:4), the spirit that motivated this "**dragon**" had a great sword given to it. If you go to Revelation, Chapter 6 (the seal series, Series 2), verse 4 reads, "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." When Christ opened the seals, we see portrayed a white horse, a red horse, a black horse, and a pale horse. Zechariah 10:3 lets us know that horses represent militancy. In the time in which the Scriptures were penned, they did not have modern artillery and equipment. A horse was an implement in battle.

These particular horses not only represent militancy, but they represent spirits as well. They were portrayed as white, red, black, and pale because of the type of spirit they represented. Zechariah 6:1-5 states: "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains [Mount Sinai and Mount Zion; they came on the scene at the conclusion of the Old Testament and the commencement of the New Testament]; In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses [corresponding with the pale horse]. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth."

Revelation 6:1-2, describing the opening of the first seal, reads: "And I saw when the Lamb [a figurative expression of Jesus Christ; John 1:29] opened one of the seals [a picture of the Holy Spirit bringing understanding during each period of time; Ephesians 1:13], and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse . . ." The first horse on the stage of action was a white horse. This pure, white horse represents the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit that gave rise to the church. We read in Acts, Chapter 2, that when the Holy Spirit came on the scene, the church was brought forth and instituted.

As soon as that occurred, Revelation 6:4 tells of a "horse that was red." Red represents sin (Isaiah 1:18), and the besetting sin is the sin of unbelief (John 16:8-9). Unbelief was the spirit that motivated pagan Rome as an opposing force. (We need to understand how these spirits worked in times past, because we are facing the same spirits working today, making up the eighth beast.) What type of sword was given to pagan Rome (Revelation 6:4)? We read in Romans 13:1 and 4: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God [speaking of civil authority] . . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." The sword that Rome was entrusted with was the sword of state, or the power of civil authority.

**Revelation 12:11** tells us that the saints engaged in a spiritual warfare. The weapons of their warfare were spiritual. The dragon, who could not win a spiritual battle, caused it to be a time of persecution and martyrdom. Thus, it was necessary for the saints to be moved to a position where "**they loved not their lives unto the death**" (**Revelation 12:11**). The following is an excerpt from *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, Chapter 2, page 5: "The first persecution of the Church took place in the year 67, under Nero, the sixth emperor of Rome. This monarch reigned for the space of five years, with tolerable credit to himself, but then gave way to the greatest extravagancy of temper, and to the most atrocious barbarities. Among other diabolical whims, he ordered that the city of Rome should be set on fire, which order was executed by his officers, guards, and servants. While the imperial city was in flames, he went up to the tower of Maecenas, played upon his harp, sung the song of the burning of Troy, and openly declared that 'he wished the ruin of all things before his death.' Besides the noble pile, called the Circus, many other palaces and houses were consumed; several thousands perished in the flames, were smothered in the smoke, or were buried beneath the ruins.

"This dreadful conflagration continued nine days; when Nero, finding that his conduct was greatly blamed, and a severe odium cast upon him, determined to lay the whole upon the Christians, at once to excuse himself, and have an opportunity of glutting his sight with new cruelties. This was the occasion of the first persecution; and the barbarities exercised on the Christians were such as even excited the commiseration of the Romans themselves. Nero even refined upon cruelty, and contrived all manner of punishments for the Christians that the most infernal imaginations could design. In particular, he had some sewed up in skins of wild beasts, and then worried by dogs until they expired; and others dressed in shirts made stiff with wax, fixed to axletrees, and set on fire in his garden, in order to illuminate them.

This persecution was general throughout the whole Roman Empire; but it rather increased than diminished the spirit of Christianity. In the course of it, St. Paul and St. Peter were martyred. To their names may be added, Erastus, chamberlain of Corinth; Aristarchus, the Macedonian; and Trophimus, an Ephesian, converted by St. Paul, and fellow-laborer with him; Joseph, commonly called Barsabas; and Ananias, bishop of Damascus; each of the Seventy."

This is but one very small episode, just part of the siege of persecution under pagan Rome. There were ten such pronounced seasons of distinct persecutions against the saints. This spiritual conflict was between the "**woman**" and the "**dragon**" over the "man child" (Revelation 12:5). Keep in mind, the "man child" represents the new converts (Isaiah 66:7-8). This is further confirmed by Isaiah 66:11, where it is obvious Isaiah was speaking of newborn babes. We can also read of this in 1 Peter 2:2, which tells us, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word . . . ."

### "Michael" Is Jesus Christ

As we study the "**war in heaven**" (verse 7), let us consider the expression "**Michael**." The name "**Michael**" in both Hebrew and Greek means "who is like God" (*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, *Hebrew Lexicon*, and *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*). This expression is used twice in the New Testament: once in our text in **Revelation 12:7** and also in Jude 9. Jude speaks of "Michael the archangel." Every time the word *archangel* is used in the Scripture, it is in the singular, because there is only one. Neither Gabriel nor Lucifer are mentioned in the Scripture as archangels. The word *archangel* only appears two times in the entirety of the Scriptures: here in Jude 9 and in 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 4. Verse 16, speaking of Christ's Second Coming, says, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel [the Lord Himself is the archangel], and with the trump of God [these are all interchangeable terms for the one and selfsame thing; it is the Lord Himself who has the voice] . . . ."

The word *archangel* is composed of two words: *arch*, meaning "chief or master," comes from the Greek word *archo*, which means "to be first in political power or rule," and *angel* from the Greek word *aggelos*, which means "to bring tidings or a messenger." When these two words are put together, the meaning is "the chief or the master of angels." Who is this describing? In Gethsemane, after telling Peter to put away his sword, Jesus said in Matthew 26:53, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" The Lord Himself is the archangel, the master of angels.

When Christ made His advent into this world, Heaven emptied itself out on those Judean hills that night. Hebrews 1:4-6 says: "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." That night all the angels came to observe the chief of angels make His advent into this world. Luke's Gospel recorded that just the angel of the Lord appeared at first to the shepherds, but before it was over the hills were filled with "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God" (verse 13).

Remember, the word "**Michael**" means "who is like God." Hebrews 1:2-3 clarifies who that is, saying that "his Son" is "the express image of his person." In John 14:8 Philip said, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answered in verse 9, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In John 10:30 Jesus clearly stated, "I and my Father are one." This expression "**Michael**" is used three times in Daniel's prophecy, and without exception each one refers to Him as a prince: "the prince of the kingdom . . . Michael" (Daniel 10:13); "Michael your prince" (Daniel 10:21); "Michael . . . the great prince" (Daniel 12:1). Why is "**Michael**" associated with the word *prince*? A Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 9:6 tells us that "his name shall be called . . . *The Prince of Peace*." This "**Michael**" is a figurative expression of Jesus Christ. This prince, the archangel, the one who is like God is Christ.

Who are the "**angels**" spoken of in **Revelation 12:7**? In Revelation 1:16, when Christ first appeared to John in this vision, we read that "he had in his right hand seven stars." Revelation 1:20b says, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches . . . ." The Greek word for *angels* is *aggelos*, which means "messenger." The "stars," symbolizing a ministry, were in Christ's right hand, or in His control.

Too many times when we see the word *angel*, we think of a celestial being. But in Galatians 4:13-14 Paul wrote that he "preached the gospel . . . [and you] received me as an angel." If you really rightly divide the Word of Truth,

you will find that many times the expression *angel* is portraying a ministry. So it is in the Revelation. Revelation 22:8-9 says: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." This was not a celestial being. We read in Revelation 19:10, "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God . . ." Revelation 18:1 tells us who he was talking about: "And after these things I saw another angel [a messenger or a minister] come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." This is portraying a minister with a divine call, bringing some light. When **Revelation 12:7** says "**Michael and his angels**," it is speaking of Christ and His ministry.

In the second part of **verse 7** we read that "**the dragon fought and his angels**," speaking of the pagan Roman Empire and their ministry. The question might arise, "Do you think there are angels in the false system of paganism, that system motivated by the devil?" Yes, in the sense of messengers and a ministry, there are. To further clarify, look at 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, which states: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." The devil has ministers, the dragon has ministers, the beast has ministers, and the false prophet has ministers.

This conflict in **verse 7** was in heavenly places, in an exalted spiritual position between Christ and His ministry and paganism and their ministry to see who was going to hold the exalted position in the minds of the men. Although they "**fought**," **verse 8** tells us that the "**dragon**" (paganism) "**prevailed not**." The rest of **verse 8** tells us "**neither was their place found any more in heaven**." In other words, when this "**war**" was over, no longer was there found a place in the minds of the masses to exalt paganism or their paganistic teachings. Up to this time, paganism had held an exalted position in the minds of men, but when the truth was loosed in this morning time, "**the great dragon was cast out**" (**verse 9**). The truth cast the teachings of paganism out of the minds of men "**into the earth**," or down to a level where people could see there was nothing divine in it. There was no truth to it whatsoever.

**Verses 9** and **13** both tell us that the "**dragon**" was cast down to "**the earth**." The *earth* represents that which came from man. Second Corinthians 4:7 says that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels." What is the earthen vessel? What is the earthen portion of man? Second Corinthians 5:1 reads, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle . . ." Then 2 Corinthians 5:4 speaks about "mortality." The earthen house is that mortal portion of man, the part of man that was made of dust of the earth. Man came from the dust of the earth, and he is going back to the dust of the earth (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The word *earth* refers to the mortal portion of man. When Jeremiah said, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD" (Jeremiah 22:29), he was not talking about this terrestrial ball, but he was talking about man.

It is necessary to understand the "**earth**" that our text speaks of, for Revelation, Chapter 20 (Series 6, which is a series in itself), speaks of the same event with different symbolism. Speaking of the "**dragon**," Revelation 20:3 says the angel (or ministry) "cast him into the bottomless pit," and **Revelation 12:13** says "**he was cast unto the earth**," showing us that they are interchangeable and synonymous terms. This system and its religious teachings came up out of the minds of the "**the earth**," or out of the minds of men. Also, we see that they were "bottomless," revealing that they had no true Bible foundation to them whatsoever. They did not come from a divine source, but a human source. The only Bible foundation is "Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Let us look at what else Revelation 20:3 tells us about this "**dragon**:" after "the thousand years . . . he must be loosed a little season." We see this same symbolism in Revelation 13:11, which states, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth," and in Revelation 11:7, which speaks of "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." These all take place in the same time period and represent the same thing.

### **The Ministry Needs a Key and a Chain**

How was "**the great dragon . . . cast out**" (**Revelation 12:9**) or "**cast unto the earth**" (**Revelation 12:13**)? Revelation 20:1-2 tells us that there was an angel (a ministry) who had a key and a chain. Luke 11:52 tells us what the



key is: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge . . ." Where does knowledge come from? How do people receive it? Jeremiah 3:15 says, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." What is the charge to a pastor? What is he supposed to preach? Second Timothy 4:2 says to "Preach the word." So this key of knowledge is the Word.



A key will not do you much good by itself. We read in Revelation 9:1 that the fifth angel fell. He had a key, but he did not have the chain. He did not put anything in the pit, but he let something out of the pit, because the key (the Word) without the chain (the Spirit) does not give the power to bind. Whenever a false ministry is trying to preach the Word without the Spirit, they do not make things clear, they make things more confused. They do not make light greater; they obscure what light there is. This angel in Revelation 20:1-3 had the Word, but he also had a chain. And he put something down.

Let us see what this chain is. The chain was used to bind the "**dragon**." Where is the power to bind? The answer is found in Matthew 12:28-29. The power to "bind the strong man" comes "by the Spirit of God." The binding power (the chain) comes through the Spirit of God. Keep in mind that this is not literal. A literal devil cannot be bound with a chain. You can read in Mark, Chapter 5, it was tried on a man who had many demons. Verse 3 reads, ". . . and no man could bind him, no, not with chains."

When "**Michael**" (Christ) "**and his angels**" (the ministry) went forth and "**fought against the dragon**" (paganism), they used spiritual weapons—the key (the Word) and the chain (the Spirit)—to show that the system of paganism did not deserve an exalted position in the minds of men. It was just something that came out of men's minds. This was the "**war in heaven**" of which **verse 7** speaks. This ministry had a powerful message, and they had a people who lived it, a people who "**overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.**"



A clear example of this warfare is recorded in Acts, Chapter 19. The Book of Acts was written when Christ and His ministry were warring against paganism and its ministry (A.D. 33-270). Acts 19:23-38 states: "And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana [one of the pagan goddesses they worshiped], brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

"Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands [one of Michael's angels, Paul, was fighting against the powers of paganism and the exalted position it held in the minds of men]: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana [one of the seven wonders of the then-known world] should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion [that is what false religion brings, every time]: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered [or permitted] him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.



"Some therefore cried one thing, and some another [is that not like Babylon, or false religion?]: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of

Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? [They believed that this image fell down from Jupiter above and landed in Ephesus. This Diana was a goddess of fertility. She was a black statue with multiple breasts all of the way

around her. This was pagan worship.]

"Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another."

Let us look at several other examples of this war in heaven and the dragon (paganism) losing its exalted position in the minds of the masses and being cast down into a bottomless pit. We read in Acts 8:9 of the dragon (paganism) using one of his angels (Simon) to keep the dragon in an exalted position in the minds of these men: ". . . Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria . . ." Notice what happened when Christ and His angels came on the scene. Verse 12 says, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." The dragon was cast down out of the minds of men. The people no longer held this paganistic man (Simon) and his teaching in an exalted position. It was cast down. The false sorcery and bewitching by this man who was filled with the devil (a paganistic spirit) lost its exalted position when truth came. Truth revealed that Simon was just another man. The people could see that his position had no true Bible base, and it was put in a bottomless pit.



Jupiter

Let us look at another confrontation in Acts, Chapter 14. Paul and Barnabas traveled to Lystra where Paul preached the Gospel. A crippled man heard Paul, and in verse 9 we find that Paul perceived this man "had faith to be healed." ("Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"; Romans 10:17. That is why Paul preached the Gospel first.) When Paul spoke to the cripple, saying, "Stand upright on thy feet," the man "leaped and walked" (verse 10). Verses 11-12 state: "And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius [Mercury], because he was the chief speaker." The Apostles restrained the people from offering sacrifices and worshiping them.

What is the lesson here? We see a picture of paganism when the people said, "The gods are come down to us" (verse 11). Here were the unenlightened Lystrans exalting the dragon, but Paul said in verse 15b, "We . . . preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities [pagan worship of Jupiter and Mercury, gods who were no gods at all] unto the living God . . ." Paul was casting down the dragon right there.



Mercury

### A Woman Bound With a Paganistic Spirit

Let us view a couple more accounts recorded in the Book of Acts. We read in Acts 16:16-18b: "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Here is a picture of a young woman bound with an old paganistic spirit.

The Amplified Bible describes the damsel in this manner: "a slave girl who was possessed by a spirit of divination [claiming to foretell future events and to discover hidden knowledge], and she brought her owners much gain by her fortunetelling." Fortune telling was and still is paganism. Paul, one of Michael's angels, came face to face with the dragon (paganism) and his angels. He used the chain to bind up that spirit. When he cast out that spirit, then we see the "**war in heaven**" **Revelation 12:7** speaks of. Paul and Silas were accused of causing "exceedingly trouble [in] our city" (verse 20) and teaching "customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans" (verse 21). Here they became as **Revelation 12:10** says, "**the accuser of our brethren.**" The Apostles were taken "into the marketplace unto the rulers" (verse 19), and "the magistrates . . . commanded to beat them" (verse 22) and "cast them into prison" (verse 23). What weapons did Paul and Silas use to bring the dragon down? Verse 25 tells us, "And at

midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God." These are the "weapons of our warfare" (2 Corinthians 10:4). They are not carnal weapons, but spiritual weapons. The dragon was cast down, and a Church of God congregation was started right there in Philippi, beginning with the jailer himself (Acts 16:30-34). Paul used the chain on the damsel and the key on the jailer and his family. "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:32).

We see the dragon on display on Mars' hill in Acts, Chapter 17. When Paul declared the truth concerning the altar to "THE UNKNOWN GOD," the true God whom they "ignorantly worship" (verse 23), "certain men clave unto him [Paul], and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite [The Amplified Bible says, 'a judge of the Areopagus'], and a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (verse 34). There was the dragon being cast down in those lives.

Let us look at one more example of the dragon being cast down to the earth, being put in a bottomless pit, a place of no true Bible foundation, no basis in truth whatsoever. Acts 19:8-20 states: "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened [divers in the synagogue, or Jews], and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus [there is the key], both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits [there is the chain] went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

### **Decline of the Roman Empire**

The Scriptures clearly show that the falsity of paganism could no more stand before the truth than Dagon could stand before the presence of God back in the Philistine days (1 Samuel 5:1-4). Nothing can stand before the truth. In fact, truth overthrew paganism. It was not the church's desire to necessarily overthrow Rome as an empire, but when she used her civil power to raise up against truth, she made a fatal error. It is the same yet today.

**Revelation 12:12a** says, "**Therefore rejoice, ye heavens** [heavenly places in Christ Jesus] **and ye that dwell in them.**" The saints were told to "**rejoice**" because "**they overcame him**" (**verse 11**). This period of time (A.D. 33-270), though fraught with physical peril, under pagan Rome, under ten seasons of severe persecution, was a time of great triumph. Paul, who lost his head on Nero's chopping block, wrote in Romans 8:35-39: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in [right now] all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

George P. Fisher in his *History of the Christian Church* says on page 51: "It was the heroic age in the history of the church when with no aid from an arm of flesh the whole might of the Roman Empire was victoriously encountered by the unarmed and unresisting adherents of the Christian faith. Imperial Rome, the conqueror of the world, was herself overthrown by the bands of the Christian disciples whose meek but dauntless courage was more than a match for all her power." So this dragon was "**cast down**" (**Revelation 12:10**), "**cast unto the earth**" (**verse 13**), "bound" (**Revelation 20:2**), and "cast . . . into the bottomless pit" (**Revelation 20:3**). Paganism as a system was shown to be

something that should not be exalted in the minds of the masses. Its teachings and its supposed gods were shown to be nothing to be revered and exalted and held in high esteem. They were the production of men's minds and had no basis in truth, no Biblical foundation whatsoever.

Henry Wickersham's *A History of the Church*, page 104, says this: "Another great event that marks the close of this period of time, A.D. 270, is the division and decline of the Roman Empire." Now this system did not completely decline and divide all at once, but rather it was a process; and this process markedly began in A.D. 270. However, it was not totally complete until A.D. 530." We will see in our next study that this period from A.D. 270 to A.D. 530 was a transitional period. Things began to change on many fronts, but it was not until A.D. 530 that the power of paganism was completely decimated and decidedly over. This lesson reveals to us that if we will stand true and stay true to the message, God in His faithfulness will give us victory over every foe. Paul, writing to "all that be in Rome" (Romans 1:7), said in Romans 16:20a, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan [the same Greek word as in our text, 'adversary'; he was speaking of this dragon, paganism] under your feet shortly."

Jesus told the morning time (and He tells us the same yet today) in Luke 10:19, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." They had victory in the morning time, and we can have victory in the evening time. They faced this foe and defeated it, and we can face this same spirit working in our day and still be "more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). I trust it has become plain what this "**war in heaven**" was over, who the principals were, and how they overcame it. That period of time closed out with victory. First Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory . . . ." They overcame by using the spiritual weapons of their warfare, and we can do the same yet today.

In our next study we will pick up with the rest of Chapter 12 and look at the things that occurred between A.D. 270 and A.D. 530.

## The Woman in the Wilderness and the Flood

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

**15** And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

**16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

**17** And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

### Elements of a Transition

As we view this portion of this intriguing chapter, we see several major events depicted, but in this part we want to primarily consider the "woman" in the "wilderness" (verse 14) and the "flood" (verses 15 and 16). Previously, we studied the "war in heaven" (Revelation 12:7). This was not in God's celestial Heaven, but rather in an ecclesiastical realm. Ephesians 2:6 describes it as "heavenly places," or an exalted spiritual position. We also found that the "war in heaven" was between "Michael and his angels" (or Christ and his ministry) and "the dragon" (or paganism) "and his angels" (or his ministry). The saints, according to verse 11, "overcame him." They were victorious in this warfare. They overcame the paganistic powers of Rome. Verse 9 tells us the great dragon was "cast out," or verse 10 tells us "cast down." Verse 13 clarifies it further by saying he was "cast unto the earth." The pagan gods and goddesses were shown to be merely inventions from the minds of men. They were cast from the exalted position they held in the minds of the uninformed masses down to the earth, where they were shown to be something that was derived from the minds of fleshly men.

This episode, or war, commenced at the beginning of the Gospel Day (A.D. 33) and continued until A.D. 270. Concerning this, Wickersham's *A History of the Church*, page 104, tells us, "Another great event marks the close of this period of time, A.D. 270, in the division and decline of the Roman Empire." As we proceed in our study, we must understand that this division and decline was a process over time. This second period of the Gospel Day (A.D. 270-530) was a transitional period of time. According to *Fisher's History of the Christian Church*, page 98, "It was around two hundred years after Constantine that paganism had vanished." Constantine's reign ended in A.D. 330. If you add two hundred years to that, that brings us up to A.D. 530, letting us know that the disappearance of paganism was not complete until around A.D. 530. Between 270 and 530 was a time of transition, a time when one power was going down, as it were, and another power was rising up in its place. Just because you defeat the enemy in one form does not mean he will not come back in another form. You may defeat him in one battle, but do not think he is down and out. He will change clothes and come back in another form. That is exactly what he did right in this time period.

If you look at the pictorial chart in the front of this book, you will see that they were going from a day of bright light to a day when the light was not so bright. During this period (A.D. 230-530), a mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea. It began to go out of public view, and the fire began to be extinguished. The Bible began to be closed, and a period of darkness began to set in. You can see the saints going downhill, as it were. Many things are portrayed on the pictorial chart which indicate that conditions were less than ideal in this period of time. It was, indeed, a transition time.

Let us begin to consider some of the aspects of this second period of the Gospel Day. In Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3, seven letters are incorporated. Those letters serve, in a prophetic manner, to take us down through the entirety of the Gospel Day. Each one of those seven letters corresponds with one of the seven periods of this Christian Dispensation. In Revelation 2:8-10 we read the second letter, the letter to the congregation in Smyrna, which corresponds with the period of time we are studying (A.D. 270-530). This congregation was one of only two out of the

seven congregations that had no charge laid to it. Again, we see elements of a transition. We know this is true by looking at the conditions. In verse 9 Jesus told them "thou art rich." This lets us know that there certainly was a true people, a true church, who had the "durable riches" that Solomon spoke of spiritually (Proverbs 8:18). They were a rich people. Then Jesus contrasted this in verse 9 by saying, "I know thy . . . poverty . . . and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." So we begin to see the rise of a false church right in this period of time. In verse 10 Jesus said to "be thou faithful" because "ye shall have tribulation ten days."

The expressions "thou art rich" and "the synagogue of Satan" (verse 9) and "tribulation ten days" (verse 10) portray a true people, a true church, people who were indeed rich. Then we see the rise of a false church, "the synagogue of Satan." Waddington in his *Church History* speaks of "the first crisis in the internal history of the church in 270, Anthony an Egyptian, the father of Monasticism, formed monks into organized bodies." By A.D. 270 organizations were forming, manmade structures contrary to the sound teachings of God's eternal Word. A false church was beginning to rise in a predominant manner. The "tribulation ten days" spoken of in verse 10 shows that the remnants of pagan persecution yet remained for a portion of the period of time from A.D. 270 to A.D. 530.

In Revelation 8:8 we read of the sounding of the second trumpet, which occurred in this same period of time. It says, "And the second angel [or ministry] sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea . . ." The sea this mountain went into is the same sea the first beast arose out of (Revelation 13:1). This time of transition was a period when paganism was waning, and a new power was rising in its place. During this time the saints had to somewhat contend with both. The things that occurred or began to occur were a process that occurred over time. Certainly, there are major events that transpired on the particular dates that can be seen on the pictorial chart, but we must recognize that it was not like flipping a light switch. There were processes that occurred before hand, giving rise to the events that occurred on those special dates.

### **The Wilderness Is a Place of Seclusion**

As we begin to examine our Scripture text, it would be good to recall that Revelation 12:1-6 serves as a summary of what was going to be more detailed throughout the balance of the chapter. Revelation 12:6 has similar verbiage to **verse 14**. Because "**the woman**" fleeing "**into the wilderness**" is mentioned in both verses, some try to advocate that there were two women in this chapter—the true church and the apostate church. They attempt to use the minor distinctions in the wording between these two verses to substantiate that viewpoint. Others assume that because both verses speak of "**into the wilderness**," the connotation must be negative.

First, let us consider the word "**wilderness**" that we find incorporated in both verses and see how this word is used throughout the Scripture. I trust you will not allow preconceived ideas to prejudice your thinking and close your mind to Bible truth. If we will let the Spirit of God "mate" the Scriptures for us (Isaiah 34:16), we will find for every obscure (dark or unclear) saying in God's eternal Word, there is another Scripture that will bring light and understanding to it. We are instructed in Isaiah 28:13, "But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." If we take a little from here and a little from there, letting the Spirit of God mate up the Scriptures, it will present a cohesive, coherent picture of truth that is in harmony with the entire scheme of the Scriptures.

Keeping this thought in mind, let us begin looking at **verse 14**. Although, there are advocates of the thought that the woman fleeing into the wilderness (verse 6) is a portrayal of apostasy and that **verse 14** shows the true "**woman**" being "**nourished**," the word "**wilderness**" is same Greek word (*eremos*) in both verses. According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* this word means "lonesome, desert, desolate, solitary." When we lay line upon line, scripturally, the thought of a wilderness does not always have a negative connotation. Rather, when we begin to look at it through the scheme of the Scriptures, many, if not most times, it is positive.

Let us look at a few examples of the word "**wilderness**" throughout the Word. Speaking of when Ishmael and his mother Hagar were banished, Genesis 21:20 says, "And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the *wilderness* . . ." Now if he dwelled in the wilderness and God was with him, God must have been in the wilderness. Also, we read that growth occurred while he was in the wilderness. In Exodus 3:18, after Moses had received his divine commission to go in before Pharaoh, look at the message he was told to deliver to Pharaoh: "The LORD God of the Hebrews hath

met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the *wilderness*, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God." God instructed Israel to go into the wilderness. That was the message Moses was to deliver to Pharaoh.

Next let us read Exodus 4:27, which states: "And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the *wilderness* to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God . . ." That teaches us that the "mount of God," the place where Moses met with God, was in the wilderness. Exodus 3:1 tells us that Moses "led the flock to the backside of the desert [the Hebrew word is *midbar*, meaning 'wilderness'], and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." Where was the "mountain of God"? In the wilderness. Where did God appear to Moses? In the wilderness. Where did Moses receive the Word of God? In the wilderness. This is not a negative connotation at all. The wilderness was a solitary place, a good place for God to capture Moses' attention and to commune with him. The wilderness is also where the burning bush appeared (Exodus 3:2). All of these allusions to the wilderness were positive experiences rather than negative. Also, all of these (as well as others we will reference in the next few pages) occurred prior to the disobedience at Kadesh-Barnea that caused them to wander in the wilderness of sin. None of these was a result of disobedience.

Let us read some other Scriptures. In Exodus 5:1 we read, "And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the *wilderness*." This message is reiterated in Exodus 7:16, which says, "And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may *serve me in the wilderness* . . ." God can be served in the wilderness. Exodus 8:27 reads, "We will go three days' journey into the *wilderness*, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us." Exodus 13:18 says, "But God led the people about, through the way of the *wilderness* of the Red sea . . ." It was God who led them to the wilderness.

Let us come up some in Hebrew history. David was God's anointed; he was in favor with God, and he dwelled in the wilderness. First Samuel 23:14-15 reads: "And David abode in the *wilderness* in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the *wilderness* of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the *wilderness* of Ziph in a wood." Here is a vivid type of the antitype we are seeing in the Revelation. Saul was out to persecute and make a martyr out of David in the sense that he was ready to take his life. Saul had already thrown the javelin at David, showing his willingness to take David's life. Thus, David fled into the wilderness, a place of seclusion, a place of protection. That is exactly what "**the woman**" in our text did. These verses are not a portrayal of apostasy, but of seclusion. The "**wilderness**" was a solitary place where God protected "**the woman**," just as He protected David in the wilderness many years before.

In both the Exodus account and the account recorded in 1 Samuel, Chapter 23, concerning David's day, people had to separate themselves and resort to isolation and solitude because of the prevailing conditions about them. So it was here in Revelation, Chapter 12. It was through no fault nor failure of the woman, but rather because of prevailing conditions about her that God enabled her to be moved away to a place of seclusion, solitude, and protection. The "**wilderness**" also was a place of divine communion. Consider both John the Baptizer as well our Lord. Matthew 3:1 tells us that John came "preaching in the *wilderness* of Judaea." Where did John reside? Jesus said in Matthew 11:7, "What went ye out into the *wilderness* to see?" We read in Matthew 3:3, "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias [Greek for the Hebrew *Isaiah*], saying, The voice of one crying in the *wilderness*, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Where did Jesus resort to? Luke 5:16 tells us, "And he withdrew himself into the *wilderness*, and prayed." Now was Christ apostatized? No! The wilderness was a place of seclusion, a place where Jesus could be solitary, a place where He could get alone with God. In John 11:53-54 we see Christ doing something very similar to what this "**woman**" portrayed in our text was doing. Because of the physical peril ("from that day forth they took counsel . . . to put him to death"), "Jesus therefore walked no more openly." He and His disciples resorted to a place by the wilderness. There they had the protection afforded of the wilderness. Consider where the Revelator John was when he received the Revelation. Revelation 1:9 tells us that he "was in the isle that is called Patmos." According to *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, Patmos was "*peculiarly rugged and bare*." It was like a wilderness. It was in this place of seclusion, a place where John was solitary, that he received the Revelation.

Looking back at Revelation 12:6, it states, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." *The Expanded Translation of the Greek New Testament* by Wuest renders it in this way: "And the woman fled into the uninhabited

region, where she has there a place which is in a state of readiness, having been so prepared by God in order that there they might be providing her with food one thousand two hundred and sixty days." The King James version renders **verse 14** as, "**And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.**" Wuest's *Expanded Greek* offers it in this manner: "And there was given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, in order that she might be flying into the uninhabited region, into her place, where she is being provided with food there a time, times, and one-half a time, safe from the presence of the snake."

When the church came out of "**the wilderness**" (which many believe is a picture of apostasy), what kind of position was she in? When Solomon received a vision and saw her coming out, he wrote in Song of Solomon 8:5a, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" She was not in a backslidden state; she was not in an apostate state; she was "leaning upon her beloved." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* defines the word *wilderness* as "an adjective signifying 'desolate, deserted, lonely' is used as a noun, and rendered 'wilderness' thirty-two times." It was in the wilderness that Moses received his divine call. It was in the wilderness of Sinai that Israel received God's Word. It was also in the wilderness where Elijah, who had fled from Jezebel, was fed and sustained.

The account given in 1 Kings, Chapter 19, serves well as a type of this antitype. There we read that Elijah had defeated the prophets of Baal upon Mount Carmel, just as the woman had defeated the powers of the dragon, the powers of paganism. Elijah had cast down their altar, destroyed their priests, and came out victoriously. We read in 1 Kings 19:1-5: "And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. [That is how you still deal with false religion—with the sword, or 'the Word of God'; Hebrews 4:12. That will still destroy all the high places, all of the groves. That will still bring the dragon and every false thing down.] Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, [Elijah had not done a thing at all to disobey God. He had not displeased God. He had not apostatized or backed up on truth. He went into a wilderness.] and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat."

Just as the "**woman**" in Revelation 12:6 and 12:14 was nourished, so was Elijah. Notice what he was nourished with: "a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water." The cake was made out of meal, and meal (or bread) represents the Word of God. Water represents the Spirit of God. He was divinely sustained by the Word and by the Spirit. Also, this "**woman**," while she was in the "**wilderness**," was divinely sustained by the Word and by the Spirit.

Continuing to read in 1 Kings 19:6-7, we find: "And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time . . ." What is the lesson? There were two periods of time that this woman was hid away in the wilderness (270-530 and 530-1530), but in both periods God sustained her while she was in the wilderness with the Word and with the Spirit. Verses 7-8 tell us: "And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." Where was "Horeb the mount of God"? In the wilderness. Where was the angel? In the wilderness. As we look at this symbol of the "**woman**" going "**into the wilderness**," I trust you can see that this does not represent apostasy, but rather a place of seclusion.

### Provisions Provided in the Wilderness

Let us look at these verses more closely to learn what type of provision was made for the "**woman**" when she went into seclusion, into the solitary place. When the "woman fled into the wilderness," we read that she had "a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there" (Revelation 12:6). Who is the "they" this verse speaks of? The word for *God* here in the Greek is the word *Theos*. It is the same Greek word that is used in the Septuagint in Genesis 1:26, which reads, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . ." In the original Hebrew it is the word *Elohim*, which speaks of God in the plural. Why? Because He is a triune Godhead.



When God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness," to whom was He speaking? (He had not created man yet.) The Father was addressing the Spirit and the Son, the other personages of the triune Godhead. So when Revelation 12:6 tells us that "*they* should feed her there," it refers to God in the plural—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is a picture of God sustaining the church while she was away in seclusion. The "*they*" that fed her during "a thousand two hundred and threescore days" were the "two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3). This is the same time period spoken of in Revelation 12:6.

Let us identify who these "two witnesses" are. In John 5:39 Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." We call someone who testifies a witness. So, we see that one of the witnesses is the Scriptures; the Word of God is one of the witnesses. This is further clarified in Matthew 24:14, which states, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness . . ." The Gospel, or the Word, is one of the witnesses. What is the other witness? Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit . . ." We read in Hebrews 10:15, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness . . ." There is the other witness—the Spirit of God. Thus, the two witnesses are the Word and the Spirit. God, through His ordained manner—His Word and His Spirit—feeds the church. In the Pergamene letter that corresponds with the period of 530-1530, Christ told the overcomers, ". . . will I give to eat of the hidden manna" (Revelation 2:17). In this same verse He instructed them to "hear what the Spirit saith." Here are the two witnesses working and feeding during this period.

In **Revelation 12:14** we find that the "**woman**" was "**given two wings.**" The "**two wings**" are that which raises the church up, or that which exalts her, the Word and the Spirit. Who provided these "**wings**"? In Exodus 19:4 God said, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." Eagles' wings represent divine intervention. Isaiah 40:31 states, "But they that wait upon the LORD [the Hebrew says 'waiters upon Jehovah,' or those actively engaged in service] shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles."

Again, the "**woman**" going "**into the wilderness**" is not a symbol depicting an apostate people. Some would make a distinction between the words "feed her" (verse 6) and the words "**is nourished**" (**verse 14**). But it is the same Greek word in both verses, the word *trepho*. An artificial distinction cannot be made between the two verses when it is the same Greek word. In truth, we are seeing a symbolic picture of the church being led away or hid away in seclusion, in the catacombs and caves. There God, through the Word and the Spirit, was going to sustain her through the difficult times confronting her.

Let us look further into this verse and consider the prophetic time symbol. The period of time spoken of in **verse 14**, "**a time, and times, and half a time,**" is prophetically the same period of time mentioned in verse 6, which states, "a thousand two hundred and threescore days." We also read that same expression in Revelation 11:3. The two witnesses, clothed in sackcloth, were prophesying for "a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

What is the time reckoning of this symbol? Numbers 14:34 gives a prophetic delineation of time, saying, "After the number of the days in which ye searched the land [speaking of spying out Canaan land], even forty days, each day for a year . . ." A day represents a year. Ezekiel 4:6 gives the same delineation: "I have appointed thee each day for a year." In Genesis 29:27 we read that to marry Rachel, Jacob had to "Fulfill her week [in other words, 'you labor with me and fulfill her week'], and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years." So Jacob had to "fulfill her week." How many days are in a week? Seven days. Jacob had to work seven years for Rachel, "each day for a year."

Using the time reckoning of a day for a year, 1260 days (Revelation 12:6) equals 1260 years. Let us lift the other time figure mentioned in **Revelation 12:14**—"a time, and times, and half a time." This symbol is also listed in Daniel 7:25, which says, "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Daniel 12:7 reads, "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half." This is the same prophetic time symbol in both verses.

To identify this, we need to learn what "**time**" (singular) is. We read in Daniel, Chapter 4, that Nebuchadnezzar failed to heed the warning given by the Prophet Daniel. In verse 25 Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of his dream, saying, "That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they

shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee." This same expression is used in Daniel 4:32, which states, "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times [plural] shall pass over thee . . . ." The Amplified Bible says "seven times [or years]."

Flavius Josephus, the famous Jewish historian, says that the period of time during which Nebuchadnezzar suffered this fate was seven years. Thus, seven times is seven years. When the time symbol has a designation, it denotes the number: seven times was seven years. When "times" (plural) is used, without a specific designation or number, it denotes two years; but "time" (singular) denotes one year; "half a time," or "dividing of time" as it says in Daniel 7:25, equals one-half a year. Thus, the time symbol "time, and times, and half a time" equals three-and-one-half prophetic years. Let us compute it. "Time," or one year; equals twelve months; "times," or two years, equals twenty-four months; and "half a time," a dividing of time, or a half a year, equals six months. When you add those together, the total is forty-two months. Revelation 11:2 tells us they will "tread under foot *forty and two months*." All of these are various prophetic expressions for the same time period.

Using a Jewish calendar, we find that there are thirty days to a Jewish calendar month. By multiplying forty-two (months) by thirty (days), you will get 1,260 days. Then, if you give "each day for a year" (Ezekiel 4:6), you come up with 1,260 years, or the time period from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530. Revelation 11:2 tells us that "the holy city shall they tread under," speaking of the church having to go underground in the catacombs and caves, a place of seclusion and protection. We read in Revelation 13:5 that "power was given unto him [this first beast] to continue forty and two months" (prophetic time). Below is a chart that depicts this prophetic time delineation.

Prophetic Time Symbols	
Forty-two months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month =	1260 days
Time = 1 year or 12 months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month =	360 days
Times = 2 years or 24 months x 30 days to Jewish calendar month =	720 days
Dividing of Time = ½ of a year or 6 months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month =	180 days
Time + Times + Dividing of Times (360 days + 720 days + 180 days) =	1260 days
1260 days or "each day for a year" =	1260 years (A.D. 270 - 1530)

Why was it necessary for the church to go into seclusion for this period of time? Remember, a portion of this time was a transitional period. Though the dragon was "cast down" from his exalted position (Revelation 12:10), he was not completely out. **Revelation 12:15** tells us, "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." There are two aspects of this figure to consider. First, what does "water" represent in the Revelation? Revelation 17:15 tells us that "The waters . . . are peoples." Second, how is the word "flood" used? Revelation 12:15-16 are the only places this word is used in the Revelation. So, we have to step outside the Revelation and see how it is used in other Scriptures.

Let us go to Job, which is chronologically the first book of the Bible. It was written in the proximity of 2058 B.C. Job 22:16 says, "Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood." This "flood" overflowed to the point where it could affect the foundation. What foundation does the church have? First Corinthians 3:11 tells us, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The "flood" in our text wanted to overflow and move people off the foundation. Psalm 69:15 states, "Let not the waterflood overflow me . . ." What was the "waterflood"? Verse 14 says it was "them that hate me."

We read in 2 Samuel 22:5, "When the waves of death compassed me, the *floods of ungodly men* made me afraid." Isaiah 59:19 tells us: "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When *the enemy shall come in like a flood* . . ." By looking at these verses together, we see that the enemy was behind this move portrayed in our text. He used this system of ungodly men (paganism) to send this "flood." What was his purpose? To attempt to cause the church to be moved away from her foundation, to be "carried away."

## A "Flood" of Persecution

This **"flood"** of persecution was the dragon's last-ditch effort. You can see it coming out of **"his mouth."** It was the last **"flood"** of pagan persecution. Jesus told the people of this second period in Revelation 2:10, saying, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer [he let them know it was going to be a time of suffering]: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days . . ." Using the prophetic time reckoning, the "ten days" of tribulation were actually ten years (A.D. 303-313). This ten-year period commenced during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian. History tells us this was one of the fiercest of all persecutions. On February 23, 303, Diocletian ordered all churches closed, all Scriptures burned, and all Christians placed outside of the law of the land.

*Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, page 11, says this: "It has been said that the lives of the early Christians consisted of persecution above ground and prayer below ground . . . Beneath Rome are the excavations which we call the catacombs, which were at once temples and tombs . . . There were sixty catacombs near Rome, in which some six hundred miles of galleries have been traced, and these are not all." There is where the **"woman"** was hid away for the thousand two hundred and sixty years. This was a period when the saints resorted to catacombs and seclusion because of fierce persecution.

The fact that this persecution endured for 1,260 years leads us to the second aspect portrayed in **Revelation 12:16**. If paganism vanished by A.D. 530, why then was the **"woman"** in seclusion until A.D. 1530? **Verse 16** says, **"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood . . ."** One aspect of this is that it was a **"flood"** of persecution. How did **"the earth"** help **"the woman"**? It **"swallowed up the flood."** In other words, the **"earth"** took the persecution away. In reading **verse 16**, we can see that **"earth"** represents man. Let us lift one Scripture to show this is true. Second Corinthians 5:1 reads, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved . . ." That is further defined in verse 4, which tells us it is "mortality," the mortal part of man. So **"earth"** represents man.

In A.D. 312, toward the end of the Diocletian persecutions, Constantine (then a pagan) marched on Rome. History tells us that while in a contest with Maxentius, Constantine saw a radiant cross in the sky with this inscription: "By this thou shalt conquer." Supposedly, at this time Constantine converted to Christianity. However, the truth of this matter is, he did not convert at all, because his nature never changed. In A.D. 323 Constantine became the sole lord of the whole Roman Empire. He not only stopped persecutions with his Edict of Tolerations, but he also made Christianity the state religion, which stopped the persecution for a time.

### The "Earth . . . Swallowed" the Dragon's Spirit

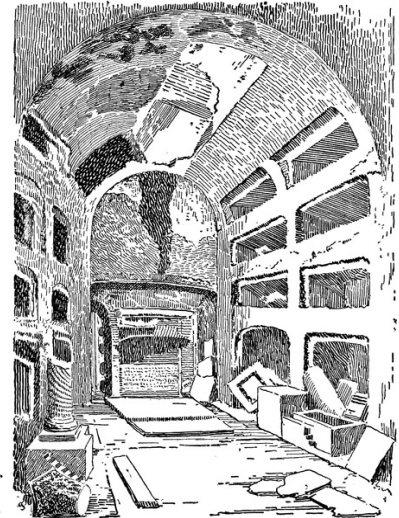
Let us look more deeply at this **"flood."** Yes, it may have been a **"flood"** of persecution. That may have been the physical aspect, but where did it come from? What produced it? What was behind the fierce persecution? Revelation 16:13 says, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon . . ." This shows us that there was a spirit back of it. What came out of the mouth was the spirit. The next verse tells us what kind of spirit: "For they are the spirits of devils" (verse 14). It was a devilish spirit that motivated paganism. When Constantine helped the **"woman,"** he **"swallowed up the flood."** **"Water"** also represents the Spirit. Jesus taught in John 7:38-39: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit.)" *Waters* represent the Holy Spirit too, but this was not a godly spirit Constantine was taking in; it was the spirit of the dragon. He may have stopped the physical persecution that pagan Rome brought for a time, but he imbibed their spirit. It was not too long until supposed Christianity, as a state religion, turned right around and began persecuting the saints who would not come into compliance with the state church. This persecution was just as fierce as paganism ever was.

We will find in our next study, this state church that Constantine fostered was as pagan as the paganism it took the place of. It was nothing more than paganism with a changed garb, with a supposedly Christian garb. Constantine may have initially stopped the persecution and made Christianity the state of religion, but he took in their spirit, the spirit of the **"dragon."** This is further described in Revelation 13:2, which reads, "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his

power, and his seat, and great authority." Its nature was comprised of what it received from the **"dragon"** (paganism). Revelation 13:4 says, "And they worshipped the dragon [paganism] which gave power unto the beast . . . ." Why did they worship the **"dragon"**? Because they had taken in its spirit.

The **"flood"** that came out of the **"mouth"** of the **"dragon"** is the spirit that produced Babylon and the great River Euphrates (the lifeline of Babylon). Because they imbibed that spirit, it was not long before that spirit started manifesting itself in a time of horrific persecution that began under the state church. This is why the **"woman"** was secreted away for "a thousand two hundred and threescore days" (Revelation 12:6), or as Revelation 13:5 says, "forty and two months." Constantine helped give rise to the beast portrayed in Revelation 13:1. It was fully developed by A.D. 530, when Revelation 13:7 tells us, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints . . . ."

Regarding this time of persecution, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, page 43, tells us this: "We come now to a period when persecution under the guise of Christianity committed more enormities than ever disgraced the annals of paganism. Disregarding the maxims and the Spirit of the Gospel, the papal church, arming herself with the power of the sword, vexed the Church of God and wasted it for several centuries; a period most appropriately termed in history 'The Dark Ages.'" *Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume 6, page 229, says this: "There were a few Christians during this age that denied papal Rome being the true church of the Bible." Henry C. Wickersham in *A History of the Church*, page 232, says this: "It has been computed that fifty million of Christians have at different times been the victims of the persecutions of the papists and put to death for their religious opinions."



Catacombs

This was the very fulfillment of what Jesus prophesied back in John 16:2-3, when He said: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." This system (papal Rome) that rose up in place of the **"dragon"** (pagan Rome) is not a Christian system. (I say this with love and kindness. I am not speaking of individuals, but I am speaking of a religious system that has no basis in Bible truth.)

I trust that you see although **"the earth helped the woman,"** by stopping persecution for a season, they imbibed the **"dragon's"** devilish spirit. The church was literally underground (in seclusion) for ten generations, or a thousand years, the period of time described in Revelation 20:3-4. During this time, God still had a people who had victory. They might have been in the catacombs and in the caves for that period of time, but they had victory; they reigned with Christ. One of the most frequent inscriptions found on the walls of the catacombs was "The Word of God is not bound." Glory be to God! "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4). Many of them lived, died, and were buried in those catacombs and caves. The term *niche* originated from the practice of carving out a place in the stone wall of the catacombs to hold their bodies once they died. That is where the expression "he has found his niche" came from.

*Fisher's History of the Christian Church*, page 98, tells us this: "It was around two hundred years after Constantine, the first supposed Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, that paganism had vanished. Constantine's reign was A.D. 323-330. Adding two hundred years brings us up to A.D. 530." Page 138 states: "In A.D. 530 the decisions of the many synods was approved by the Roman Bishop Boniface II." In A.D. 533 the reigning Bishop of Rome, John II, received the title of Pontifex Maximus, Supreme Pontiff, the same title the old pagan emperors assumed.

When I think of these occurrences, one admonition comes to mind: "take heed to your spirit" (Malachi 2:16). Constantine thought because he saw some heavenly event (a cross in the sky), that brought a conversion in his heart. It takes more than *seeing* something to have a conversion; it takes *doing* something. Constantine may have changed religions, but he never changed spirits. He was a pagan *before* he had his supposed conversion, and he was a pagan *after* he had his supposed conversion. The difference was that he dressed it in a Christian garb. We need to take heed to our spirit. These devilish spirits that motivated false religion in the past have "come out" (Revelation 16:13). They are no longer merely housed and working in those systems, as they did back there historically. They have "come out"

and are working to surround the camp of the saints. They are working to change your experience, while keeping the same outward profession.

We need "to give the more earnest heed [that word means 'obey'] to the things which we have heard" (Hebrews 2:1). We need to obey what we have heard, for when we hear truth and fail to obey it, we are prey for every seducing spirit that is out there. We will lose our possession and end up with a profession if we do not take heed to our spirit. If we do not "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), we will soon be in darkness.

In our next segment we will study in detail what produced the first beast of Revelation, Chapter 13. In essence, a people failed to stay in line with truth, and because of that a seducing spirit took hold of them. Their spirit changed. They went right on professing and practicing religion, but it was motivated by a devilish spirit. We live in an age when people say, "Well, if it is religious, it is good." That is not so. It has to be according to God's eternal Word and according to truth to be right. Many people feel, "As long as I am sincere, that is all that is necessary." Joshua let Israel know in Joshua 24:14 that they must "serve [the Lord] in *sincerity* and in *truth*." It takes more than being sincere. It takes truth if you are going to serve God. If you will take the truth, give heed to it, put it on, and live it out, God will provide protection for you. He will provide shelter; He will be a refuge (Psalm 46:1).

## The Rise of the First Beast

**Revelation 13:1** And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

### Hidden Manna

As we begin to view this passage of Scripture text, we find that the scene in John's vision has changed from the previous chapter, where he described the activities concerning the dragon and the woman, to **Chapter 13, verse 1**, where he declared, "**And I stood upon the sand of the sea . . .**" Here is depicted the rise of the first "**beast.**" The remainder of **verse 1** provides identifying factors to clearly establish his identity. As we closed out our study of Chapter 12, we found that there was one last flood of persecution: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood . . ." (verse 15). Although he had been cast down to the earth (to a human level) and shown not to be a system that should be exalted in the minds of men, one last effort was made. The spirit of the dragon sent forth the most fierce persecution under the Roman Emperor Diocletian (A.D. 302-312).

Due to this and previous persecutions, Revelation 12:14 tells us, "And to the woman [the church] were given two wings of a great eagle . . ." Those two wings were the Word and the Spirit. To clarify that interpretation of symbolism, let us read a couple of Scriptures. Zechariah 5:1-2 reads: "Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll." To understand what this roll was, read Ezekiel 3:1-4. There you will find that this roll is described as "my words" (verse 4). Verse 3 says that "it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." What does that describe? Psalm 119:103 makes it clear: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" This "flying roll" is a picture of the Word of God.

The other wing is a picture of the Spirit of God. When the Holy Spirit came and anointed Christ at the baptism of John, Luke 3:22 says, "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove . . ." So, these two wings of a great eagle that the woman in Revelation, Chapter 12, had is a picture of the Word and the Spirit. The woman was "given two wings" so that "she might fly into the wilderness," a place where "she is nourished" (Revelation 12:14), or a place "that they [the Word and the Spirit] should feed her" (Revelation 12:6).

Is this truly what occurred? When Jesus spoke to this age (Pergamos) in the Letter Series (Revelation, Chapter 2), the time period was A.D. 530-1530. During this time the woman was hid away in the catacombs and caves in seclusion. Jesus said in Revelation 2:17, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna . . ." While the woman was hidden away, they were feeding her "hidden manna." Although the predominant condition was that the Bible was chained to a pulpit and was not in the language of the common people, the most common inscription on the catacomb walls was, "The Word of God is not bound." There was some "hidden manna" that the Word and the Spirit were feeding the overcomers while they were hid away in seclusion during that period of time.

### A Form of Godliness

While the church was withstanding and yea, even victorious, over the foe from without, there was an insidious foe working within. During this same transitional time period that began in A.D. 270 and went to A.D. 530, this "**beast**" began to "**rise up**" (**Revelation 13:1**). Revelation 13:5 tells us, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." This gives a prophetic time frame for this beast—"forty and two months." We found in a prior study by multiplying forty-two (Revelation 13:5) by thirty (days in a Jewish calendar month), the total is 1,260 days. Using the Biblical reckoning for prophetic time, "each day for a year" (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6), the 1,260 days equals 1,260 years, or the totality of the power of this beast. The time period is from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530. (If you subtract 270 from 1530, you will get 1,260 years, just as the prophecy in the Revelation declares.)

Concerning A.D. 270, Wickersham's *A History of the Church* tells us, "Another great event that marks the close of this period of time, A.D. 270, is a division and decline of the Roman Empire." Other historians let us know there were things that became more pronounced beginning around this time. Waddington's *Church History* speaks of the first crises in the internal history of the church occurring in A.D. 270: Anthony, an Egyptian, the father of Monasticism, formed monks into organized bodies. Dowling's *History of Romanism* (pages 88-89) describes the extravagant practice of these groups of monks and the false standards of piety and holiness they created. Dowling declared it "actually affected the church universal." The practices of hermitism or monasticism included men closeting themselves away in monasteries and becoming virtual hermits. Some let their fingernails and their hair grow. Some of them wore the same clothing for years, never bathing. These false acts, "false standards of piety" as Dowling described them, actually affected the church universally. Piety and holiness went from being an internal reality to being merely external performances. The Apostle Paul described it as "a form of godliness" with no "power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:5).

Eusebius, the famed church historian, placed in a side heading the words "Decay of pure Christianity A.D. 270." Daniel W. Kurtz in his *Church History* (page 48) says this: "The heresies within the church forced the Christians to a rule of authority. At first religion was an inner experience of Christ in the heart, being personal on the theology of a good shepherd. As the church entered the Greek and Roman territory and prevailed in conflict with heathenism, religion became more and more a matter of creeds." There was an insidious move from within, moving the people as a whole away from inner piety, inner reality, inner holiness to external performance, creeds, and practices. It is during this transitional period that we see a picture of a "beast" rising up. Even as paganism was being defeated and cast down to the earth, this system was in the process of rising up in its place.

As we look at **Revelation 13:1**, notice that our text begins with the word "**And**," which is a conjunction. This serves to remind us that our text is a continuation of the previous thought. We must recognize that when the New Testament was written, it was not written in chapters and verses. The first English Bible that was broken down in chapters and verses was the Geneva Bible, written in A.D. 1560. The New Testament, particularly the part we are discussing, was written in continuity. It was later broken down in chapters and verses for ready reference's sake. By looking at the first word, "**And**," we understand that this was a continuous vision John received. The scene has merely changed, but it is a scene in continuity with previous thought. We must never lose sight of the fact that God used the panorama of the skies to give John a "vision" (Revelation 9:17). God used the form of this vision to reveal precious truth in a symbolic manner unto John.

In the past, good brethren have taught Chapter 12 as a series in itself. By rightly dividing the Word of Truth, I trust we can see that Chapter 13 follows right along in chronological sequence. One reason I feel they made the division of the series as they did is because light is a progressive thing. The older brethren did not teach Chapters 21 and 22 as a series. Rather, when they got to Chapters 21 and 22, which speak of a new heaven and a new earth, they viewed that as a period beyond time. They viewed it in a literal sense. They viewed the description of the city as the eternal realm, but it is a description of the church.

Series Number Seven begins in Revelation 21:1, speaking of "a new heaven and a new earth." This describes what John spoke of in verse 2, the "new Jerusalem" and "a bride" (or a people). It is a symbolic picture of salvation and the institution of the church. It shows a picture throughout Chapters 21 and 22 of the institution, the attributes, and the operation of the New Testament church. Yet, dear brethren in bygone days did not have the light concerning these truths afforded to them. Thus, they viewed these chapters as occurring in the eternal realm.

I trust it is clear by the light of our study that Chapter 13 follows the chronological sequence of Chapter 12. In Revelation 12:13 "the dragon" was "cast unto the earth." Then, verse 14 tells us that "the woman" was "given two wings," and she went into the wilderness where she was

### Prophetic Time Symbols

Forty-two months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month = 1260 days

Time = 1 year or 12 months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month = 360 days

Times = 2 years or 24 months x 30 days to Jewish calendar month = 720 days

Dividing of Time = ½ of a year or 6 months x 30 days to a Jewish calendar month = 180 days

Time + Times + Dividing of Times (360 days + 720 days + 180 days) = 1260 days

1260 days or "each day for a year" = 1260 years (A.D. 270 - 1530)

nourished "for a time, and times, and half a time." That commences with A.D. 270. Verses 14-17 portray a picture of that which transpired from A.D. 270 to A.D. 530. We see in verse 16 a picture of the earth helping the woman. This was Constantine in the 300's. Chapter 13 ties right in chronological sequence because this **"beast"** began to **"rise up"** in A.D. 270. Chronologically these verses are vitally connected.

Let us notice particularly what produced this **"beast."** It rose **"up out of the sea."** What was in this **"sea"**? We read in Revelation 8:8, "And the second angel [the second period of this Gospel Day; A.D. 270-530] sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea . . . ." So now we know what went into the **"sea."** The Greek word here for *angel* is the word *aggelos*; it means "a messenger." This is symbolic of a ministry, not of celestial beings. This same Greek word is used in Paul's writings. In Galatians 4:13-14 Paul wrote, "Ye . . . received me as an angel . . . ." Verse 13 tells us what Paul did: "I preached the gospel."

When the "second angel sounded" (Revelation 8:8), the sound was the sounding of the trumpet, or the particular message they had in their era of time. Revelation 8:6 reads, "And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound." Sound what? The trumpets. The "trumpet" represents the message that was preached, or sounded out, in each particular time period. Isaiah 58:1 tells us what the trumpet is: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." The sounding of the trumpet is a portrayal of what is being preached. We can tell what was being preached in each one of these periods by what it produced or by what occurred.

When the second angel sounded his trumpet, there was a cause and effect, as there always is. Revelation 8:8 tells us the "great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea." The great mountain that had been burning with fire (in the first period of the Gospel Day) was cast down into the sea; in other words, it was going out of public view, the fire was being extinguished. The **"beast"** in our text rose right up out of the same sea this mountain was cast into. What went into the sea and what was in the sea has great bearing on our text.

### A Great Mountain

To identify the **"beast"** John saw **"rise up out of the sea,"** we must identify three things: What was this great mountain? What caused it to be cast into the sea? and What is this sea into which it was cast? To understand what this great mountain is, we must go back into prophecy. In Daniel, Chapter 2, we read of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a great image. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that this image, represented by four different metallic substances, portrayed four kingdoms in chronological succession. This dream served as a prophetic time line, bringing us from the days of Nebuchadnezzar down to not only the Advent of Christ, but even the institution of the New Testament church. This image had a "head of gold" (Babylonian Empire; Daniel 2:38). The next kingdom was "inferior" to the Babylon Empire (Daniel 2:39). Daniel 5:30-31 tells us this was the Medo-Persian Empire. That is why it is represented by the chest (common heart) and the two arms (two aspects of the kingdom—the Medes and the Persians).

The third kingdom, which succeeded the Medo-Persian Empire, is spoken of in Daniel 11:2—the Grecian Empire. To identify "the fourth kingdom" (Daniel 2:40), we must look at which kingdom was in power when the stone came. Daniel 2:34 says that "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet." The fourth kingdom, the feet, is what was in power when Jesus Christ made His First Advent. Luke 2:1 clearly states which world empire that was: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." Caesar Augustus was Emperor of the Roman Empire.

The stone being "cut out without hands," lets us know that man had nothing to do with it. It is a portrayal in prophetic language of the virgin birth. To further identify this stone, read Acts 4:10-11. Peter told the Sanhedrin: "Be it known unto you all, and to all people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone . . . ." The stone is Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He is the One who came during the reign of the Roman Empire, while the feet were in power.

Let us catch other Scripture references to substantiate this truth. Ephesians 2:20 says, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." First Peter 2:3-4 says: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming [the Lord], as unto a living stone [the Lord], disallowed



indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." Then verses 7-8 read: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence . . . ." The Lord is this stone.

When we read in Daniel 2:35 that "the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth," we realize this is the fulfillment of what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18—"I will build my church." Daniel 2:44 tells us more about this great mountain. It reads, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This great mountain is the kingdom, or the church. They are interchangeable and synonymous terms, representing the same things.

I realize there are those who, although well-intentioned, make an artificial distinction between the kingdom and the church. But in reality they are the one and selfsame thing. Look at the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:18-19: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter [the word *Peter* is *Petros*, meaning 'a piece of rock'], and upon this rock [*petra*, a different Greek word, meaning 'a massive rock like Gibraltar'; in other words, 'upon this divine revelation,' not on Peter] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom . . ." If the *kingdom* and the *church* are different, why did Jesus give Peter the keys of the kingdom when He was going to build a church? That lets us know they are synonymous; they are interchangeable. The kingdom and the church represent the same thing.

The nearest distinction you can make between the two is that the kingdom speaks more to the individual reign of Christ in the heart, where the church (the *ecclesia*, as the Greek calls it) speaks more to the collective unit as a whole. However, they are still comprised of the one and selfsame people and represent the one and selfsame thing. Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us: "But ye are come [in the proximity of A.D. 63 to 69 he said 'ye are come'] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, [what are all of these things expressions of?] To the general assembly and church . . ." These all represent different aspects, attributes, or facets of the one and selfsame church. Then, in verse 28 we read, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom . . ." The writer never changed his topic of address. This lets us know the kingdom and the church are the one and selfsame thing. When Daniel 2:44 says, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," it is talking about the same thing spoken of in Matthew 16:18, which states, "I will build my church." This great mountain that "filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:35) is the church that was instituted on the Day of Pentecost.

Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled in Acts, Chapter 2. Verse 1 tells us that this was when "the day of Pentecost was fully come." Verse 5 says, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven [a representation of 'the whole earth'; Daniel 2:35]." Then verse 47b tells us, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." This great mountain is a symbolic representation of the church. In Revelation 21:9 "one of the seven angels [or a ministry]" said, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Then verse 10 reads, "And he carried me away . . . to a great and high mountain . . ." What is the great and high mountain? It is the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church. This is confirmed in Revelation 21:9, which states, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Who is the bride? Revelation 19:7-8 tells us: ". . . the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife [the Lamb's wife] hath made herself ready. And to her [the Lamb's wife] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen [the wedding garment] is the righteousness of saints." If the wedding garment is the righteousness of saints, it only stands to reason that the Lamb's wife (who is wearing the garment) is the saints, or the church.

Paul verified this in 2 Corinthians 11:2, when he repeatedly employed the word *you*: "For I am jealous over *you* with godly jealousy: for I have espoused *you* to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ." To understand who this virgin that he spoke of is, look at whom this Corinthian epistle is addressed to: "unto the church of God" (2 Corinthians 1:1). When John was "carried . . . away in the spirit to a great and high mountain," he saw "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven" (Revelation 21:10). Galatians 4:26 explains what this is: "But Jerusalem which is above [or heavenly Jerusalem] is free, which is the mother of us all." When Hebrews 12:22 speaks of "the heavenly Jerusalem," verse 23 defines it as the "church."

Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 2:2 of "the last days." Hebrews 1:2, which was written in A.D. 63 to 69, tells us very clearly when those days were: "Hath in *these* last days." They had already commenced in A.D. 63. When did they commence? Peter, preaching on the Day of Pentecost, said in Acts 2:16-17, "But this is that which was spoken by the

prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days . . . ." Peter was saying, in essence, "This is that; these are the last days." The last days commenced in A.D. 33. Isaiah was speaking of the New Testament dispensation in his prophetic writings. Isaiah 2:2-3 tells us: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house [This mountain here is associated with the Lord's house, the house of the Lord, or the house of God. First Timothy 3:15 tells us that 'the house of God . . . is the church of the living God.'] shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Zion, Jerusalem, and the mountain of the Lord's house all represent the church by various analogies. Where does the Word go forth from? From the church.

Micah saw the same thing in Micah 4:1-2: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." This is a prophetic picture of the church. I trust that you can see this "great mountain" represents the church.

### What Is the Sea?

Coming back to Revelation 8:8, we read that the "great mountain . . . was cast into the sea." What does *sea* symbolize? The literal definition of a *sea* as found in *Webster's Dictionary* is "a large body of water." Another definition is "a mass of water, density of water." So the sea is a massive body of *water*. What does *water* represent in the Revelation? Revelation 17:15 says, "The waters . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." This a massive move of people. What kind of people? Isaiah 57:20 tells us that "the wicked are like the troubled sea." So these are not just people, but these are wicked people.

What does God consider being at the apex of wickedness? We read in Psalm 50:16-17: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee." God considers the zenith of wickedness to be people who want to continue to take His covenant in their mouth (in other words, they want to continue to supposedly declare His statutes, teach and preach His Word), but they will not take instruction from Him. They cast the Word behind them, but they want to continue to profess, preach, and practice religion. That is the apex of wickedness. And that is the type of people who caused this apostasy and caused the "**beast**" to "**rise up.**"

What caused this mountain, which had been burning with fire (the morning-time Church of God in her pristine glory, on fire, filled with the Holy Ghost) to be cast into the sea, to lose her fire, to go out of public view? It was people. The church is no stronger than the people that make it up. The church is not a building; it is not brick and mortar; it is not blocks and stone; it is not a neon sign. It is a people, and the church is only as visible as its people are. It is only as powerful as its people are. It only shines forth the light as its people shine forth the light. When wicked people become more dominant than good people, it drives the good people out of sight. That is what happened in this era when the woman went into the wilderness. She went into a place of seclusion, underground into the catacombs and caves. The predominant condition that was in public view, prevailing during that era, is what caused it to become a Dark Age. It was a system that came up out of the minds of these people.

That same spirit is still working today. People lose the reality, but they do not lose religion. They will lose their possession, but they do not lose their profession. The picture in Revelation 8:8 is that right while the church was victoriously withstanding the foe from without, there was an insidious foe (a spirit of apostasy, giving rise to religious leaders, preachers) working within, causing a people to defect from truth. It was such a dangerous foe that it caused the fire to be extinguished. When fire goes into the sea, it goes out.

When this great mountain sank into the sea, it went out of sight, out of public view. There was no visible church during this period of time that is known as the Dark Ages. As it sank, the light of its fire was put out and darkness took its place. Amos prophesied of a time when a spiritual eclipse would take place right in the midst of the clear day. Amos 8:9 states "And it shall come to pass in that day [a prophetic expression of the Gospel Day], saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon [that is not a natural occurrence; that is not the natural order of things; thus,

something intervened], and I will darken the earth in the clear day." It had been a clear day. The woman had come on the scene clothed in the sun, with dazzling brilliance and light, with all of God's luminary agents. The mountain, another symbol of the same church, was burning with fire: brilliant and radiant.

During that same time, because of these insidious spirits that had worked their way into many of the leaders' positions, it began working in the lives of individuals. This continued until much of what had been the church fell out of the hands of God and into the hands of people, not just people, but *wicked* people; people who were religious but wicked. Anytime the church becomes the people's church, it is no longer God's church. Whenever the people get hold of it, the light is going to go out, the fire is going to be extinguished, and the real church is going to go out of view. Regardless of the locality, the principles are the same.

### False Prophets

Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 21:11-12: "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night . . ." Night does not usually follow morning, but it did here. Normally, you have a whole day to go through before you come to night. But the watchman on the wall had a vision of night following the morning. He had a vision of a dark age following the morning time. It is also prophesied of in Isaiah 63:18, which reads, "The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary." This is speaking of the time period from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530. Revelation 11:2, speaking of the same period, says, ". . . the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." In other words, it was underground in the catacombs and caves, out of public view.

Daniel 8:12, speaking in a type, says, "And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered." That is exactly what we see happening during this period of time. Another prophecy found in Isaiah 1:21-22 says: "How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross [what had been precious is no longer of any value] . . ." These prophetic expressions are showing us that much of what had been the morning-time church fell out of the hands of God and into the hands of men. Right while the brethren were fighting and gaining victory over paganism, they were also warning of this terrible move that was taking place from within. The church is never successfully assaulted from without, but from within.

Paul, en route to Jerusalem, told the brethren, "Ye . . . shall see my face no more" (Acts 20:25). The Spirit had witnessed to Paul that bonds and afflictions awaited him. Agabus the Prophet and others warned him not to journey (Acts 21:10-12), but the Spirit constrained him. In Acts, Chapter 20, Paul warned the Ephesian brethren of the same thing Christ told John to write in Revelation 2:1-4, saying (in essence), "Take a letter to Ephesus and tell them they have left their first love." Paul said in Acts 20:28-31: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves [the elders at Ephesus; verse 17], and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves [right among brethren there at Ephesus] shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." This warning from Paul that men would arise is very significant, as in our text we see the fulfillment of this prophecy when we see "**a beast rise up**" (**Revelation 13:1**).

The morning-time brethren, though they were fighting paganism from without, realized there was an insidious foe working within. We read in 2 Peter 2:1-2: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many [many right among you; verse 1] shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." What is the lesson here? False prophets were going to arise, and they were going to cause many to follow them. These brethren saw the spirit of this thing working. In Paul's last epistle before he was martyred on Nero's chopping block, he penned in 2 Timothy 4:2-4: "Preach the word [the solution is the Word] . . . For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." That is exactly what this system that arose espouses—doctrines that were nothing but fables.

Jude wrote, "For there are certain men crept in [they were already in] unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). This does not mean they denied the existence of Jesus; that would not be deceptive whatsoever. Titus 1:16 tells us how they denied him: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

What was working at this time? In 1 Timothy 4:1 Paul said, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits . . ." Seducing spirits were working. Second Thessalonians 2:1-4 tells us what type of spirits: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

The words "a falling away" are translated from the Greek word *apostasia*. It is the word our English word *apostasy* comes from. According to *Strong's Dictionary of Greek New Testament Words*, the word *apostasia* means "defection from truth." These Scripture verses speak of people who defected from truth. To put it in the words of the psalmist, they would no longer take divine instruction. They cast God's Word behind them. What gives rise to apostasy? It starts when people fail to take instruction.

Why is apostasy so dangerous? Why is it so damning? Because it is so deceitful and so deceptive. Paul denounced apostates as "deceivers" (Titus 1:10) because "they profess" (Titus 1:16). To see what caused the rise of apostasy, look at 2 Peter 2:1, which talks of "false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." Verse 2 tells us that "many shall follow their pernicious ways," and verse 3 lets us know that "they with feigned words make merchandise of" people. If you read verse 10, you will find it says: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." The words "despise government" are in The Amplified Bible as "despise authority." The Greek word is *kuriotes*. Also, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* says "constituted authority." In other words, they will not take instruction; they do not want anyone telling them what to do. That is what produced apostasy then, and that is what produces apostasy today. When the Word is presented to them, they cast it behind them. Yet, they keep right on professing. When they fail to walk in the light, darkness comes on them. Although they continue to profess and practice and preach, all they can do is deceive.

### Out of Divine Order

First Corinthians 14:40 tells us that "all things [are to] be done decently in and in order." For things to be done in order, someone has to have the authority to keep order. Who is ordained to keep order? Revelation 4:4 tells us, "And round about the throne [in other words, the closest in proximity to the Divine] were four and twenty seats [the Greek says 'thrones']: and upon the seats [or thrones] I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment ['the righteousness of saints'; Revelation 19:8]." So these "four and twenty" are saints; but they are a particular body of saints, they are the "elders." This is nothing more than a picture of the ministry. In 1 Peter 5:1-2 Peter said: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight . . ." Who has the oversight? Who feeds the flock? The "elders," or the ministry.

The "four and twenty elders" is an allusion back to the twenty-four courses of the Levitical priesthood. In 1 Chronicles 24:1-4 we read: "Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron [Aaron was the High Priest; his sons were priests]. The sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office. And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service. And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar, and thus were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar . . ." Sixteen plus eight equals twenty-four. There were twenty-four courses of Levitical priests. It represented all of the

priesthood. The twenty-four elders represent the entirety of the ministry.

Look at what 1 Chronicles 24:5 says about these twenty-four courses of priests: "Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another; for the governors of the sanctuary, and governors of the house of God . . ." The house of God has some governors. Not just everything goes on. Just because we believe in letting the Spirit direct does not mean we believe in having a free-for-all. There is still divine order. All things are to be done decently and in order, and God has a governor to keep things in order. However, when this spirit of apostasy rose up, we found in 2 Peter 2:10 that they "despise government." That word *despise* means "to think against, think little or nothing of, to slight, to disregard, to scorn, to despise." That is exactly the way people began to treat the ministry in the morning time when the spirit of apostasy began to work. That is what caused that apostasy, and the same spirit is working to cause an apostasy today. It causes people to think that God's man is no different from any other man, that his idea is no different from the ideas of the people. God's man is not just the run of the mill, the run of the herd. He is God's man. It is just like when Saul went among the prophets after he was anointed. The Bible says he became "another man" (1 Samuel 10:6). Whenever people refuse to take instruction, casting the Word behind them, they are ripe candidates for apostasy. Their experience is going to fall out of God's hands and into their own hands. Then any type of teaching or belief imaginable is likely to rise up. That is exactly what happened in the morning time.

In this morning-time apostasy, this was a massive move of people leaving the reality and replacing it with mere religion, which is why the symbol of "sea" is employed in **Revelation 13:1**. In the literal, the body of the seas is more massive than land mass (the earth is two-thirds seas), and spiritually this was the most massive development in New Testament history, not only in scope but in time as well. From A.D. 33 until today (1,979 years of Christian Dispensation), this beast held sway for 1,260 years of it. It was a massive move!

In New Testament language, this sea in Revelation 8:8 that the mountain was cast into, that the "beast" rose out of, is the sea of apostasy. What the apostate church went into, this system rose up out of. I trust you can see, when another spirit takes over a person, they just do not pull down the shingle (so to speak) and say, "Well, I'm not saved anymore." No, they just change their practice of religion. This system of worship shown in our text arose out of the minds of apostate men. Remember, Paul said in Acts 20:30 that "men arise." In **Revelation 13:1** we see this fulfilled in "a beast rise up." This beast is the system these apostates devised.

Notice how John described what he saw in **Revelation 13:1**. He called it "a beast." The Greek word is *therion*, meaning "a wild beast." *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* tells us that "metaphorically it is used of a brutal, bestial man, savage and ferocious." Before we complete our study of this manmade system, we will see that this is an apt description when we realize that it martyred more than fifty million saints during this period of time. It was, indeed, a beastly system.

It is important that we study this morning-time apostasy for we are not immune from the powers of apostasy; we are not immune from these seducing spirits. Ecclesiastes 1:9 tells us that "there is no new thing under the sun." As we study these truths, it is important to give them their historical mooring and see how they arose, why they came about, what produced them, and where their place was historically, but we are not studying it from merely a historical perspective to address its place in proper church history. We also recognize that right now, in this evening time, we are facing those same spirits.

Revelation 16:13-14 tells us: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils . . . which go forth . . ." They are trying to gather people. They are no longer merely housed in those religious systems. They have "come out" as well. If we are not cautious, it is possible that we could get to a place where we will not take instruction, a place where we do not want a man to tell us anything. Some might say, "Oh, I don't believe in man rule." I do not believe in man rule, either, but do not forget that God rules through a man. We need to recognize that whenever we get to a place where we will not take instruction, casting God's Word behind us, yet we want to keep right on professing and practicing religion, God looks at us as wicked.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:23b, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" It is unbelievable what comes out of the minds of men whose minds are enveloped with darkness. They will start denying the Lord God that brought them, not denying His existence but denying Him lordship of their lives. Worse than that, they will start speaking "evil of dignities" (2 Peter 2:10). When God's man preaches about letting the Lord have His rightful place, letting Him be the Lord, they will start speaking evil of the very man who is trying to help them.

Dear one, if you take a stand for the truth, they will start speaking evil against you. Why? Because they are presumptuous and self-willed. It is important to understand that these spirits that worked in the first century are still working in this twenty-first century. The winds of apostasy are still blowing yet today. We are not immune from it. We need to give, as the Hebrew writer said, "the more earnest heed" (Hebrews 2:1). That word *heed* means "obedience to the things we have heard." If we do not give heed to what we have heard, they will slip away. However, we will still be accountable. Once those things start slipping away, we are in a ripe position to become deceived by one of these seducing spirits.

"The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while . . ." (Isaiah 63:18). Then the holy city was trodden under foot. When that mountain went down, those people did not quit practicing religion. Something came up in its place; they devised a system. Out of their minds came a system that they made up out of their teachings, ideas, and thoughts. It became a plague on mankind.

## Identifying the Beast

**Revelation 13:1** And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

### The Battle Is Over the Faith

As we continue to study the "beast" that rose "up out of the sea," we can read that the Apostle Paul, along with a host of other brethren, warned us of this very thing. We read in Acts 20:28-30 what it was that Paul said would rise up: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood [there is the great mountain, burning with fire, the church that Jesus purchased, which is under the direction of the Holy Spirit and a God-called, God-placed ministry]. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves [here is the rising of the 'beast'; wolves are beasts] enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise [here is what the 'beast' is: men that arose], speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." They still have a religious nature, they still have religious practice, but they are speaking perverse things. They are wolves, or beasts, rather than that which God ordained to lead His people: divine, Holy-Ghost leadership.

Paul, Peter, Jude, and others warned of this insidious foe that was working from within. In 1 Timothy 4:1 we read, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from *the* faith . . ." In the morning time of this Gospel Day, Ephesians 4:5 lets us know that there is "One Lord, one faith." The battle all the way down through the Gospel Day has been over the faith, and that is what it is over yet today. Oh, the devil will try to mix personalities in it—"he mistreated me" or "she said that" or "he did this"—but do not ever lose sight of the fact that the battle is over the faith. The enemy wants to take the faith away from you or move you away from the faith.

That is why Paul admonished the young minister in 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." The fight is to keep the faith, to not be removed or depart from the faith. Paul wrote that second-and-final letter to Timothy right before he went into martyrdom. Look at what he said in 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, [what good fight did Paul keep?] I have kept the faith." Paul was saying: "I did not move away from the faith, and I did not let anybody move me away from it. I kept the faith."

The Apostle Paul had the discernment and the insight and enough of the gift of prophecy to see what was on the horizon. He warned the saints of these seducing spirits. What type of spirits were working? We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." Paul had to write this clearly because they had the impression that the Second Advent was to be an imminent event. They received that impression from Paul's own letters. He wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-15: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that *we* which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord . . ." Paul left them with the impression that "the coming of the Lord" would be an occurrence in that first century, right while they were still alive.

Between 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians, the Spirit of God gave Paul the insight to realize that his own letter had been mistaken and misunderstood. So he clarified it in 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2. In essence, he said in verse 2, "Do not be upset over or misunderstand a letter from me concerning the day of Christ being at hand." We read in verses 3-5: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" Paul had already told them these things; but they misunderstood what he wrote in 1 Thessalonians, and it unsettled them. They had become shaken, thinking that the Advent of Christ

was imminent and immediate. So, Paul had to remind them that day would not come until there came a falling away first. Paul said, "Remember ye not, that . . . I told you these things?" Paul continued writing in verses 6-7: "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." Here the Apostle Paul began to give insight as to what was going to transpire. In verse 3 he spoke of "a falling away." This is translated from the Greek word *apostasias*. That is the word that our English word *apostasy* comes from. It is important to understand that one of the primary spirits working then was the spirit of apostasy.

In the seal series (Revelation, Chapter 6), God began to expose the militant spirits that would work down throughout the Gospel Day. Revelation 6:5 says, "And when he had opened the third seal [the same period we are currently studying, A.D. 270-530], I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse." These horses represent spirits, and horses were articles of warfare. They denote militancy. The depiction of these horses in the seal series represents the militant aspects of these spirits that were working through the Gospel Day. This is confirmed in Zechariah 10:3, which tells us that "the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle."

In Revelation, Chapter 6, we find a white horse, a red horse, a black horse, and a pale horse. These same horses are spoken of in the prophetic account found in Zechariah 6:2-6: "In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses [which corresponds with the pale horse]. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the LORD of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country." Again, these horses represent spirits. The black horse is a militant spirit that goes to the north country. What is the north country? When you travel north, the temperature becomes colder. East is the source of light, but this horse is going north, into a cold climate. To see why that occurred, read Zechariah 6:8, which tells us that "these that go toward the north country [speaking of the black horses] have quieted my spirit."

People went into an apostasy (a spiritually cold position) because they quieted the Holy Spirit. He was a faithful and true witness, but because they would not take the warning, because they would not heed the admonition, they quieted the Spirit. Once that happened, people went into a cold spiritual condition. However, because they professed over top of it, a spirit of apostasy overtook them until the Spirit of God was unable to get through to them. Apostasy causes people to be so set in their own thoughts that they start leading people astray. They "draw away disciples" after their "own selves . . . speaking perverse things" (Acts 20:30). When people quiet the Spirit of God, they have to lean on their own understanding, their foolish "understanding [is] darkened" (Ephesians 4:18). The thoughts that arise from those people are coming from a darkened mind. This is what produced the Dark Ages.

### The Spirit Behind Apostasy

Let us take a closer look at the seducing spirit that lies behind apostasy. The "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thessalonians 2:7) was already working when the Apostle Paul penned this Thessalonian epistle in the proximity of A.D. 50-51. *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* describes it as "the secret of lawlessness." Another rendering says "the secret of lawlessness already is inwardly working itself." All of these moves started internally—in the hearts and lives of men—before they became external manifestations.

We read in Psalm 50:16-17 that God considers the wicked to be those who "hatest instruction." These were people who did not want anybody to tell them what to do. That is what gave rise to this "**beast**" (**Revelation 13:1**), and that spirit is still working today. People are being gathered into another beast with that same spirit: not wanting anybody to tell them what to do. They do not want to have a pastor or anyone who has any authority over them. Their attitude is, "Oh, we will decide." No, not in God's church you will not. That spirit is what gave rise to this lawlessness. The Amplified Bible describes it as "that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority." Acts 20:28 tells us who constituted authority is: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers . . ." The authority in the Church of God is the Holy Ghost. When He sets a man in, that man is the authority. That is the truth, whether people like it or not.



Look at the words of Peter in 1 Peter 5:1-2: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight . . ." The elder has the oversight. Too many people today do not want an *overseer*, they want an *overlooker*. But God sets His man on the wall as "a watchman," or an overseer (Ezekiel 33:7).

The spirit that gave rise to apostasy was the spirit of lawlessness to constituted authority, and that is how every apostasy begins. I have seen it work during my own lifetime. Men have thought that they knew as much as a godly pastor. They did not want to be told, or instructed, what to do. Peter spoke of this in 2 Peter 2:1, saying, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you [the morning-time brethren warned that apostasy was going to happen, and it did], who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many [This is why it is referred to as a '**sea**'; the sea is more massive than the land mass. This was a massive move.] shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

Peter explained this a little further in verse 10a, saying, "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government." The Greek word for *government* is *kuriotes*. The *New Analytical Greek Lexicon* defines it as "constituted authority." The word *despise* means "to think against, to think little or nothing of, to slight, to disregard, to scorn, to despise." When people despise constituted authority, they are presumptuous and self-willed. They do not want to bring their will under to anyone else. They do not want someone else telling them anything. This is what causes apostasy. This is what caused it in the morning time, and it is the cause of it in so many localities today. While I do not believe in man rule, let us not forget that God rules through a man. This is such a critical truth that we need to understand, because what worked in bygone days and gave rise to this system is giving rise to a lot of things today. Before the move today is over, people who have taken on that spirit will march right in with this eighth beast because they already have one of its spirits. Some are already locking arms with it. You will see them at the various interfaith affairs and activities. How can that be? When people depart from the truth, it is because they have taken on another spirit, and that spirit will cause them to start doing other things.

Look at what the Bible says in Hebrews 13:7, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God [this is not talking about civil authorities, but of those who speak the Word of God to you, a true ministry]: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation [or their conduct]." One rendering says "considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith." Then verse 17 tells us, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Though we do not succumb to man rule, we must always recognize the truth that God rules through a man, and God's man will not be unfair.

### **A Portrait of Apostasy**

To confirm that apostasy is what was working in the morning time, look at the examples Jude gave in his epistle. In verse 3 he let us know there was a move afoot, saying that "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith [singular] which was once delivered." Here Jude spoke in the past tense, for when he penned these words (A.D. 66), something was already working. The faith was not being commonly delivered as it had once been. Verse 4 tells us why: "For there are certain men crept in unawares . . ." Look at what verse 11 says about them: "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." There is one common denominator that unites all three of these men (Cain, Balaam, and Core), and that is the fact that each one of them engaged in the practice of religion. In this epistle Jude equated these certain men (verse 4) with the reason that the faith was not continuing to be delivered in its purity as it once had been.

In verse 10, Jude referred to these men as "beasts." Let us look at the examples of the three notorious Old Testament characters Jude used. Cain was the first murderer. He rose up and slew his brother over religious jealousy. Isn't that a picture of the spirit behind this first beast that murdered more than fifty million saints? Then he brought up Balaam, a hireling who for filthy lucre's sake followed Balak. Last of all Jude spoke of Core, who was an usurper. He thought he was in as good of standing as Moses. He said that God talked to him just as He talked to Moses. He said, "Ye take

too much upon you" (Numbers 16:3). These three men are a portrait of apostasy.

Let us look at it a little closer. We read in Genesis 4:2-5a: "And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." Why did God not have respect unto Cain? Some might believe that Cain should have taken his fruit of the field and sold it for a sheep and offered a sheep. However, they were not under the Levitical law. It had not been instituted yet. What was the principle Cain violated? He was to bring God his *firstfruits*. Abel brought God the firstfruits, but Cain did it "in process of time." In other words, when he got around to it, when it was convenient to him. The first lesson we see here is that Cain wanted to alter the system of worship, just as the rise of this "**beast**" did. It wanted to put something ahead of the place that God was designed to occupy.

God gave Cain opportunity to change. Genesis 4:5b-7 tells us: "And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Instead of taking advantage of God's mercy, Cain let the enemy overtake him until he became the first murderer in the Bible. The spirit that gave rise to the "**beast**" in our text wants to put something else ahead of God; it wants to create an alternative system of worship. In this period when the beast began to dominate the religious landscape, ultimately anyone who did not succumb to that system of worship became as Abel—martyred.

If you will study Numbers, Chapter 22, you will read that Balak sent messengers to Balaam to ask him to come and curse Israel. He would not go at first, but they continued to press him, offering him greater gifts until Balaam wanted to go. Second Peter 2:15 says, "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." Balaam became a hireling; he did what he did for wages. Likewise, this system does much of what they do to amass their wealth and for wages.

Our last example is found in Numbers, Chapter 16. This example vividly illustrates the spirit that was working in the morning-time apostasy as well as the very type of spirit we face in this evening-time yet today. We read in Numbers 16:1-2: "Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up [a picture in type of the '**beast**' raising up] before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown." When the enemy starts working in a congregation, he uses people who have influence, people who hold offices and have a good reputation, people who can influence and move others.

Look at the words of Numbers 16:3-7, which state: "And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, [They did not take anything upon themselves. When God called Moses, he did everything he could to get out of it. He did not want to take what God was giving him.] seeing all the congregation are holy [that was a lie, because they surely were not holy], every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. This do; Take you censers [in other words, you are going to die right in the practice of religion], Korah, and all his company; And put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi."

If you continue to read this chapter, you will find in verse 35, "And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." Raising up against a true man of God stirs the wrath of God and the judgment of God, and there will be consequences. It will take your life. That is exactly why Jude used these men as a comparison to the certain men who crept in during the morning time, giving rise to this apostasy, or the "**beast**" of **Revelation 13:1**. Jude compared them to these men of old.

It is dangerous to allow a spirit of lawlessness to cause you to raise up against constituted authority. God has authority, and He desires that we submit to it. Not only is it dangerous to rise up against authority, it is dangerous not to have a leader. God wants everyone to have a leader. If you are not a pastor, you need to be pastored. Judges 21:25 says this: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." What chaos that produces! When people do not have a leader, everybody does what is right in their own eyes. In time, all you have

is pandemonium, anarchy, and chaos. This is the spirit that produced the morning-time apostasy. According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, an apostasy is a "defection from truth." It is a people who left the reality and replaced it with mere religion.

### A "Beast" Came Out of the Sea of Apostasy

Coming back to our text, notice how John described what he saw. He called it a "**beast**." This word in the Greek is *therion*, which according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* is defined as "metaphorically a brutal bestial man, savage, ferocious." That indeed is an apt description of a system which martyred more than fifty million saints. Because men's minds immediately want to run off to literalism, thinking this to be some hideous monstrosity that is going to literally rise out of the seas, let us look at how the word "**beast**" is used in the Scriptures. When Paul said that he "fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Corinthians 15:32), he was not saying he engaged in a carnal wrestle with literal beasts. No, for he said, "If after the manner of *men* I have fought with beasts . . ." The beasts were men. What was he fighting over? The truth, the doctrine, the faith. Titus 1:9-12 makes it clearer yet, saying: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake [remember Balaam's wages of unrighteousness?]. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil *beasts* . . ." The Cretians are referred to as "evil beasts," the same Greek word *therion* as is used in **Revelation 13:1**. Certainly, they were not literal beasts. Paul was talking about the nature of these people and the spirit behind the nature, showing how hirelings were teaching and subverting and doing great damage to people through deception. Peter described them as "natural brute beasts" (2 Peter 2:12). He was not talking about literal beasts, but of "false prophets" and "false teachers" (2 Peter 2:1), men who take on a spirit that causes them to be brutal, bestial, savage, ferocious, and uncaring for people's welfare. They are self-willed and selfish, out for only what is good for them, not considering the flock. Peter let us know that these men "have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray" (2 Peter 2:15). That is what an apostate is—someone who has forsaken the right way and gone astray.

Jude said much the same as Peter. As a matter of fact, Jude penned his epistle in A.D. 66, and the Apostle Peter penned his epistle in the proximity of A.D. 63 to A.D. 65. So they were writing at the same time, describing the same conditions. If you compare the writings of Peter with the writing of Jude, you will find that many similar expressions and analogies are used. (Compare 2 Peter 2:4-18 and Jude 4-13.) Let us look at Jude's descriptions of apostates. He said that "certain men" (verse 4) "speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts" (verse 10); they are "Raging waves of the sea" (verse 13). Jude painted a picture of this "**beast**," rising up out of the swelling and raging "**sea**" of apostasy. As we begin to identify what arose "**out of the sea**," we must realize that **Revelation 13:1** is a symbolic picture. In Revelation 8:8 we read of a great mountain, burning with fire, that went into the sea, and the fire went out. Those people quieted the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit became extinguished when the mountain went into the sea. The "**beast**" in our text came up out of a "**sea**" of apostasy, or out of the minds of men, as Revelation 8:8 describes. Jude 19 tells us, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." When people separate themselves from the truth or from a true congregation, that is a mark that a seducing spirit has overtaken them. When one quiets the Spirit, it will only be a space of time until the Spirit is gone.

John said in 1 John 2:18-19: "Little children, it is [present time] the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists [plural]; whereby we know that it is the last time. [then John began to define them] They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: [Antichrists were Church of God people who would not take the truth. They would not take instruction, casting the Word of God behind them (Psalm 50:17). These are the ones who rebelled against constituted authority. Yet, they wanted to keep practicing and professing religion.] but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

This was a religious system that arose out of darkened minds. Look at Ephesians 4:17-19, which reads: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, [why was the

ignorance in them?]) because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Their understanding was darkened because of the blindness of their hearts. According to verse 17, he was talking to Gentiles, the uncircumcised. In the Revelation this first beast is referred to as the Gentiles because they are uncircumcised. There was a transition made with Christ, and he is a Jew who is not one outwardly, but one inwardly who has the circumcision of the heart. The church is the circumcised, and the Gentiles (the uncircumcised) are false religion.

You can read of this in Revelation 11:1-2, which states: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod [the Word of God]: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months [a prophetic time symbol that figuratively represents A.D. 270-1530]." The Gentiles represent this beast because they are unclean, uncircumcised. The saved are the circumcised now. We read in Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

The change comes with Christ. The Gentiles are those who have not had that spiritual circumcision. They are not saved; they are unclean; they are not God's people. That is why this system is referred to as Gentiles. Ephesians 4:18 tells us that their understanding is darkened because of the "blindness of their heart." Why were their hearts so blinded? It was because they got past feeling. God was faithful to them. They did not want to retain God in their knowledge. Because of that, their understanding became darkened.

### The "Beast" Represents Roman Catholicism

How do we know that this is a religious system that we are viewing in Revelation, Chapter 13? Revelation 13:4 says, "And they *worshipped* the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they *worshipped* the beast . . . ." It is a system of worship. Paganism, the first system that contested the church, was defeated as an opposing force. We read of this in Revelation 12:12, "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens [or heavenly places in Christ Jesus], and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea [Protestantism and papalism]! for the devil [verse 9 tells us that is the dragon] is come down unto you [down to the sea] . . . ." When paganism was defeated, it went down into the sea. That which came up out of this sea was a mixture of apostasy and paganism. This is confirmed in Revelation 13:2. There we read that "the dragon [paganism] gave [the beast] his power, and his seat, and great authority." Verse 7 of that same chapter states, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints [just as the dragon, or paganism, did] . . . ."

The dragon came down to the sea and to the earth (Revelation 12:12), the dragon gave this beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Revelation 13:2). This beast made "war with the saints" (Revelation 13:7), just as the dragon did (Revelation 12:17). How did "the dragon . . . make war with the remnant of her seed"? He did it through the succeeding beasts of papalism and Protestantism. Revelation 13:11, speaking of this second beast, says, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth [Revelation 12:12 says 'Woe to the inhabitants of the earth' because this dragon is 'come down unto you']; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." When this Protestant beast came up, Revelation 11:7 says, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit [this Protestant beast] shall make war against them . . . ." The dragon makes war with the remnant of her seed through these succeeding systems. We read in Revelation 17:14 that "These [the eighth beast; verse 11] shall make war with the Lamb." This dragon continues to make war against the remnant of her seed. Through the first beast, second beast, and eighth beast (those successive systems), the dragon continues to make war with the saints. Not a one of these systems is any more Biblical or Christian than the dragon (pagan Rome). Every one of them is as false and devilish as pagan Rome ever was.

As we continue to identify the "beast" of **Revelation 13:1**, we find the same identifying factors in

#### The seven distinct forms or heads of government were:

- Regal Power
- Consular
- Decemvirate
- Military Tribunes
- Triumvirate
- Imperial
- Patrician

Revelation 12:3 when we are introduced to the dragon: **"seven heads and ten horns."** We found in our study of Chapter 12 that **"heads"** represent the heads of government (Isaiah 9:6). Through its history as a pagan power, Rome had seven distinct heads of government.

In the time setting of Revelation, Chapter 13, those **"heads"** were not in power, but these **"heads"** and **"horns"** are preserved as identifying factors, letting us know that what we are seeing described in Revelation, Chapter 13, is indeed something Roman. It shows identifying factors that were attributed to the Roman Empire. We have also learned that **"horns"** symbolize kingdoms (Daniel 8:20). Jeremiah 48:25 speaks of "The horn of Moab [a kingdom]." Lamentations 2:3 tells us that "He hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel [a kingdom]." According to the famous historian Machiard, when Rome declined, it divided into ten minor kingdoms.

**The ten minor kingdoms were:**

- Anglo-Saxons
- Burgundians
- Franks
- Huns
- Heruli
- Lombards
- Ostrogoths
- Sueves
- Vandals
- Visigoths

In our study of Revelation 12:3 we clearly saw by the identifying factors of the seven heads and ten horns that this dragon represents the pagan Roman Empire. Notice the employment of these same symbolic representations in our text. **Revelation 13:1** also speaks of **"seven heads and ten horns."** This reveals that this **"beast"** is also definitely identifiable as something Roman. Yet, there is one substantial distinction between Revelation 12:3 and **Revelation 13:1**. Revelation 12:3 tells us that the "seven crowns [were] upon his heads." In other words, the power of rule (the civil rule) was on the heads of government in its pagan form. But in **Revelation 13:1** the **"crowns"** are the

**"ten horns."** That tells us the **"crowns,"** the power of rule or the political power, moved from the heads of government to the ten minor kingdoms. **"Crowns"** symbolize the power to rule (2 Chronicles 23:11). After the division and decline of the Roman Empire, the power to rule went from the heads of government that Rome had in its pagan form to these **"horns,"** or these minor kingdoms.

When this **"beast"** (**Revelation 13:1**) began to rise in A.D. 270, the Roman Empire was declining and dividing into these ten minor kingdoms. Although these kingdoms were vested with the civil power, a politico-ecclesiastical system arose that had control because of the spiritual sway it held over the kings of the earth. The power of this **"beast"** (which came from the dragon) was so great, its spiritual sway was so massive, that it controlled and dominated the ten kingdoms. Not only that, but it had control of the kings of the earth. Revelation 18:3 tells us, "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her . . ." Then we read in Revelation 19:19, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Certainly there are more spiritual applications here, but superficially it confirms this truth.

Let us establish beyond any fear of contradiction the identity of this **"beast."** We have already proved by the identifying factors of the **"heads"** and the **"horns"** that it definitely is something Roman. But it is a different form of Romanism, because the **"crowns"** (the power) have moved from the **"heads"** to the **"horns."** What Roman feature can be identified? We read in Revelation 13:18: "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man . . ." One man best represents this beast.

There was not a separate numerical system until the Arabs devised one in the tenth century (A.D. 1000). Until that time, the alphabetical system also doubled as a numerical system; the letters served as numbers. Revelation 13:18 tells us that "the number of the beast . . . is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." If you were to take the Latin inscription that is on the mitre of the popes of Rome (Vicarius Filii Dei) and ascribe numerals to the Latin letters, you would come up with a total of 666. Thus, this number (666) is the number of a man. The man who wears that inscription on the mitre, or on the

V	5	F	0
I	1	I	1
C	100	L	50
A	0	I	1
R	0	I	1
I	1	D	500
U	5	E	0
S	0	I	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>554</b>
<b>Grand Total (112 + 554)</b>		<b>666</b>	

crown, is the Pope of Rome.

**Revelation 13:1** says that "**upon his heads the name of blasphemy.**" How could the words inscribed on the Pope's mitre be blasphemy? That inscription "Vicarius Filii Dei" means "Vicar of the Son of God." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines a *vicar* as "a person who acts in place of another." Christ has not given His place to any other; He has not abdicated the throne. He is still the Head of the church. He has not given His position to any other. To claim otherwise is blasphemy, and they have done just that. As a matter of fact, Pope Leo XIII said, "We hold upon the earth the place of God the Almighty." That is blasphemy!

I trust it is becoming clear that this "**beast**" is the religious system of Roman Catholicism. It might be well to make mention that I am speaking of systems, not individuals. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood . . ." (Ephesians 6:12). We are not warring against people, but we are speaking out, as Paul said, in "defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17). We are speaking out against religious systems that are duping, deceiving, and damning multiplied millions of souls.

This system of Roman Catholicism is not a Christian system. It did not come from God out of Heaven, as the true church did, but it came up out of the minds of apostate men. It is a product of a combination of apostate men and the external power that Constantine gave it when he supposedly made Christianity the state religion. This is when, according to Revelation 12:14, the woman had to go "into the wilderness" (out of public view) because this system is motivated by a devilish spirit just as much as the pagan system was (Revelation 16:13-14). According to Revelation 13:7, because this beast imbibed the spirit of the dragon, "it was given unto him to make war with the saints."

In our next study we will look further at this system and its nature. This "**beast**" is not something that is rising up out of the sea in the future. It arose back in the annals of history, but we are still facing the consequences and the spirit of it yet today. We are going to spend more time talking about its nature and some of the atrocities it perpetrated. The question may arise, why spend so much time studying this system? From the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 33) until today is a period of almost 2000 years. During those 2000 years of Christian history, 1260 years were almost exclusively dominated by this "**beast.**" The effects of those 1260 years remain yet today.

This is why it is so necessary to understand what gave rise to this system, the spirit that motivates it, and what type of nature it has. We need to understand what it did in bygone days, because the spirit of that "**beast**" has never changed. That spirit is still the same today. We must study these truths so that we can understand the spirits that are loosed and working in our day. We cannot only have victory over those systems, but we can also have victory over the spirits that produced those systems.

## The Nature of the Beast and the Source of His Authority

**Revelation 13:1** And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

**2** And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

### The Beast's Features Are an Allusion to Daniel's Vision

In this passage of the Revelation, John revealed the source from which this "beast" or system arose—the "sea" of apostasy. We found in an earlier study that this is the same "sea" which "a great mountain burning with fire was cast into" (Revelation 8:8). The Apostle Paul taught that the Second Advent would not come except there came "a falling away first" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). The Greek word for *falling away* is *apostasia*, and it comes from two words: *apo*, which means "away," and *stasis*, which means "a standing." In other words, it means "away from a standing." *Webster's Dictionary* defines it as "an abandoning of what one believed in as a faith." Another definition is "a defection from truth, to revolt, to forsake." In papyri documents it is used to speak politically of rebels. We see the very apostasy Paul warned of displayed symbolically in our text. The "beast" (papalism) rose out of the "sea" of apostasy. In other words, it came out of the minds of apostate men.

In this study we will focus mainly on **verse 2**. This verse describes the nature of the "beast" and the source of its "great authority." Here John began to describe the characteristics of this "beast," and in so doing he revealed its nature. These descriptive features are of a "leopard," a "bear," a "lion," and a "dragon." As in much of the Revelation, these are an allusion back to the Old Testament prophetic writings. These descriptive features are reminiscent of what can be read in prophecy.

In Daniel 7:1-8 we are introduced to the same specific beast characteristics as are portrayed in our text. Daniel received what he described as "a dream and visions of his head upon his bed" (verse 1). Daniel told us in verse 2 what he saw: "the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." What do these winds represent? Daniel 2:35 also speaks of this wind, stating that "the wind [singular] carried them [the broken pieces of the image] away." What does "the wind" in the singular represent? In His night discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus said in John 3:6-8: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." When "the wind" is used in the singular, it represents the Spirit of God.

In Daniel 7:2 Daniel said he saw "the four winds of the heaven." "Winds" in the plural represent spirits. We see this employed in Revelation 7:1 as well. There John penned, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth [an earthen ministry, a manmade ministry], holding the four winds of the earth [in other words, the spirits that motivated false religion], that the wind [the Holy Spirit] should not blow on the earth . . . ." They did not want the true Spirit of God working down in their systems. When Daniel saw these four winds in Daniel 7:2, the next scene he described (verse 3) was "four great beasts [which] came up from the sea [or out of the minds of men]." These systems, or kingdoms, arose. Just as winds or spirits produced these New Testament beasts, it was spirits that produced the Old Testament systems or kingdoms. Whether they be temporal kingdoms or spiritual kingdoms, there is a spirit behind every one of them.

Notice the description of these beasts. (It is not our intention in this study to intimately study the truth contained in these detailed descriptions, but rather to identify what they represented and what bearing that has on the nature of this "beast" described in our text in **Revelation 13:2**. For a more detailed study, please see my book *Daniel and Revelation Texts Examined*.) In Daniel 7:3 they are described as "four great beasts." Daniel said in verse 4 that "The first was like a lion." In verse 5 he described the "second, like to a bear." Then verse 6 tells us that "another, [was] like a leopard." The last description, in verse 7, was of "a fourth beast . . . [that] had ten horns." The exact same

characteristics are described of the first "beast" in **Revelation 13:2**. It says, "**And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon [which had the ten horns] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.**"

It is important that we identify what these four beasts that Daniel envisioned represent, because the nature of what they represent is incorporated in this first "beast" (**Revelation 13:2**). In Daniel 7:17 we read, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [the *Septuagint* says 'four kingdoms'], which shall arise out of the earth." These four beasts that Daniel saw in his vision represent four kingdoms. This is confirmed in Daniel 7:23, which states, "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth . . ." The four beasts are kingdoms or successive world empires.

### The Four Kingdoms

Let us identify these kingdoms. Daniel 7:4 tells us, "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings . . ." The lion is known familiarly as the king of beasts, and the eagle is also known as the king of birds. It flies the highest of any creature. Babylon, the city of gold, was known as the kingdom of kingdoms. When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he saw four metallic substances representing the same four kingdoms. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:37-38: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings . . . Thou art this head of gold." This was known as the golden empire; it was known as the kingdom of kingdoms.

In the Scriptures a lion is associated with kings. Proverbs 19:12 reads, "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion." Our text speaks of "**his mouth as the mouth of a lion.**" That which came out of his mouth was fierce; it struck fear in the hearts of its prey. Proverbs 20:2 tells us that "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion." Habakkuk 1:6-8 says: "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." Who is this that flies as the eagle? Verse 6 tells us it is the Chaldeans. The Chaldeans were the Babylonians. Chaldean merely means the type of people they were, but the kingdom was the Babylonian Empire. This is clearly stated in Daniel 5:30, which says, "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." Daniel 7:1 tells us "Belshazzar [was] king of Babylon." So when Habakkuk described one that would "fly as the eagle," he was speaking of the Babylonian Empire.

When Daniel 7:4 states that the first kingdom "had eagle's wings," it is letting us know that the Babylonian Empire soared higher and farther; it rose higher to the greatest preeminence of any world empire. If you study Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, you will find with each succeeding kingdom the quality of the metallic substance became inferior to the one before. It went from gold to silver to brass to iron. Superior of all was the head of gold, that Babylonian Empire. It soared higher, flew higher, did more, and was greater than any of the succeeding empires. Looking further into it, verse 4 says, ". . . I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." This describes exactly what occurred to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel warned Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:32-33: "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." Nebuchadnezzar had the "eagles' feathers" and the "birds' claws," but the wings were plucked. He was not flying high now.

After seven years Nebuchadnezzar was "made [to] stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it" (Daniel 7:4). You can read of it in Daniel 4:36-37. After the seven times were passed over him, after his wings were plucked, after he had learned his lesson, Nebuchadnezzar then became humble. He received a man's heart. The Scriptures plainly reveal that this first beast, like a lion that had eagles' wings, represents the Babylonian Empire.

Describing the second beast, Daniel 7:5 says, "And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour



much flesh." This represents the succeeding kingdom, the Medo-Persian Empire. When Belshazzar, king of Babylon (Daniel 7:1), was slain, "Darius the Median took the kingdom" (Daniel 5:31). There we see a direct succession from the Babylonian Empire to the Medo-Persian Empire. This beast is said to have raised up on one side, letting us know it had two sides; but one side became more predominant. Look at Daniel 8:20 where Daniel explained the vision concerning the ram and the he-goat: "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia [the Medo-Persian Empire]." Daniel 8:3 tells us that "the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last." In other words, one aspect of that dual kingdom was more predominant than the other, and that was the Persian kingdom. The "three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it" are a reference to the fact that just as a literal bear crushes something in its teeth, the Medo-Persian Empire crushed something. According to the historian Kliefoth, when the Medo-Persians came in to overcome the Babylonian Empire, they crushed the three main provinces of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, which were the main composition of the strength of the Babylonian Empire.

In Daniel 7:6 the third beast is spoken of as a leopard with four wings and four heads. This represents the third world empire, the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great. Why is it likened to a leopard, especially a leopard with four wings? The Babylonian Empire had two wings—the wings of an eagle. They soared higher, because an eagle can fly higher than any other winged creature. This beast had four wings. They were the wings of a fowl. The quality was not as great. It did not soar as high, but it had four wings as opposed to two. It was much swifter; it arose much faster. A leopard is known for its swiftness. It is one of the fastest animals, known for being most fleet of foot.

Alexander the Great conquered all of the then-known world in five years by the age of thirty-two, a feat that has never yet been paralleled in the annals of history. This is why the empire is likened unto a leopard. This is why the empire is described as having four wings. It moved much more swiftly than preceding empires. After all this, tradition has it that Alexander sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. He died the death of a drunken sot at the tender age of thirty-three. Thus, he fulfilled the Scripture in Proverbs 16:32, where the wise man said, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Alexander conquered the world, but he could not conquer his own passions and desires.

After Alexander's death we read that "the beast had also four heads" (Daniel 7:6). The kingdom was divided amongst Alexander's four generals. (It is important to understand the historical sequence of events and what lies behind these events to understand what is being portrayed to us in the symbolism incorporated in **Revelation 13:2**.) We read in Daniel 11:1-4: "Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia [remember, the Medo-Persian Empire was a dual kingdom]; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

In this Scripture reading, we have a direct succession, historically speaking. After Darius, the Mede (verse 1), there were three kings (verse 2). Those three kings were Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius Hystapes. The fourth king (Xerxes) is mentioned in verse 2. Then verse 3 tells us "a mighty king shall stand up." That is speaking of Alexander the Great. Continuing to describe Alexander the Great, verse 4 states, "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds." After Alexander died, the Grecian Empire was divided amongst his four generals. They were Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus. When verse 4 says "and not to his posterity," it is telling us that none of Alexander's family became rulers over the Grecian Empire. Thus far, we have come in direct chronological succession: the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, and the Grecian Empire.

### **The Four Beasts in Daniel's Vision**

Now we have come to the fourth beast, spoken of in Daniel 7:7. It reads, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." The fact that it is identified as having ten horns lets us know that it is the same thing we saw in

Revelation 12:3: "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns." It represents pagan Rome. The only distinction is that Daniel seeing it in his vision lets us know that this particular beast was pre-Christian era pagan Rome. That same entity, or power, was also the first hideous representation portrayed in Revelation, Chapter 12, in this new dispensation. It is the dragon, or pagan Rome, in the Christian era.

When Daniel gave the understanding of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel, Chapter 2), he revealed that this fourth kingdom would be in power when the stone was cut out of the mountain, or when Jesus Christ came on the stage of action. Luke 2:1 tells us what power that was: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Caesar Augustus was the Roman Emperor. The power in force when Christ made His Advent was the Roman Empire. So, we are coming right down chronologically through the sequence of time. We find in Daniel 7:8, "I considered the horns [the 'ten horns' that made up the pagan Roman Empire; verse 7], and, behold, there came up among them [among the ten horns] another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." A "little horn" came up right among those ten horns that comprised Roman paganism. In other words, it came right up out of paganism. Notice the characteristics attributed to this "little horn." It had "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." This is also seen in Daniel 7:20-21: "And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." Then verse 25 says, "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High . . . ."

In these verses in Daniel we see great similarities through the expressions concerning this papal beast that we find recorded in Revelation, Chapter 13. Let us compare the expressions:

"a mouth speaking great things" (Daniel 7:8) "a mouth that spake very great things" (Daniel 7:20)	"there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things" (Revelation 13:5)
"I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints" (Daniel 7:21)	"it was given unto him to make war with the saints" (Revelation 13:7)
"time and times and the dividing of time" (Daniel 7:25)	"power was given unto him to continue forty and two months" (Revelation 13:5)
Both of these last two Scriptures are speaking of the same prophetic time period (A.D. 270-1530).	

We have established that the fourth beast (Daniel 7) had ten horns, representing the pagan Roman Empire. Our text tells us in **Revelation 13:2** that "**the dragon** [paganism] **gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.**" There are two aspects to this "**power**" and "**seat**" and "**great authority:**" the civil aspect and the spiritual aspect. This beast is again a politico-ecclesiastical system. Let us view the civil aspect first. Look again at Daniel 7:8, which reads, "I considered the horns [the ten horns], and, behold, there came up among them [something Roman] another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots . . . ." The ten horns are described in Daniel 7:24 as "ten kings that shall arise." This occurred in A.D. 270 at the division and decline of the pagan Roman Empire. The rest of Daniel 7:24 reads, ". . . and another [this little horn] shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings."

The "three kings" were the three temporal kingdoms that were overthrown to give this politico-ecclesiastical system its civil power. The three kingdoms in Italy that were overthrown to give the Holy See of Rome and papalism their civil power were: the Heruli, the Ostragoths, and the Lombards. The ten horns represented ten minor kingdoms, but this little horn, representing the popery, was more stout than his fellows. When it rose up, "three of the first horns [were] plucked up by the roots." These were kingdoms that were subdued by papal Rome to give it its civil authority. This "**beast**" in **Revelation 13:2** literally received "**his power**" and "**his seat**" and his "**great authority**" (politically, or temporally) from the "**dragon**" (paganism).

Let us look further at the spiritual aspect. Revelation 12:12b tells us, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! [Why?] for the devil [the dragon; Revelation 12:9] is come down unto you . . . ." Remember also that when "the earth [or Constantine] helped the woman," he "swallowed up the flood" (Revelation 12:16), showing us that supposedly Christian Rome (the Holy Roman Empire) imbibed the very spirit of the dragon. This reveals that this system, the first "**beast**" in our text, in reality, is nothing more than paganism in a supposed Christian garb. The letter to the Pergamene age is the same period of time (A.D. 530-1530) in which this "**beast**" is ruling. This is the "thousand years" (Revelation 20:4) that many people are looking to arrive sometime in the future. As we look at the letter to Pergamos, keep in mind that these seven letters correspond with the seven periods of the Gospel Day. We read in Revelation 2:12-13: "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

The phrase "Satan's seat" in verse 13 is rendered as "throne" in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*. As a matter of fact, the word "**seat**" in our text is also the same Greek word, which means "throne." "Satan's seat" indicates his throne, or the position from which he rules. What type of rule was it? What type of a kingdom was it during this rule of the beast? Revelation 16:10 tells us, "And the fifth angel [this is a vial angel in the seventh-seal period of time] poured out his vial upon the seat ['throne'; *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*] of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness." This kingdom produced a dark age, a time when the Word and the Spirit had to prophesy clothed in sackcloth and ashes, mourning over the conditions. It was a time when the Bible was chained to the pulpit and was written in Latin, a language the common masses could not understand. The true church had to go underground, into the catacombs and caves, and there they lived and reigned with Christ during this period. They were out of public view, because the prevailing condition was a dark age. This is why it is referred to as the Dark Ages. This was a product of apostasy, and it brought about a spiritual eclipse, a time of darkness.

Amos prophesied of this in Amos 8:9, saying, "And it shall come to pass in that day [a prophetic expression of this Gospel Day], saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." A spiritual eclipse took place right at noon. The point of the day that should have been the brightest was darkened. What kind of darkness was it? Amos 8:11 states, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." It was a famine of the Word of God. Revelation 6:6 tells us when this spirit of apostasy began to work, the Word of God began to be rationed out at starvation rates, causing famine in the land.

Isaiah prophesied of this famine as well in Isaiah 21:11-12: "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night . . ." The morning is not followed by night, but here it was. The earth was darkened in the clear day. Right after the morning time was a dark age; it was night, the dark night of papalism, or Roman Catholicism. It was a time of darkness. We read in Isaiah 63:18, "The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary."

### Sitting in Satan's Seat

Let us look a little more at this "**seat**" and see from where "**the beast**" derived his spiritual "**authority**." In 2 Thessalonians 2:2-4 the Apostle Paul wrote: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away [the Greek word is *apostasia*, or an apostasy] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God *sitteth in the temple of God*, shewing himself that he is God." There is Satan's seat, the throne from which this kingdom of darkness is ruled. It is ruled over by the office of the popes of Rome. (Again, we are not speaking against individuals, but against a system. We are not even speaking against the Pope as an individual, but against the religious system that he represents. The Bible calls it a kingdom of darkness.)

How does "**the beast**" derive his spiritual authority? Second Thessalonians 2:9-10 tells us: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan [that is the one sitting in Satan's seat] with all power and signs and lying wonders,

And with all deceivableness . . . ." They reign by the powers of darkness and deception. They hold rule over the people "with all power and signs and lying wonders." In 2 Timothy 4:3-4 the Apostle Paul called it "fables." Fables and fear are what holds the people. (We will study more concerning these things when we study "a mouth speaking great things"; Revelation 13:5.) These fables, or as 1 Timothy 4:1 speaks of them—"doctrines of devils," is what was produced by the spirit that produced this system. That is how they derive their "**authority**" and by what "**power**" they hold their people.

As we look closer at the nature of this "**beast**," we find that it incorporated the nature and characteristics of all of the heathen, paganistic empires of the past. In no way is it, as 2 Peter 1:4 says, "partakers of the divine nature." The nature of this "**beast**" is certainly anything but divine. It is heathen, pagan, vicious, corrupt, and dark. It is a product of the minds of apostate men. **Revelation 13:2** tells us that the most pronounced feature of this "**beast**" is that it "**was like unto a leopard**." What is a leopard's most familiar markings? Its spots. As a matter of fact, the Scripture says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" (Jeremiah 13:23). I have been told that if you were to take the fur off of a leopard, its skin has spots. Also, if you were to dissect it, its bones have spots. There are spots all the way through. Spiritually speaking, spots denote sin, flesh, and worldliness, the opposite of holiness and purity. There are no positive connotations with the word "spots" in the Scriptures.

The apostolic admonition to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:14 was to be "without spot." Peter gave the same admonition in 2 Peter 3:14, saying, ". . . without spot, and blameless." In 2 Peter 2:13b Peter, speaking of the rise of apostasy and particularly of apostates, likened them to "Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you." Jude's epistle likens them much the same way. Verse 12 reads, "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." Jude described apostates, those who have given vent to the flesh, as "spotted by the flesh" (verse 23). James 1:27 states, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The spots are worldliness. When Ephesians 5:27 speaks of the church, it says, "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot . . ." This spotted beast ("**a leopard**") is the opposite of holiness, the opposite of truth, the opposite of being unspotted by the world and unspotted by the flesh.

The "**leopard**," representing the Grecian Empire, is noted for its swiftness. Just as Alexander swiftly conquered the then-known world, Roman Catholicism quickly conquered the religious realm as well. We read of this in Isaiah 63:18. There the Prophet Isaiah said, "The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while . . ." This system arose so quickly that Amos 8:9 said the sun would go down at noon. Isaiah 1:21 says, "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" It produced a radical change. It produced an untimely eclipse. It went from a city wherein lodged judgment to one full of murderers.

In the proximity of A.D. 65-68 Paul preached and wrote that a system would arise which, according to 1 Timothy 4:3, would be "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." By A.D. 100 John spoke of this system and those who had already fallen prey to its spirit until preeminence and excommunication had become a practice. He wrote in 3 John 9-10: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." This system, built on preeminence and excommunication, was already in full sway by A.D. 100. This move was as swift as "**a leopard**" (**verse 2**). In Alexander and his generals, we see the antitype of the popes and their cardinals. One man was supreme; he was ruthless, holding absolute authority. Though they could conquer the world (and Roman Catholicism did exactly that; Revelation 13:8), they could not conquer their own spirit. Likewise, Alexander conquered the world but not his own spirit.

Let us move now from the literal over to get the spiritual significance of what laid behind these kingdoms and how that nature and characteristics were incorporated right in Roman Catholicism. In Proverbs 25:28 we read, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." Revelation 18:2 lets us know this system is broken down: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." It is broken down; it does not have walls. Isaiah 26:1 tells us what the walls represent: "salvation will God appoint for walls." This city does not have the wall of salvation.

Just as Alexander could not control his fleshly desires, Roman Catholicism could not control theirs either.

Alexander the Great was a drunk, and so is this system of Roman Catholicism. Revelation 17:2 tells us, "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." The "her" is the woman, the mother, Roman Catholicism. We see this clearly in Revelation 17:4-6, which states: "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken . . ." Alexander was a physical drunk; Roman Catholicism was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

### Changing Times and Laws

Continuing with our text, we find that the "feet" of this "beast" were "as the feet of a bear." This "bear" refers back to Daniel 7:5, which speaks of Medo-Persia. What did this kingdom do? We read in Daniel 6:6-9 that they established manmade statues and decrees that were contrary to the law of God. Tying this in with our lesson, when **Revelation 13:2** speaks of "the feet of a bear," it is talking about the feet with which one walks. Roman Catholicism walked according to manmade decrees and laws that also were contrary to the law of God.

The Medo-Persian kingdom crafted a decree that prohibited people from praying to God; they had to ask of the king instead. It is the same way with Roman Catholicism and their manmade laws. They teach their people that they cannot access God directly, but they can only access God by praying to Mary or through one of the saints. When Daniel violated the Medo-Persian law, it made him a candidate for martyrdom (Daniel 6:12). Roman Catholicism operates in the same way. When people violated the teachings of this system and that which came from its head (the king of this kingdom of darkness), they made martyrs of them just as quickly as those did back in those Old Testament kingdoms. It is the same spirit, the same characteristics, the same nature. Jesus said in Matthew 15:9, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Daniel 6:8 tells us, "Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing . . ." In other words, they changed the law. We read in Daniel 7:25 that papalism thought "to change times and laws." Why did they think to change times and laws back in Daniel's day, in the Medo-Persian Empire? It was so they could get rid of their enemies and also to control what occurred. Likewise, this papal "beast" changed times and laws to get rid of their enemies and to control what occurred. One of the ways they got rid of their enemies was to change times and laws, taking in things that were pagan and making them supposedly Christian. In this manner they could bring pagans right into the supposed church, thus eliminating their enemies, eliminating the opposition. By letting pagans keep their festivals, their customs, and their habits when bringing them into the supposed church, they eliminated paganism as an enemy.

Let us look at how they changed times or laws. Luke 2:1, speaking of the birth of Christ, says that "there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." This decree was not just a taxing; it was more of a census and an enrollment. Because of this, it was done in a month when men could travel. It was done after the harvest. In an agricultural society men could not be pulled out of their fields without dire consequences. This census was done after the harvest, but before the winter. It had to be a time when travel was favorable. Jesus said in Matthew 24:20, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter . . ." Winter was not commodious to travel. People did not travel in the winter. Hence, Christ was not born in the winter.

In Luke 2:8 we read that there were "shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" when Jesus was born. Shepherds did not stay in the field keeping watch over their flock any later than October 15. However, Roman Catholicism has changed the date of Christ's birth to December 25. Why? The pagans used December 25 to celebrate the birth of Sol, the sun god. To accommodate the pagans, they changed that date, that time. That which is called Christmas came from Christ Mass, a Roman Catholic practice that came out of the Dark Ages to accommodate pagans.

We can see another change when looking at Christ's death and resurrection. Look at what Christ said in Matthew 12:40, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." It is commonly taught that Christ was crucified on Good Friday and that He resurrected on Easter Sunday. But you cannot get "three days and three nights" from Friday afternoon until Sunday

morning. There is no truth in that whatsoever. The Scriptures are very clear concerning what time He was crucified. Matthew 26:17 states, "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?" You can read in John's Gospel when they ate the Passover. Then from there they left the upper room. In Chapters 14, 15, and 16, Jesus did the last teaching. In Chapter 17 He was in Gethsemane praying, and He was seized in Chapter 18. From there He went on to Calvary. This reveals that Jesus was crucified at the time of Passover.

When is Passover? Passover is the same time every year: "the fourteenth day of the first month" (Leviticus 23:5). Yet, Easter continues to change. That is because the western world operates on what is known as a Gregorian calendar, instituted by Roman Catholicism. Popery even changed the calendar we use. The following are some excerpts from *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*: "The Gregorian calendar is the most widely used calendar in the world. A modification of the Julian Calendar [which came from Julius Caesar], it was first proposed by the Calabrian doctor Aloysius Lilius, and was decreed by Pope Gregory XIII, for whom it was named, on February 24, 1582 via papal bull *Inter gravissimas* [which is Latin, meaning 'in the gravest concern']." Much of this same history is recorded by *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, which also states, "The new Gregorian calendar, introduced on February 24, 1582 . . . was welcomed by . . . astronomers . . . and . . . many Protestants saw it as the work of the antichrist and refused to adopt it."

Concerning the lunar aspects, this *Wikipedia* article says: "The Catholic Church maintained a tabular lunar calendar which was primarily to calculate the date of Easter and the lunar calendar required reform as well." Under the section noted as "History," under the subheading of "Gregorian Reform," it says: "The motivation of the Catholic Church in adjusting the calendar was to celebrate Easter at the time it thought the First Council of Nicaea had agreed upon in 325 [the Council of Nicaea was convened by Constantine I]. . . . In Rome, Easter was not allowed to fall later than 21 April, that being the day of the Parilia or birthday of Rome and a pagan festival. The first day of the Easter moon could fall no earlier than 5 March and no later than 2 April. Easter was the Sunday after the 15<sup>th</sup> day of this moon, whose 14<sup>th</sup> day was allowed to precede the equinox." (This historical record can be validated from a number of reference sources, among them *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. I merely cited *Wikipedia* since it combines salient facts together in a more readily referenced manner.) The way that Easter is calculated comes straight from paganism. Kenneth C. Davis, in an article entitled "Don't Know Much About Easter Traditions," wrote that it was Pope Gregory I who allowed people to keep pagan symbols, such as eggs, if they were recast in Christian terms. Again, Daniel 7:25 says that they "think to change times and laws." These are just a couple of the times that papalism has changed.

What else about the nature of a bear should we consider? A bear tries to use brute force to hold its territory. **Revelation 13:2** tells us that this system has "**the feet of a bear.**" Revelation 11:2 says that during this same "forty and two months," or 1260 years, they would "tread underfoot . . . the holy city." Its claws are sharp and deadly, and so was this system. Last of all, **Revelation 13:2** says, it has "**the mouth of a lion.**" Daniel 7:4 tells us that is Babylon. The lion is the king of beasts, and the system of Roman Catholicism is the king of beasts. It has been stronger, reigned longer (of the 1979 years since Pentecost, they have had power for 1260 of them), and as a predator it has devoured more souls than all of the other beasts.

What was literal Babylon? It was one of the seven wonders of the then-known world. When John saw this system in the position it would hold in our day, he said, "When I saw her, I wondered" (Revelation 17:6). What was literal Babylon's nature? In Daniel 2:38 it was referred to as gold. It was a golden kingdom, fabulously wealthy, and so is Roman Catholicism. Revelation 18:15 reads, "The merchants of these things, which were made rich . . . ."

Literal Babylon worshiped idols. We read in Daniel 3:1 that "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold." In verse 5 the people were commanded to "fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up." This kingdom worshiped idols, and Roman Catholicism worships idols as well. Back in Daniel 3:6 it was worship or die. During the Dark Ages (A.D. 530-1530) the cry was, "Be Catholic, or die." They had the nature of a lion, a predator, one that devoured the life of others. It was an era of pronounced martyrdom. Our text calls it "**the mouth of a lion.**" A lion strikes fear and intimidation with its roar. It commands attention. Through the beastly teachings of this system, they intimidate and strike fear in the hearts of their adherents. Then the "**mouth**" devours the life of its prey.

I trust the nature of this "**beast**" is becoming clear. This system is not a Christian system, but rather wholly pagan in its composition, history, and operation. We need to understand these truths for the following reasons: (1) to see how

we have arrived where we are today in the religious realm; (2) to not sympathize with this dastardly devilish system; (3) to be able to "always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15) and to help them to get out of such a system. Please keep in mind that we are not speaking against individuals. Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood . . ." We are speaking about a system that rose up in opposition to truth, and it is still in opposition to truth today. This system has duped and damned millions of souls and is continuing to do so. It is important that we understand its origin, its nature, and its character. Only then can we truly be used of God to bring souls "out of the darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

## The Worship, Blasphemies, and War of the Beast

**Revelation 13:3** And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

**4** And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

**5** And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

**6** And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

**7** And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

**8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**9** If any man have an ear, let him hear.

**10** He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

### Roman Catholicism Is a Kingdom of Darkness

In prior studies we identified the "beast" (Revelation 13:1) as representing the system of papal Rome, or Roman Catholicism. (As we continue this study, keep in mind that we are not wrestling against human components; we are not warring against individuals; Ephesians 6:12. We are not against people, but we are speaking of a system that is contrary to the sound teachings of God's eternal Word. This is a system that is wreaking havoc in the minds of men, duping and deceiving and damning countless souls with their darkness.)

The battle is over the faith (Jude 3). Thus, the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:17, ". . . I am set for the defence of the gospel." It is important that we study these truths and expose these systems in "the defence of the gospel." In this manner, we are defending truth and exposing error. One cannot stand for truth and proclaim truth without exposing everything that is in opposition to truth or everything that is erroneous. We read in 1 John 4:6: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." The utter simplicity of it is that it is either truth or error; there is no in-between. While the truth will set you free (John 8:32), error will do just the opposite. It brings bondage to men. In this study we will look at the powers of "**the beast**" that held people in bondage through the Dark Ages. It was spiritual darkness that bound them. Thus, the need of sounding forth the Word of God, for light is the only thing that can expel darkness.

We read in Matthew 4:23 that there is only one Gospel—"the gospel of the kingdom." However, the "spirit of error" (1 John 4:6) often presents its teachings as the Gospel as well. The Apostle Paul warned the Galatian brethren against this very thing. In Galatians 1:6 he described it as "another gospel." Then in verse 7 he clarified it, calling it a perverted gospel. What we see portrayed in our text is the by-product or the results of "another gospel," or a perverted gospel. It is "another spirit" that gives rise to "another Jesus" and "another Gospel" (2 Corinthians 11:4).

The papal beast that we are studying is a combination of that which rose out of the minds of men who were apostates but desired to have "a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:5), a supposed Christian garb in which to entrap their teachings. In their foolish, darkened minds they incorporated the spirit, tenants, and practices of paganism (the dragon). Our prior study of Revelation 13:2 revealed that "the dragon gave him [the beast] his power, and his seat [the Greek word actually means 'throne'; that from which he rules]." Christ addressed the Pergamene Age during the zenith of this dark age in Revelation 2:13, saying, "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is [*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'throne'] . . . ." We also read of this in 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2. After Paul wrote in verse 3 of that "falling away" (the Greek word is *apostasia*, an apostasy), verse 4 states, "Who opposeth and exalteth



himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth [there is Satan's seat] in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." The one who occupies Satan's seat is the one who ruled over the dark age. Even yet today, when the Pope speaks in official (and supposedly) infallible capacity, he speaks what is known in Latin as *ex cathedra*, which means "from his seat." When he thus speaks, his teachings, or his issuances, are official and supposedly infallible.

In Revelation 16:10 we see what type of a seat, or throne, he has and what type of a kingdom he rules over. It says, "And the fifth angel [this is the vial angel] poured out his vial upon the seat [or throne] of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness." There is no light at all in Roman Catholicism. It is a kingdom of darkness. We will study more about that darkness when we look at the details of how this "beast" exhibits "power," what type of "power" it exercised, and how it held the people during the Dark Ages.

### The "Beast" Causes Ones to Worship the "Dragon"



Pantheon

As we view **verse 4** of our text, which states, "**And they worshipped the dragon** [paganism] . . .," let us look at the question: How does papalism fulfill this Scripture? In other words, how does papalism cause people to worship the dragon, or paganism? Turn to one of the most familiar injunctions in the Scriptures, the Ten Commandments. The second commandment is found in Exodus 20:4-5: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them . . ." Does "**the beast**" violate this age-old command and the moral principle behind it? To find the answer, it is needful that we take a look at history. An old, heathen temple, known as the Pantheon, stands in the city of Rome. It was

built by Marcus Agrippa and dedicated in 27 B.C. to "all the gods." (*Pan* means "many"; *the* means "god"; thus, many gods. They were pantheistic.) Within this Pantheon were all of the various national pagan deities and idols. When people came to Rome to conduct their commerce, they could go into the Pantheon and look until they found the idol of their national deity. All of the idols of the various nationalities were therein. Visitors to Rome could go in, bow before them, pay homage to them, light a candle, and go through whatever motions of religiosity their custom dictated.

In A.D. 610 this heathen temple was changed by Pope Boniface IV to bear the inscription "to the blessed virgin and all of the saints." It was the same building, statues, idols, and practices. It was the same altar smoking with incense and the same holy waters. People bowed down in front of the same idols that the pagans had worshiped. Roman Catholicism had taken the national gods and supposedly christened them "saints" and had changed their names. That is one manner in which this beast caused people to worship the dragon.



Priest of Dagon

*The History of Romanism*, pages 109-110, tells us this: "In the year 63 B.C. after Rome had conquered the world and instituted its authority, Julius Caesar became both its civil and religious leader and was officially recognized as Pontifex Maximus. That was the title given to Julius Caesar and to all the succeeding pagan Roman Emperors, as head not only of state, but as head of the state religion: Pontifex Maximus." *Pontifex Maximus* was a Latin term that was given to all of the pagan Caesars and rulers. In A.D. 533 John II, Bishop of Rome, was denoted as *Pontifex Maximus*, the same title as the old heathen rulers. All of this is historically verifiable. So, even the papal office's name is pagan.

If we study the papal attire, we will find another manner in which "**the beast**" causes people to worship the dragon. Let us consider the mitre that the popes of Rome wear. We read in 1 Samuel 5:2 that "the ark of God" was brought "into the house of Dagon," the god of the Philistines. If you were to study historical records, you would find that Dagon was a fish god—a half-man, half-fish type of creature. In fact, the word *dag* means "fish." Because Dagon was a fish god, the "priests of Dagon"

(verse 5) wore a fish as a cap. They would take a fish, which had all its entrails removed, and put it on their heads. The fish's open mouth would be placed on the head of the priest with its body draped down their backs. That was how the priests of Dagon attired themselves. That was their mitre.

If you look at a current picture of the Pope today, you will see that he, too, wears the supposed "fisherman's cap." The open top and the streamers coming down his back are just like the mitre of the old priests of Dagon. Not only did this beast incorporate pagan idols into their worship and a pagan title for their leader, but the very vesture that the popes of Rome wear in official capacity also come from paganism.



Where did mother and child worship originate? It was not in the Scriptures. Christ did not exalt Mary. This is plain in Luke, Chapter 11. There He reproveth ones who tried to exalt Mary. Verses 27-28 read: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked [this is very similar to some of the verbiage incorporated in the prayer amongst Roman Catholicism, known as the 'Hail Mary']. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Mary enjoyed something physical, but those who keep the Word of God and get a born-again experience enjoy something far superior; they enjoy something spiritual. She may have experienced a physical birth, but we have a spiritual birth! The words of Jesus, "Yea rather," make it clear that He certainly never advocated Mary worship. (Also, read Matthew 12:46-50.) In 1 Timothy 2:5 the Apostle told us that there is only "one mediator between God and men," and that is "the man [not the woman] Christ Jesus." It is not Mary, but Christ. He is the mediator; there is no mediatrix.

Mother and child worship has its origin with the dragon (paganism). In Genesis, Chapter 10, we find a record of the first kingdom in the Bible, the kingdom of Babel. Verses 8-10 read: "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. [That sounds harmless enough at casual reading in our English language, but that expression 'before the LORD' had a hostile meaning. It meant he set himself in a superior position to everyone and everything, including the Lord. He set himself 'before' the Lord.] And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel."



Semiramis and Tammuz

Nimrod had a wife whose name was Semiramis, and after Nimrod died his wife conceived an illegitimate child. She named him Tammuz and said that he was Nimrod reborn. She declared that she and her child were both divine. Thus began many expressions such as holy mother and mother of God. Those expressions had their beginnings with Semiramis and Tammuz of ancient Babylon. One famous Catholic writer, Alfonsus Liquori, wrote, "Prayers were much more effectual when addressed to Mary rather than to Christ." He was canonized as a saint by Pope Gregory XIV in 1839 and declared to be a "doctor of the Catholic Church" by Pope Pius IX.

This worship of mother and child is also spoken of in Ezekiel, Chapter 8. Israel was in a deplorable spiritual state, and Ezekiel was taken through the hole in the wall and given a vision of the conditions that were working. Verses 13-14 read: "He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." Israel had been overcome by heathenism and idolatry. Verse 16 tells us, "And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple [they had turned their backs on truth] of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east." They had turned to heathenism, paganism. Tammuz, Semiramis, sun worship, worship of the mother and child—all of that had its origin in heathenism.

In what other ways does this "beast" cause ones to worship the dragon? The famous, supposed prayer entitled "Hail Mary," where Mary is referred to as the mother of God, is one of the expressions given to the old, idolatrous, heathen Semiramis. The Hail Mary is an exercise in paganism. What about the rosary? The Phoenicians used a rosary in the worship of Astarte,



Rosary

the mother goddess, about 800 B.C. The Brahmans also used rosaries. Worshipers of Vishnu gave their children rosaries. Buddhists in India and Tibet use rosaries. Even Muslims have rosaries. Rosaries have been used by many paganistic people throughout the centuries. Repetition, which is what a rosary encourages, is a pagan practice. Jesus said, "Don't do that," but Roman Catholicism tells the people to do that. That is the difference between light and darkness; they are opposites.

Let us look at Jesus' words in Matthew 6:7. He said, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Is the rosary "vain repetitions"? When one fingers the beads and goes through the various recitations of the rosary, there are fifty-three Hail Marys, six supposed Lord's Prayers, five mysteries, five meditations on the mysteries, five Glory Be's, and one supposed Apostle's Creed. Then all of that is repeated again. That is "vain repetitions." That is a heathen practice, not a Bible practice.

There are so many, many pagan practices that papal Rome has incorporated right into what is supposed Christianity. These practices are nothing more than paganism with a supposed Christian dress given to it. December 25 was the observance of Sol, the sun god. The Roman Catholics supposedly Christianized it, making it the birth of Christ, the Son of God, on December 25. However, it is a pagan practice and a pagan date. It has no basis in truth whatsoever. Easter has its beginning as an observance of Ishtar. It was observed based on lunar cycles and was the worship of the pagan goddess of Spring. However, Christ was crucified during the week of Passover. The time of the Passover was firmly established by Exodus, Chapter 12, and John 13:1 clearly establishes the fact He was crucified at the time of the Passover. The Bible clearly warns us to flee idolatry. All of these are idolatrous, heathen practices. In 1 John 5:21 John closed out his epistle with these words: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." In 2 Corinthians 6:16 the Apostle Paul said, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The temple of God has no agreement with idolatry.

What about nuns and the nunneries, or convents? This practice was observed as far back as the second king of Rome, Numa Pompilius, who reigned from 715 to 673 B.C. This practice was observed in the form of the vestal virgins of antiquity. It is not a Christian practice.

I trust you can see *how* that this "**beast**," according to our text in **Revelation 13:4**, "**worshipped the dragon**."



**Monstrance**

Consider the Mass. Consider the host. The host is a wafer that they put into what they call "the monstrance." When the priest prays, or consecrates, that wafer, it is supposedly transubstantiated right into the actual blood, body, and divinity of Jesus Christ. According to Catholic teaching, it literally becomes Jesus Christ. The monstrance in which the consecrated bread is placed is made in the shape of a cross with a hollow center. The monstrance has a sunburst design. (This information is according to *The Handbook of Catholic Practices*, page 20.) Before the host is placed in the monstrance, the worshiper bows down and worships the wafer as God! That came straight from idolatry and sun worship.

During the Dark Ages all who were not truly saved succumbed to this devilish religious system. It held worldwide sway. The predominant spiritual condition in this period was darkness. The Bible, as far as being a public message, was shut; it was chained to the pulpits and written in the Latin language, a language the common masses could not read. No trumpet was sounded during this time; no public message was heralded. The saints lived and worshiped underground in the catacombs and caves. The Word and the Spirit were prophesying in sackcloth and ashes. This beast dominated this era of time. **Revelation 13:7** tells us, ". . . **power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.**"

What we have studied here is a very superficial view of just a few of the practices of papalism that were incorporated right from paganism. I encourage you to look at the origin of what many, especially those in Roman Catholicism, revere as Christian practices, which are not Christian at all. If you study this further, you will notice that they pay great attention to crosses; however, a cross is truly not a Christian symbol. It was a symbol revered by the Egyptians and other pagans centuries before Christ ever came.

Steeple also have their origin in paganism, going back to the old obelisks. You can find an obelisk right in Saint Peter's Square in Rome. The most similar thing I can relate it to is the Washington Monument in Washington D.C. An obelisk has its origin in paganism as a phallic symbol where the people worshiped the god and goddesses of fertility.

This worship included sexual practices and sexual organs, and that is exactly what the obelisk is shaped as—a phallic symbol. Thus, steeples (or obelisks) come from paganism, heathen practices. They are not Christian at all, but people in their ignorance revere it as a highly sacred Christian symbol. Yet, the reality of it is they are worshipping the dragon. Isaiah 5:20 puts it like this: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

Sadly, many people have fallen prey to the spirit of apostasy. Not only back in this morning time that produced this "beast," but today many people are falling prey to that same spirit of apostasy. They are doing the very thing Jesus warned about in Matthew 6:23b, when He said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" We need to be very careful what we do with light. The people who initially gave rise to this system were not originally in that condition; they were not originally in darkness. They once were in light, but they did not walk in the light. When you do not walk in the light while you have the light, darkness comes upon you. There is no greater darkness than having once had light and losing it. We are a tremendously responsible people. We are given light for one reason: to walk in it. If we fail to do so, the light will continue to progress and outstrip us, leaving us in a darkened state.

### What Is Blasphemy?

We find in our text that the "**beast . . . opened his mouth in blasphemy.**" What is "**blasphemy**"? The Greek word is *blasphemia*, and according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, it means "impious and reproachful speech injurious to the divine majesty." Let us look at a Scriptural example where this expression "**blasphemy**" is employed. We read in Matthew 26:63-66: "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou has said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy [the same Greek word as in **Revelation 13:6**]; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."

Here Christ claimed a position that belonged only to God. To the high priest, His claim was an insult and an injury to the divine majesty. The definition of "**blasphemy**" is "one who makes a claim that is impious, that is so injurious as to insult the divine majesty by claiming a position that could not be occupied by other than the Divine." Now their definition of what verse 65 records as "blasphemy" was correct, but the object was wrong. Christ did not blaspheme, because He is "equal with God" (Philippians 2:6).

Keeping this definition in mind, let us look at how this "**beast**" in our text "**opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name.**" How does that system do this? Remember, we are looking at it historically. The time period under consideration is the Dark Ages. Many of our history books today have tried to put a good face on it and dress it up somewhat, but historically the record still stands. How does Roman Catholicism "**blaspheme**" against God and against "**his name**"? For years, when the masses were conducted in Latin, a part of every Mass was the words "Dominus Deus Noster Papa," which means "Our Lord God, the Pope." That is blasphemy! That is blaspheming God's name. That is an insult and an injury to the Divine Majesty.

Here are a few other titles ascribed to the office of the Pope: "king of the world," "holy Father," "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," "Viceregent to the Son of God," "Most holy Lord Pope." Let us go a little further. Pope Boniface VIII said this: "All the faithful of Christ by necessity of salvation are subject to the Roman Pontiff who judges all men. Therefore, we declare, assert, define, and pronounce that to be subject to the Roman Pontiff is to every human creature altogether necessary for salvation." That is from the "Unum Sanctum."

Pope Leo XIII said this in 1894: "We hold upon the earth the place of God Almighty." I would say that is blasphemy, wouldn't you? The Vatican Council proclaimed on January 9, 1870: "The Pope is Christ in office, Christ in jurisdiction and power. We bow down before thy voice, O Pius, as before the voice of Christ. The God of truth is clinging to thee; we cling to Christ." In the thirteenth century this was said: "The Bishop of Rome is the supreme Lord of the universe." When Johann Tetzel came through Germany in the sixteenth century, selling his indulgences, he made this claim: "The Lord God omnipotent hath ceased to reign. He has resigned all power to the Pope." That is blasphemy!

The nature of this **"beast"** has never changed. On April 30, 1922, Pope Pius XI said this: "You know that I am the holy Father, the representation of God on earth, the Vicar of Christ, which means that I am God on the earth." This indeed qualifies for what **Revelation 13:5** calls a **"mouth speaking great things and blasphemies."** This is a fulfillment of the prophecy of the Apostle Paul, written in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, which states, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Where was Pope Pius XI when he exalted himself, making the declaration, "I am God on the earth"? He was in the Vatican throne room before a throng of cardinals, bishops, priests, and nuns, all who fell on their knees before him. He let them fall on their knees, and said, "I am God on earth." The Pope is supposed to be the direct successor of Peter. Roman Catholicism teaches apostolic succession, that the popes are direct successors of Saint Peter. Yet, how did Peter act when one fell down on his knees before him? He said, "Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:26). The way Peter handled it is the direct opposite of the way the popes handle it.

Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, ". . . he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." In the seal series he is portrayed as the one who took the balances in his hands. "And when he had opened the third seal [A.D. 270 to 530], I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse [horses represent the militant spirit, and this was a spirit of apostasy]; and he that sat on him [the spirit of apostasy gave rise to a flesh-and-blood representation] had a pair of balances in his hand [he is a usurper, a blasphemer; the balances do not belong in his hand]" (Revelation 6:5).

Proverbs 16:11 says, "A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work." This balance belongs to the Lord; it does not belong in any man's hand. Proverbs 11:1 reads, "A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight." Was it a false balance? Certainly so. Whenever one would adhere to the tenets set forth by Rome, they would make him supposedly in a just balance. If they did not adhere to the Romish doctrine, they proclaimed them to be heretics. These are "a false balance."

Let us read some prophecy. Hosea 12:7 says, "He is a merchant, [Babylon has waxed rich, making merchandise of the souls of men. They teach that when one dies, he goes to Purgatory. So, they charge the family to say masses to supposedly get their loved one out of Purgatory. The Irish have a saying: 'Low money, low Mass; high money, high Mass; no money, no Mass.' All Soul's Day was created for all of the people who could not pay to have a Mass said while they were alive. It is to pray them out of Purgatory. The people altogether pray for the dead on All Soul's Day.] the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress." They are "balances of deceit"; they are not true balances.

We read in Amos 8:5-6: "Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn [in other words, when will the light get far enough away that we can operate in darkness]? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes." In other words, "so we can deal in darkness and deceit and deceive souls and make merchandise out of the souls of men!" Revelation 18:12-13 speaks of this very thing: "The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and [last of all] souls of men." Priority wise, the souls of men are last of all. Every other thing is more precious to them than the souls of men.

Micah's prophecy, in Micah 6:10-11, says: "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable [this ties right in with Revelation 6:6, which tells us what apostasy would produce—'A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny'—starvation wages, starvation rate, a famine in the land]? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" This is the balance that the rider took in his hand—balances of deceit, false balances, wicked balances that call the good, evil and call the evil, good.

### **The Power of the Beast**

Continuing with **verse 6** of our text, what does **"blaspheme his . . . tabernacle"** mean? Revelation 21:3 tells us what the real tabernacle is: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,

and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people . . . ." The tabernacle of God is a people. When our text says he would "**blaspheme his . . . tabernacle,**" it is saying that they would claim to be God's people. The 1998 Roman Catholic missal, which is used right in their sanctuary and is called "Breaking Bread," is imprinted with the words "We are the Church of God." That is blaspheming His tabernacle. They are claiming to be His people, but in reality they are the backslidden, or apostate, Church of God.

During this time period, how did Roman Catholicism hold people? **Revelation 13:7** states, "**And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him . . . .**" What type of "**power**" was this? Certainly, they had civil power. The cry was "Be Catholic or die." But what was the real "**power**" that lay behind the civil power? Colossians 1:13 asks, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness . . . ?" There is the real underlying "**power**" that held people during this Dark Age. Darkness has a binding power.

We read in 2 Peter 2:4, "For if God spared not the angels [he was not speaking of angelic beings—the Greek word is *aggelos*, which means 'a messenger'—he was speaking of a ministry] that sinned [this could not be speaking of celestial beings for they have no power of choice], but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness . . . ." Their "chains" were their "darkness." Darkness is what holds them bound. Darkness has a binding power. Again, we must be careful what we do with light. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6:23b)! That darkness has a binding power. These people were held in this Dark Age by the binding power of darkness. This darkness was like the darkness back in Exodus 10:21. We read that it was a "darkness which may be felt."

### Fables and Lying Wonders

To see what held the people, what this "**power**" actually was, read 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10. This Scripture reading describes "a falling away," or an apostasy. Here is the "**power**" that is attributed to this "**beast.**" Here we see this "**power [that] was given him.**" Verse 9 speaks of "all *power* and signs and lying wonders." The Amplified Bible puts it like this: ". . . with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders—."

The "**power**" that this "**beast**" uses to hold people in darkness is the power of "signs and lying wonders." Paul admonished in 2 Timothy 4:2-4: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." These signs and lying wonders are fables. First Timothy 4:1 tells us, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." Then, verse 7 says, "But refuse profane and old wives' fables . . . ."

What are some of the fables that are lying wonders which the "**beast**" uses to hold these people in this "**power**" of darkness? Let us lift just a few. One is that the priest can absolve sin. In other words, by going into auricular confession, one may be absolved from sin. That is a lying wonder! That is a fable! How is sin cleansed? One songwriter put it well, saying: "What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus." First John 1:7 tells us that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." A supposed priest uttering words of absolution is a lying wonder or a delusive marvel, a pretended event.

Being able to pray one out of Purgatory is a fable as well. Ecclesiastes 11:3 states, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." That tells us several truths. Just as this speaks of two directions a tree can fall—north or south—there are only two positions that man may die in—saved or lost. Once that tree falls, "there it shall be." There is no alteration of man's eternal destiny after his eyes close in the finality of death. There is no Purgatory, and there is no priest who can perform a lying wonder, praying one out of a supposed Purgatory! That is a lying wonder. Yet, they hold "**power**" over their people with that lie.

Being able to supposedly consecrate the wafer and literally turn it into the body, blood, and divinity of Jesus Christ (transubstantiation) is another lying wonder! The Lord's Supper is an ordinance that, though *literally* partaken of, is *symbolic*. How do we know it is symbolic? Read Matthew 26:26-28, which states: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the

cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." When Jesus said this, He was standing right there beside them; His body was still whole. It was not broken, and His blood had not yet been shed. It was still within His veins. It was symbolic. Transubstantiation is a fable!

The teaching of the perpetual virginity of Mary is also a fable. It is a lying wonder. The Bible lets us know that it is not true. We read in Matthew 1:18, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." The implication is clear that *later* "they came together." Speaking of Joseph, Matthew 1:25 says, "And knew her not *till* she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS." The clear implication is that after she "brought forth her firstborn," he had a relationship with her as a husband would with his wife. She did not remain perpetually a virgin. This fable is further disproved in Matthew 13:55-56, which tells us that Mary had at least six other children: James, Joses, Simon, Judas, and his sisters (in the plural, so there were at least two).

We could go on with fables and lying wonders. They teach the bodily assumption of the virgin Mary. Yet, the Bible lets us know that all bodies go to the grave and sleep until the time of the Resurrection (Ecclesiastes 12:7; John 5:28-29). They teach direct apostolic succession. All of these are lies, darkness that holds people bound under their "**power.**" How can the cardinals from all over the world, of various nationalities, go into conclave and then vote on the direct apostolic successor to Saint Peter? That is a lie! They teach papal infallibility. Yet, Peter, who was supposedly their first pope, was fallible (Galatians 2:11-14). Paul rebuked Peter right in front of the whole group because he was to be blamed. He was not infallible.

Let us look to the Scriptures and see what they reveal about some common practices in this system. First Timothy 4:1-9 is a good example of what we are talking about. Certainly, there is much contained here, but let us lift a few thoughts. Verse 2 says, "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." This verse is clarified in verse 3, which speaks of "Forbidding to marry." The Roman Catholic system teaches celibacy for their priests and nuns, although the Scripture says that it is not good for a man to be alone (Genesis 2:18). The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:2, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife . . ." Throughout the centuries there has been a portrayal of ones who have had their consciences seared. Passageways have been found between the monasteries and the convents, where babies were discarded in lime pits and destroyed so they would not be found. That is a conscience seared. "Forbidding to marry" is a doctrine of devils! Roman Catholicism still adheres to it today, and we see the sad results of this devilish doctrine in all of the pedophiles in their priesthood.

First Timothy 4:3 also speaks of being told to "abstain from meats." That has been a Roman Catholic practice on Fridays and during Lent. However, verse 4 tells us that "nothing [is] to be refused." Abstaining from meats is a doctrine of devils! We read in verse 8 of "bodily exercise." Roman Catholic services are full of bodily exercise, or genuflecting. For years they used flagellation (beating themselves; recently, it was discovered that the late Pope John Paul II practiced *flagellation*) and all other kinds of bodily exercise. That is a doctrine of devils! There is no spiritual merit to that whatsoever! These external actions cause people to feel as though they are engaging in piety. But true salvation, according to Ephesians 2:9, is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." It is not external, but it is an internal reality.

Let us look at another description of some of the practices embraced by this "**beast,**" or this religious system. Third John 1:9-10 says: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." Here are two of the most predominant doctrines upon which Catholicism is built: preeminence and the fear of excommunication. The parish priest, the bishop, the archbishop, the cardinal, and then the Pope are all based on a hierarchy, a system of preeminence. They love such titles as: his holiness, our father, your eminence. But Jesus said that "all ye are brethren" (Matthew 23:8).

Let us look further at Matthew 23:8-12. There Jesus said: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth [one of the titles of the popes is 'holy father,' and all of their priests are designated as 'father']: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

## The War of the Beast

This was the **"power"** of darkness, spoken of in our text, that held people during the Dark Ages. Thank God, there were people who lived and reigned with Christ during this thousand-year period. Revelation 20:4 says, "And I saw thrones," letting us know here was a people who were reigning. Who were these people? **Revelation 13:8** tells us it was those who did not bow to the **"beast,"** those whose names were written in **"the book of life of the Lamb."** These were the saints. During a time when the prevailing condition was darkness and dominance by this **"beast,"** there were saints who still lived and reigned with Christ. They were in the catacombs and caves; they were a part of the woman in the wilderness (Revelation 12:6).

Looking again at Revelation 20:4-5, we read: "And I saw thrones [depicting people reigning], and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded [this is not speaking of martyrs, for the last phrase of this verse says that 'they lived and reigned'] . . . . But the rest of the dead lived not again . . . ." This shows that it could not be talking here about being martyred. This is a symbolic portrayal.

When this Scripture talks about "the souls of them that were beheaded," we need to remember Christ is "the head of the . . . church" (Colossians 1:18). During this Dark Age, the people were denied the benefit of the Head, because the Pope said he was the head of the church. Thus, they were "beheaded"; there was no visible church. They were denied benefit of the Head. Revelation 20:4 goes on to say, ". . . for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." That "thousand years" is not a symbol. Years cannot symbolize years. So that is a literal figure. The "thousand years" is the time of this Dark Age when the saints lived and reigned with Christ in the catacombs and caves (A.D. 530-1530). The "hidden manna" (Revelation 2:17) provided enabled them to have victory and reign while this **"beast"** dominated the spiritual landscape.

When the **"beast"** could not hold people with its spiritual **"power,"** then it would try to grasp or seize with its civil power. **Revelation 13:6** talks of how it would **"blaspheme . . . them that dwell in heaven."** Ephesians 2:6 tells us who these people are: those that dwell "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Roman Catholicism would **"blaspheme"** the true saints by calling them heretics. **Verse 7** of our text says that they made **"war with the saints."** They say that they *make* saints, but the Bible says that they **"make war with the saints."** During this period of time, more than fifty million people were martyred. If you read *Foxes's Book of Martyrs*, you will learn about the inquisitions and the atrocities and barbarities committed by this **"beast"** and you will clearly see why it is called a **"beast"** or, as the Greek word *therion* is defined, a wild beast.

**Revelation 13:10** tells us, ". . . he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." It is true that Roman Catholicism misused the Word of God: the Bible was chained to the pulpit and was not in the language of the people; people were not led by the Bible, but led by the priest. But they also employed weapons that were carnal (2 Corinthians 10:4). This carnal and spiritual contrast is also seen when David said to Goliath (the beast he had to face), "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear [or carnal weapons] . . . but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts . . ." (1 Samuel 17:45).

Roman Catholicism brought death with the literal sword, but Jesus told the people in this Pergamene Age, (A.D. 530-1530), "I . . . will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (Revelation 2:16). Hebrews 4:12 tells us what this "sword" is: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword . . ." God was going to turn the truth loose on them if they did not repent, and they did not repent. Thus, God used Martin Luther. Luther was a Roman Catholic priest who had been studying the Book of Romans. As he was ascending the supposedly sacred stairs, called the Scala Sancta in Rome, on his knees, history tells us the truth of Romans 1:17, which says, "The just shall live by faith," struck his heart. God said, "Martin, the just shall live by faith." Martin Luther took that sword and used it to lay a deadly wound to the papal beast. This led to the drafting of the Augsburg Confession, which was presented at the Diet of Augsburg in Augsburg, Germany, on June 25, 1530. When the confession was formally adopted, the exclusive night of papalism was forever broken. We read of this in **Revelation 13:3**, which says that **"one of his heads as it were wounded to death."**

Revelation 13:14 speaks of "the wound by a sword." It is just as Jesus said in Matthew 26:52; they that live by the sword die by the sword. Then **Revelation 13:10** says that he **"must be killed with the sword."** The domination of papalism and its exclusive rule was ended by the sixteenth-century Reformation, and it was the **"sword,"** or the Word of God, which brought this about. It is the Word that will still bring falsity down yet today and put truth on the forward march. If we will take hold of it under the direction of the Spirit and hear what the Spirit saith, we can still go forward conquering and to conquer for Jesus Christ even in the day in which you and I are privileged to live.



## The Second Beast

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

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

### Christ Sends Forth His Sword

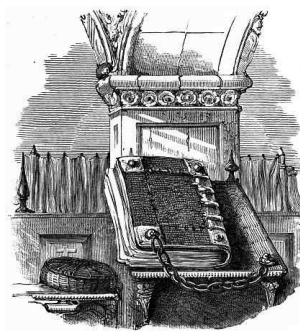
This "beast" that **verse 11** says came "up out of the earth" is the second beast. It is needful to understand this "beast" did not just arise. There were things that preceded it, things that gave rise to it. There were conditions that fostered the development of this beast. It is needful to understand this, because when conditions today replicate what was taking place in our text, it will still give rise to systems that are contrary to God's will and God's Word. In the letter series when Jesus spoke to the Pergamene age, He said, "Repent; or else . . ." (Revelation 2:16). That is a pretty strong message! In the Gospels Jesus said, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In other words, "repent" for some good thing was about to occur. But here Jesus said if they did not repent, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (Revelation 2:16).

In this day of lack of respect for ministers and ministerial authority, one thing we need to understand is that when Christ sends forth His sword (His Word), it is Christ coming to you. The Apostle Paul prophesied of this very same thing. After describing the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the mystery of iniquity that was already working, he also penned in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Many people believe that Paul was speaking of the Second Advent, but that is not the coming of which the Apostle was speaking.

"That Wicked" spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 refers back to 2 Thessalonians 2:3 ("that man of sin, the son of perdition") and 2 Thessalonians 2:4 ("Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God"). That is the "Wicked" who would be exposed. In other words, a revelation would occur and people would see him as he is and what he truly represents. The rest of that verse says that He "shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." This is made more plain in Revelation 2:16, which tells us He will come "with the sword of my mouth." This is what the Spirit used to consume the power of the papal system.

Revelation 1:16 calls it "a sharp twoedged sword." Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17 tells us the Word of God is that sword. When the Thessalonian letter speaks of "the brightness of his coming," the writer was letting us know that "The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psalm 119:130). It had been a dark night, but with the brightness of His coming, He turned loose "the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword," as one songwriter described it. He came through the Spirit, bringing an understanding of the Word.

Roman Catholicism did not take heed. They did not "repent" as Jesus enjoined them in Revelation 2:16. (As a matter of fact, they have never repented; they do not even teach repentance. They teach "penance," which is totally different than repentance.) Therefore, Christ began to turn the truth loose. During the Dark Ages, as far as the public message, the Bible was shut. It is shown to be shut on



**Bible Chained to the Pulpit**

the pictorial chart. Bibles were chained to the pulpit, and the Scriptures were all in Latin, which was not the common language of the people. Papalism attempted to prevent the people from having the Word of God. They wanted reliance on the priests and the teachings of the supposed church, rather than on the Bible. Yet, though the prevailing condition was a dark age, the Lord began to bring glimpses and glimmers of a light. As early as the 1300's the Lord began to work. John Wycliffe, born in 1324, was a Professor of Divinity at Oxford in England. He translated the entire Bible into English. He was so hated by papalism that his teachings



**John Wycliffe**

were condemned by Rome. They attempted to destroy all of his books. Forty years after his death, they dug up his bones and burned them to ashes. What a terrible spirit false religion has!

Another great reformer was John Huss of Bohemia. He preached with such affect and conviction of truth that finally Rome had him burned at the stake on July 6, 1415. Before he died he prophesied: "The wicked have begun by preparing a treacherous snare for a goose [in the Bohemian language *Huss* means 'goose']. But if even the goose, which is only a domestic bird, a peaceable creature, and whose flight is not very far in the air, has nonetheless broken into their toils; other birds soaring more boldly toward the sky will break through them with still greater force. Instead of a feeble goose, the truth will send forth eagles and keen-eyed vultures." As the faggots were piled about the stake ready to be lit, John Huss said, "You are now going to burn a goose, but in a century you will have a swan whom you can neither roast nor boil." This was fulfilled through a Roman Catholic monk, named Martin Luther.



John Huss

One of the things that greatly stirred Martin Luther was when Johann Tetzel came into Germany. The Roman Catholic Church was trying to amass funds to build St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. So they concocted the idea of selling indulgences. Tetzel became so bold that he promised the people that if they paid well, they would not only have their sins forgiven, but they could even be forgiven of the sins they "intended to commit." Tetzel told the people he could hear their departed loved ones in Purgatory, screaming and crying. He had a box that he carried with him with an inscription. The English translation goes something like this: "When the money in the box you pop, the souls from Purgatory will hop." This is one way that the Roman Catholic Church made merchandise out of the souls of men.



Martin Luther

This stirred Martin Luther. He had been studying Paul's epistle to the Romans, and God had been working with him. As he was ascending the sacred stairs on his knees (the "scala sancta" in Rome), God emblazoned the truth of what he had been studying concerning the Book of Romans upon his heart. His understanding of Romans 1:17 was enlightened: "The just shall live by faith." Luther began to understand that it was not by all the contrivances and concoctions and teachings of Rome, but rather by *faith* that man would gain an experience of salvation. When Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the church building in Wittenburg, Germany, he took the sword of truth that God had given him and laid a "**deadly wound**" to "**the first beast**" (the papal beast). A death blow was struck to Roman Catholicism as an exclusive, worldwide power. The dark night was forever broken. There will never be another dark age.

Certainly there were many other reformers in the intervening years. There was Jerome of Prague, Girolamo Savonarola, Philip Melancthon, and many others in the intervening years between the thirteenth and sixteenth century whom God used to bring glimmers of truth. H. M. Riggle in his book *The Christian Church, Its Rise and Progress* tells us this on page 184: "About the same time that Luther was preaching the truth revealed to him, Menno Simons came out and also began to preach salvation from sin. About this time Zwingli began to preach the truth of salvation from sin throughout Switzerland. Thus the Reformation rapidly spread in every direction. Among the noted reformers who followed Luther may be named John Calvin, though he held some doctrines which were not scriptural, such as predestination, yet he effected a great work and led thousands out of darkness." This period of time, often called the Lutheran era, was from A.D. 1530 to 1730. It is denoted as commencing in 1530 because that is when the Augsburg Confession, the first articles of faith of a Protestant organization, was drafted. Thus, the exclusivity of Roman Catholicism was formally ended.

### The Great Star Fell

Concerning this period of time, the third trumpet age, Revelation 8:10 states, "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp . . ." The first question that arises is, Why is the third angel over in the fourth time period? It is because there was no public message heralded through the Dark Ages (530 to 1530). The saints were underground, hidden away in the catacombs and caves.

Initially, this "great star" (ministry) broke a darkness that was over a thousand years in duration. The ministry of this period of time was initially "burning as it were a lamp" (Revelation 8:10). What was the message of this Lutheran era? Isaiah 62:1 tells us that the "lamp" is salvation. They had the message on salvation. They broke the dark night of

papalism with that truth of Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." That entire system of Roman Catholicism is based on works, but Ephesians 2:9 says it is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." This was a great light in the midst of a dark night. People could once again see the truth concerning salvation: salvation did not come through a man, through the organization of men, through priests and popes, or through observing canon law and catechisms. Salvation came through taking faith in the work of Jesus Christ.

Sadly, this "great star [fell] from heaven [heavenly places in Christ Jesus'; Ephesians 2:6]." This ministry had been exalted to a spiritual position. They had a divine message, but they did not continue. When they failed to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), darkness came upon them. Thus, a dark and cloudy day commenced, a mixture of light and darkness, truth and error. This "great star" that fell "from heaven" is called "Wormwood" in Revelation 8:11. *Strong's Concordance* defines *wormwood* as "a type of bitterness." *Merriam Webster's Dictionary* also defines it as "bitterness." Verse 11 describes it as bitterness as well: "And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." Bitterness brings death (Hebrews 12:15).

How did this happen? Look at where this "great star" fell. Revelation 8:10 says that it fell "upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." Here "fountains" are used in the plural, but in reality, there is only to be one fountain. We read in Zechariah 13:1, "In that day [a prophetic expression of the Gospel Day] there shall be a fountain [singular] opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." We read of that fountain being opened in the Savior's side: ". . . and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). Blood was for the remission of sin (Romans 3:25), and the water symbolizes the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39) cleansing a man of his unclean spirit and bringing regeneration.

When this star, or this ministry, fell from its exalted position in Christ, all of a sudden there were many fountains. There was the Lutheran fountain; there was Menno Simons' (Mennonites) fountain; there was the Calvinistic fountain. There were all manner of fountains of men. The one fountain was replaced with the many fountains (the many avenues) that man devised for supposed salvation. When John spoke about a fallen star, he was talking about a fallen ministry, a ministry that did not keep the position that God ordained they keep. They became as "wandering stars [not stationary]" (Jude 13). Jude continued, describing what happens to stars that fail to keep walking in the light: "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

How is all of this germane to **Revelation 13:11**? It is very vital, because when this "star" went down, this "**beast**" came up. Revelation 8:11 tells us that "many men died of the waters." In other words, they started putting their trust in the fountains of water (various organizations of men) rather than in the truth that they had originally proclaimed. It caused many men to die out spiritually. Not only did many men die, but the spirit of this beast became so bad that Revelation 11:7 tells us, "And when they [speaking of the Word and the Spirit] shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." They not only wanted to kill the people symbolically, but they killed the Word and the Spirit as well. They not only caused people to lose their spiritual life, but they put the Word and the Spirit in a position where they could not function. For all intents and purposes, they were as good as dead.

This was not a physical death, but a spiritual death, a separation from God. You can be physically alive but spiritually dead. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 5:6, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." When God told Adam, ". . . for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17), he did not die physically. Genesis 5:5 says that "Adam lived . . . nine hundred and thirty years." Adam died spiritually. He was cut off, separated from God. When God came walking in the cool of the day, Adam went and hid himself. Sin brought a separation. He could no longer fellowship. The word *fellowship* means "share in common." Adam could no longer "share in common" because he no longer shared the nature that God had. He now had a sinful nature, and he could not function as God has intended man to function.

So, when we read that they killed the Word and the Spirit, it was not a literal death but a symbolic expression, letting us know they were cut off. The Word and the Spirit were not able to function in the capacity in which God ordained that they function. They were to be the true vicars of the church, but men usurped their place. They wanted them lying in the street so they could say that they had the Word and the Spirit, but they would not let them operate. They began to presume to take the place of the Holy Spirit, giving gifts one to another.

## The Two Witnesses Lay Dead in the Street

Revelation 11:7 says, "And when they [That word '*they*' reverts back to verse 3, 'my two witnesses.' Those two witnesses are the Word (Matthew 24:14) and the Spirit (Hebrews 10:15).] shall have finished their testimony, [Again, this refers back to verse 3, the 1260 years of papal rule. The Word and the Spirit had finished feeding the saints in the catacombs and caves. The dark night was broken when the great star arose and light came on the stage of action.] the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them [the Word and the Spirit], and shall overcome them, and kill them."

Notice what killed the Word and the Spirit. It was the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit. That is what made them inoperable. This is the same "**beast**" spoken of in our text. **Revelation 13:11** speaks of this "**beast coming up out of the earth,**" and Revelation 11:7 tells us it "ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." These are two aspects of the same truth. When the morning-time brethren cast down the dragon, "he was cast unto the earth" (Revelation 12:13), but Revelation 20:3 tells us they "cast him into the bottomless pit." When old paganism was touting its teachings as supposedly divine, the brethren came along preaching the truth, and they showed that paganism was of an earthen, manmade origin. It came out of the minds of men. Thus, they cast it "unto the earth" but also into a bottomless pit, showing that it had no Bible foundation, or basis in truth.

Revelation 20:3 also tells us that after "the thousand years . . . he must be loosed a little season." How was he loosed? Through this second "**beast**" that came up "out of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 11:7). In other words, it had no Bible foundation for its rise. It came up, as our text says, "**out of the earth,**" or out of the minds of men. Man is referred in 2 Corinthians 4:7 as "earthen vessels." The dragon was loosed through the rise of this second "**beast,**" the system that we call Protestantism. God was behind the sixteenth-century Reformation, but it was never His will for this "**beast**" to rise up. This "**beast**" rose up because men failed to continue to listen to the Spirit of God.

Let us go back to Revelation, Chapter 11. Continuing to speak of the Word and the Spirit, verse 8 reads, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, [The word *streets* in the plural does not appear in the Book of Revelation. The word *street* in the singular is mentioned three times. Once it is mentioned here, and the other two verses where it is mentioned is Revelation 21:21 and Revelation 22:2. The second reference in Chapters 21-22 describes a street that is right in the middle of the city of God, or the Church of God. Those two streets represent the broad way and the narrow way. This '**beast**' did not want the narrow way; it wanted the broad way. And because of that, it overcame the two witnesses during this period of time.] which spiritually is called Sodom [a symbolic expression denoting lewdness, wickedness] and Egypt [bondage], where also our Lord was crucified." Whenever people profess supposed Christianity but live in wickedness and are in bondage and continue to profess and practice over top of it, they are crucifying the son of God afresh (Hebrews 6:6). Both Sodom and Egypt are symbols of Babylon. Babylon is wickedness and bondage.

Revelation 11:10 states, "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another . . ." Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:1, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." He continued in verses 3-4: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." The Spirit is the One who apportions the gifts. Ephesians 4:8, speaking of Christ, tells us that He "gave gifts unto men." What were those gifts? They were the gifts to fill these offices (Ephesians 4:11). However, in Revelation 11:10 we find that they gave "gifts one to another." Church dogma or dictates took the place of the Word, and their own thinking supplanted the place of the Spirit.

This was a time that should have been light, but because the ministry failed to hold the position that God ordained they occupy, it became a dark and cloudy day (Ezekiel 34:12)—a mixture of light and darkness, of truth and error. The Book could have continued to be opened and greater understanding given, but the progress of it was stopped. As this "star" went down (Revelation 8:10), this "**beast**" came up (**Revelation 13:11**). This "**beast**" was not letting God's will be done. This religious system came up out of their darkened minds because they failed to continue to walk in the light. When we study the history of this Gospel Day, we will find that every time God was good enough to reach down and give individuals light or understanding, they ran well for a while. Paul well described this when he wrote, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Galatians 5:7). Every time God brought truth, there were

people who failed to walk in it and they went into darkness. Out of their darkened minds came systems and sects that were contrary to the sound teachings of God's eternal Word.

The word "**beast**" in our text is the same Greek word that was used earlier in this chapter to describe the first beast: *therion*. The Scriptures prove that this refers to man (2 Peter 2:1, 12; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Jude 4, 10). This system is just as beastly, brutal, savage, ferocious, and ungodly as the first beast. There are people who see through the darkness of Roman Catholicism, but they sympathize with Protestantism. One is no more a Christian system than the other. Neither one of them has a godly beginning. They both came up out of the minds of men. Concerning Protestant systems of religion, people have said, "Well, they are *almost* like the church." There is nothing *almost* like the church: "she is the only one of her mother" (Song of Solomon 6:9)! People feel that they are worshiping Christ when they are in this system of religion, but in reality, they are worshiping "**the first beast**" (**Revelation 13:12**); and "**the first beast**" worshiped the dragon (Revelation 13:4).

This Protestant system is no more a Christian system than papalism. Both of these systems were something that came up out of the minds of men. But the true church did not come up. It came down (Revelation 21:2)! The true church came down from God; it had divine institution, divine origination. That which is not built on Christ, or the Word, is groundless, baseless, and without foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11). This Protestant system had no basis or grounds in truth, no Bible foundation. This is important to understand because this system is just as deadly as "**the first beast**" or as the dragon. Revelation 13:15 tells us that "as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." It was just as deadly a system as Paganism or papalism.

### **The Second Beast Is Deceptive**

Protestantism is so effective because of its nature. Revelation 13:14 says, "And deceiveth . . ." It works through deception. It is not as obviously hideous, as threatening, or seemingly as deadly. It has some lamb-like features. Our text describes it as having "**two horns like a lamb.**" Notice there is no other description given of this "**beast.**" I realize he is portrayed on the pictorial chart as a lamb, but in reality the Scripture give us no other description of him whatsoever. One reason is because it has so many appearances and so many different forms through the various sects and denominations of Protestantism. It does not always appear the same. When one gains a vision of this, as John did, the only thing that he sees is something that has some lamb-like features on the surface. **Verse 12** speaks of "**worship**" and lets us know that this "**beast**" is a religious system. The employment of expressions, such as we find in verse 14 "And [he] deceiveth," lets us know that it is a *false* religious system, for truth will not deceive you. Also, **verse 12** says, "**And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him . . .**" This lets us know that it is a politico-ecclesiastical system, because the first beast had political power (civil) as well as ecclesiastical power (spiritual).

In Revelation 16:13 this beast is referred to as "the false prophet." Verse 14 tells us what is behind this system: "the spirits of devils." In Revelation 19:20 again this "**beast**" is referred to as "the false prophet." Look at how Jesus described false prophets in Matthew 7:15. He said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing [in other words, they have a lamb-like appearance], but inwardly they are ravening wolves [What is a wolf? A beast]." Jesus referred to false prophets as those who outwardly appear to be other than what they truly are, simply so that they can disguise their nature and do their deceptive, devilish, and damnable work. That is exactly what this Protestant system does.

Protestantism has some lamb-like features. Outwardly, it may appear to be Christianity, but in reality it is nothing more than the same spirits of devils. It just has a more deceptive religious cloak. When this "**beast**" opens its mouth, when it begins to teach and preach, it does not preach what Christ did. The Bible lets us know "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). According to Revelation 16:13-14, a devilish spirit comes out of its mouth. This devilish spirit is what produces false teachings and false doctrines that deceive people. It is a seducing spirit that produces doctrines and teachings that are unclean and unholy, teachings that fight against God's Word (1 Timothy 4:1).

As we learned in a previous study, "**horns**" represent political powers, or kingdoms (Daniel 8:20). This actually has a dual application in this context. The first one is the civil power. There were two kingdoms that gave Protestantism their political power, or lent their political support to them. They were the two countries that had authorized a state

church, just as papalism did. Those two countries were Germany and England. Germany is where Martin Luther and many others commenced this Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. England is where King Henry VIII broke away from the Church of Rome, established the Church of England, and made the king the head of the church. So these two horns represent the two civil powers that supported Protestantism: Germany and England.

The second application is that this system of Protestantism had power in two periods: 1530 to 1730 and 1730 to 1880. Horns also represent spiritual power. In Luke 1:69 Zacharias prophesied of "an horn of salvation," talking about the spiritual power of salvation that Christ would usher in. In Revelation 5:6 the "seven horns" represent spiritual power throughout the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day. This Protestant beast had power in two periods, the two segments that comprise the Protestant era. This second segment of the Protestant era is described in Revelation 9:1-3: "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power."

Let us examine this a little, because this gives us some insight concerning the rise of this system. The fallen star (a fallen ministry) was given a key. When the morning-time brethren overcame the dragon, or paganism, they had a key *and* a chain (Revelation 20:1-3). However, this fallen ministry only has a key. The key is the Word. Luke 11:52 tells us about "the key of knowledge." Where is this derived? Jeremiah 3:15 tells us that "pastors . . . shall feed you with knowledge." Second Timothy 4:2 tells us the charge to the ministry is to "Preach the word." The chain is the power to bind (Matthew 12:28-29), or the Spirit of God. This fallen ministry had a key but no chain. In other words, they had the Word. But because they did not have the chain, rather than binding something up, they turned more falsity loose. This ministry did not put anything in a pit, but it let things out of the pit.

Revelation 9:2 tells us that "smoke" came out of "the bottomless pit." Smoke is the symbol of glory (Exodus 19:18; Isaiah 6:1-4; Revelation 15:8). Smoke represents the presence of God, the glory of God. But when we read of smoke coming from the bottomless pit, because this is a fallen, or *false* ministry, this is *false* glory. We know it is false for when this smoke arose out of the pit, "the sun [the Word; Malachi 4:2] and the air [the Spirit; John 3:8] were darkened by reason of the smoke." The glory of God is not going to darken the Word and the Spirit to where you cannot see it. That lets you know it is a work of falsity.

Revelation 9:3 tells us that "locusts" came out of the "smoke." This is an allusion back to the plague of locusts. Exodus 10:15 states, "For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened." That is exactly what this spiritual plague of locusts does—it gets between people and the light. It is a picture of false religion, of a false ministry that gets between the people and the light so they cannot see the light. That is why this is referred to as a "dark and cloudy day," because it was darkened by this smoke, this false glory.

Exodus 10:15 also tells us that the locusts "covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees." In other words, they took anything that had any life. That is just the way false religion will do. When Jesus gave a parable in Matthew, Chapter 13, He spoke about the wayside ground. Proverbs 16:25 tells us what the wayside is: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man . . ." What way is that? The way of religion. Look at what happens when the Word falls on that wayside ground: "And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up" (Matthew 13:4). When the Word comes to these souls, false preachers are right there to say, "God doesn't expect that; nobody can live that way." That fowl devours the seed. These fowls are the wicked (Matthew 13:19), and Psalm 50:16-17 tells us the wicked are those who have cast God's Word behind them, yet they continue to preach and practice and profess religion, a picture of the ministry in false religion.

Let us look closer at these locusts. We read in Revelation 9:7, "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle [denoting militancy]; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, [It was not real gold, but it was *like* gold; it was a cheap imitation. They did not have true victory; it just looked like they had victory.] and their faces were as the faces of men." That is what is at the head of sectism—men. This Scripture is a more in-depth description of some of the components that comprise this "**beast**." It is made up of people who are devoid of real truth, people who have crowns *like* gold but do not have real victory. Because the light has been obscured, they have succumbed to following the faces of men. There is much more depth here in this particular passage, but I just wanted

to show that these fallen ministries together gave rise to this system that we call Protestantism.

**Verse 12** of our text tells that this "**beast . . . causeth the earth [or this system] and them which dwell therein [their people, their members] to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.**" This prompts two questions: (1) How was the deadly wound healed? (2) How did they worship the first beast? The answer to one question answers the other question. Now what happened? Revelation 13:14 tells us that "they should make an image to the beast." The Greek word for *image* is the word *eikon*. *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* defines it as "an image, figure, or likeness." In other words, the Protestants turned around and became just like the thing they were protesting against.

Rome had been extremely intolerant of any dissent or disagreement. In time, Martin Luther became the same way. George P. Fisher in his *History of the Christian Church*, page 202, wrote this: "The vehemence of the reformer's tongue often moved him to use the roughest style of vituperation. There was a plebeian rudeness which, when he was goaded by opposition, found vent in abusive and even scurrilous language." Luther became just as intolerant as Rome ever was. Many of the teachings of this Protestant era were just as paganistic as Rome's. On page 309 of the same book George P. Fisher wrote: "Luther affirmed the objective presence of the glorified body and the blood of Christ in connection with the bread and wine. So that the body and blood in some mysterious way are actually received by the communicant, whether he be a believer or not." Whether one was a believer or not, Luther's position was that when one took the bread and wine, he was literally taking in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. That is as false as old paganism! This type of teaching is totally in opposition to the truth that had been revealed to Luther concerning Romans 1:17, which states, "The just shall live by faith."

Roman Catholicism would excommunicate and not fellowship those people who dared to disagree. Again, George P. Fisher on page 310, relating an account of a division between Luther and Zwingli of Switzerland, said this: "The efforts of the disinterested men to heal the schism which threatened to inflict great disasters on the Protestant cause proved unavailing. The leaders of both parties met at Marburg in October of 1529. And they were not able either at their private conference or at the public assembly to come to agreement. Zwingli, with tears in his eyes, offered the hand of fraternal friendship to Luther, but this Saxon reformer refused to take it since he could not join in Christian fellowship."

Here was a man who was supposed to be a spiritual giant. Yet, because a man did not agree with him doctrinally, he would not even shake his hand. That is the same spirit "**the first beast**" and the "**dragon**" had. Protestantism made an image to the "**beast.**" They became just like the thing they were supposedly protesting against. At first they were protesting against the falsity of Roman Catholicism, but today they are not protesting. Today the harlot daughters are locking arms with their mother.

On page 313 Fisher continued: "The cause of reform was hindered not so much by the number of its enemies as by the discord of its friends. The Protestant party was divided into the Calvinists and the Lutherans and the Unitarians." There we see the faces of men. Like a plague of locusts, men were getting between people and the light, and they began forming various bodies of sectarian religion. Just as Rome used its civil power and carnal weapons, so did Protestantism. During the Thirty Years' War (from 1618 to 1648), Protestants put armies on the field, just as Roman Catholicism.

In 1534 King Henry VIII broke from popery by having the passage of the Act of Supremacy enacted, which declared himself to be the head of the Church of England. (The reigning British Monarch is still technically the head of the Church of England yet today.) In 1539 Henry VIII enacted the Act of Six Articles, which became known as the "bloody whip with six strings." This was an act that abolished any religious dissent, punishable by death. The Six Acts were the establishment of doctrines that were essentially all Catholic:

1. The doctrine of transubstantiation, that Christ literally appears in the host, that the blood, body, and divinity of Christ appears in that wafer
2. That bread only was necessary; no wine was necessary, as blood was in the body
3. Celibacy
4. Vows of chastity
5. Masses
6. Confession



**King Henry VIII**

## "The Deadly Wound Was Healed"

Protestantism made an image to this beast. In other words, they became just like it. *Myers' General History*, page 527, tells us this: "In the sixteenth century a refusal to conform to the established worship was regarded by all Protestants as well as by Catholics as a species of treason against society and was dealt with accordingly. Thus we find Calvin at Geneva consenting to the burning of Servetus in A.D. 1553 because he published views the Calvinists thought heretical. And in England we see Anglican Protestants waging the most cruel, bitter, and persisting persecution, not only against the Catholics but against all that refused to conform to their established church." Persecution became so bad in England that this ultimately caused the Puritans and others to leave England and travel to the New World. They wanted to escape persecution from the Church of England and seek a place of religious freedom. Our country was originally founded by people fleeing persecution from the Church of England.

In addition to adhering to many of the same doctrines, Protestantism made an image to the beast by worshiping "**the first beast,**" by revering its power. As **verse 12** tells us, "**he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him.**" Papalism is ruled over by "a man" (Revelation 13:18), and Protestantism has at its head "faces of men" (Revelation 9:7). According to **verse 11**, they "**spake as a dragon.**" Paganism said, "Come to the Pantheon and choose the god of your choice"; Protestantism speaks in like manner and says, "Go to the church of your choice."

This image has manmade heads, a manmade headquarters, manmade organizations, manmade creeds, man rule (enforcing compliance), man's recognition, and man's excommunication, just like the first beast. In every way the basic tenants of sectism are just like what they started out protesting against. The harlot daughters all have their mother's nature and spirit. Revelation 17:5, talking about the eighth beast and its rider that we are facing in this time period in which we live, reads, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS." She is the mother, but every sectarian, Protestant denomination is one of her harlot daughters.

Every one of these religious systems has done the same thing the dragon did. They have warred against the Word and the Spirit (Revelation 11:7). It is the same spirit. Every one of them is a militant system produced by militant spirits that are out to work against the cause of truth and God's people. This system is out to dupe and deceive. It may wear sheep's clothing, but it cannot make sheep's tracks. Watch how they walk. Watch how they live. When they open their mouths, listen to what they speak. God, in His faithfulness, will reveal the truth.

Any spirit that goes contrary to God's eternal Word gives rise to a smoke that gets between people and light. When smoke gets in your eyes, you will get all turned around, and you will lose your sense of direction. The spirit behind this system wants to cause people to become blinded, to lose their vision, their sense of direction. But Jesus said in Revelation 3:18 to "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Our only immunity to this happening today is to have the two witnesses—the Word and the Spirit—working in our midst and to afford them their rightful position. As we continue our study, we will find that after three-and-half prophetic days (350 years) of this dark and cloudy day, the two witnesses stood upon their feet. That can only happen when they find a people who will stand up for them. But as long as men want to take the position that rightfully belongs to the Word and the Spirit, they will lay dead in the street of that organization or congregation. Wherever that condition exists, there is but one call to the people and that is to "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4).



## The Deception of the Second Beast and Its Power to Give Life to the Image

**Revelation 13:13** And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

**14** And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

**15** And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

### Deceiving by the Means of Miracles

In these verses the revelator further described the activities of this second "**beast**." Our text provides greater understanding of how this system operates. **Verse 14** says that this system "**deceiveth**." This word "**deceiveth**" in the Greek is the word *planao*. According to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, it means "to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way, lead away from truth, to lead into error." So, we begin to gain an insight as to the true nature of this second "**beast**." Its nature is a deceptive nature; it works through the powers of deception. Its works are deceptive works. How does this system accomplish deception? **Verse 14** tells us that it is "**by the means of those miracles**." If you read the preceding verse (**verse 13**), you will understand what this is referring to. It says, "**And he** [this 'beast'; **verse 11**] **doeth great wonders** [the same Greek word that is translated as '*miracles*' in **verse 14**], **so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men**."

We found in our previous study that this "**beast**" (Protestantism) is referred to as a "false prophet" (Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). The major aspect of Protestantism's deception is that they pose themselves as a true prophet. Here is the manner in which they begin to deceive and dupe the souls of mankind. But they do not merely portray themselves as a true prophet, but as the *greatest* of prophets. **Revelation 13:13**, speaking of "**fire** [coming] **down from heaven**," is an allusion back to the greatest Old Testament prophet, Elijah, who called down fire from heaven (1 Kings, Chapter 18). This fire coming down in Elijah's day was a vindication. It showed that he was the true prophet, representing the true God and operating in accordance with God's Word. It showed that he had the power of God and the power of Heaven behind him.

Among the Hebrews Elijah was the greatest prophet. He was the only one who was divinely dispatched. Second Kings 2:11 says, "And it came to pass, as they [Elijah and Elisha] still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Elijah occupied a unique position in Hebrew history, a unique position amongst the prophets. It was prophesied that he would appear before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. I want to give some insight as to why this false prophet tried to lay claim on being in the position of Elijah. It was because Elijah had the credentials of a true prophet. However, this "**beast**" is not a true prophet; it is nothing but an imitation. We read in Malachi 4:5-6: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." This was fulfilled in the person of John the Baptizer. John was the Elijah who was to come.

In Luke 1:13-17 the angel that appeared to Zacharias in the temple as he performed his priestly role said: "Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb [here he picked up Malachi's prophecy]. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias [which is Greek for the Hebrew *Elijah*], to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." The angel

was speaking of John the Baptist.

Look at the words of Jesus in Matthew 11:13-14: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias [Elijah], which was for to come." Jewish teaching held that when the Messiah came, He would be accompanied by Moses (the great lawgiver) and Elijah (the greatest prophet). Indeed He was accompanied; they did appear upon the arrival of the Messiah on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-3). When God chose a representation for the prophetic age, He chose Elijah.

So in our text we see what is styled in other Scriptures (such as Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) as the one who is a false prophet desiring to deceive. How does he proceed to deceive? How does Protestantism do this? First, they lay claim to be representing truth. They lay claim to be a true prophet. Secondly, they claim that their works and their position with God is divine. As **verse 13** declares, they try to style themselves as Elijah—a true and even the greatest prophet. But Revelation 13:11 reveals the falsity of such because it tells us that when this "**beast**" began to speak, "he spake as a dragon [as paganism]." To consider how paganism worked, go back to Acts, Chapter 8. There you will read that when Philip came into Samaria, he found a people who had been bewitched by sorcery and the falsities of paganism. We read in verse 9, "But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one." It is the same with Protestantism. They portray themselves as some great one, the greatest of the prophets. Acts 8:10 states, "To whom they all gave heed . . . saying, This man is the great power of God." Verse 11 tells us they all gave heed: ". . . because that of [a] long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." Simon's power over them was a paganistic power. He held them in his power by sorceries.

How does Protestantism deceive? How do they work against the people and hold the people? What does Babylon use to deceive men? Revelation 18:23 tells us, "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy *sorceries* were all nations deceived." Just as Simon the sorcerer and paganism deceived people back in the morning of time, this system of Protestantism deceives by their sorceries as well. One definition of this word *sorceries* in Revelation 18:23, according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, means "poisoning." They poison men's minds with their teachings. How could such things as Jonestown and Waco happen? Why were people enveloped in such a thing? Why do men in other false organizations have several wives and practice polygamy when the Bible says to be the husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2)? Because their minds were poisoned by the false teachings.

Speaking of the second "**beast**," **Revelation 13:13** tells us that he "**doeth great wonders.**" In reality, when we shine the light of truth upon it, we see that they are not "**wonders**" at all. Verse 12 says that this second "**beast**" (Protestantism) "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him." What type of power was that? We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." The wonders of this beast are lying wonders, or works of deception. **Revelation 13:14** says that the deception is "**by the means of those miracles.**"

Revelation 16:13 says, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon [paganism], and out of the mouth of the beast [papalism], and out of the mouth of the false prophet [Protestantism]." Verse 14 tells us that "they are the spirits of devils, working miracles." Then Revelation 19:20 says, "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them . . ." Each of these three Scripture texts speaks of miracles, but the devil cannot perform miracles, and neither can a devilish system of false religion. Second Thessalonians 2:9 in the Amplified Bible makes it clearer, stating, "with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs *and* delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders."

When John, writing of this second "**beast**," penned that "**he doeth great wonders,**" these were only wonders "**in the sight of men . . . that dwell on the earth.**" People who are in false religion (earthen, manmade systems) do not have a knowledge or an understanding of the truth. It only *appears* to be "**wonders . . . in the sight of men.**" These are not true "**wonders,**" but through the power of deception, they appear to be "**in the sight of men.**"

**Verse 13** says that "**he maketh fire come down.**" In other words, they appear to be true prophets, to truly have power with God, to be great "**in the sight of men.**" What kind of "**men**"? **Verse 13** tells us "**on the earth.**" In other words, "**men**" that are on the earthen level, the same level of this "**beast**" that Revelation 13:11 says came up out of the earth, or out of the minds of men. These things only appear to be "**wonders**" in the sight of those who dwell on an

earthen level.

We read in **verse 14**, "**And deceiveth them** [a true divine wonder or miracle would not deceive people] **that dwell on the earth** [or earthen religion] **by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.**" They were "**miracles**" only in the eyes of people whose foolish understanding was darkened, whose minds were blinded (Ephesians 4:18). It was not a true miracle, but a lying wonder, pretended "**miracles.**" People who are on a beastly level, this natural brute beast, do not have regeneration. They do not have the Spirit of God, hence no spiritual understanding. Only those whose minds were marked with the falsity of religion and who engaged in the worship of this system were deceived by these "**miracles.**"

### Deception Produced the "Image"

Let us look further into our text. What caused this "**image**" in **verse 14** to be made? Protestantism is much more deceptive than Roman Catholicism, because it has some lamb-like features. Notice that the description in Revelation 13:11 does not give us any type of a description of this beast other than to say it "had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." This is because it has taken on many different forms through the various systems of Protestantism.

This Protestant era is referred to in prophecy as "the cloudy and dark day" (Ezekiel 34:12). In Joel's prophecy, it is referred to as "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds" (Joel 2:2). Zechariah 14:6 tells us that "the light shall not be clear, nor dark." This era was a mixture of light and darkness, truth and error, meal and leaven. It was an age of compromise. This system was produced by a compromising spirit. Many Protestant organizations started with an element of truth. The Lutheran era is described in Revelation 8:10 as "a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp." It was a great star because it came to break a great darkness. But the same verse also tells us that it "fell."

The Wesleyan era is described in Revelation 9:1 as a "star," a bright luminary agent. They started with light, but they failed to hold the position God desired they occupy; and they fell. So we find the Lutheran era and the Wesleyan era—the two segments of Protestantism—both started with light, but when they failed to "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7), darkness came upon them. Jesus warned in John 12:35: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light . . ." Light is designed for one purpose: to walk in, to improve our Christian walk, to help us walk and progress in our experience and have greater understanding. Light is going to keep moving. We must move with it, or the light will outstrip us and leave us in darkness. This is exactly what happened in the dark and cloudy day. They embraced light for a season, but they failed to keep progressing and walking with it. So, they stayed in darkness.

John 12:35 continues, ". . . lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." That is exactly the condition of sectism yet today. They think they are bound for Heaven, but they are on a collision course with hell. They think they are worshipping Christ, but they are worshipping the beast and the dragon. The mixture was deceptive. Jesus prophetically gave a picture of this time period in the Parable of the Leaven in Matthew, Chapter 13. (There are seven parables in this chapter; each one has prophetic content and corresponds with one of the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day.) The Parable of the Leaven represents this first segment of the Protestant era (A.D. 1530-1730). We read in verse 33 that a woman hid leaven "in three measures of meal."

Now let us examine this. The Greek word for leaven is the word *zume*, and it means "a sour dough in a high state of fermentation." The Latin word is *fermentum*, which literally means "corruption." The ancient Plutarch penned this: "The leaven itself is born from corruption and corrupts the mass with which it is mixed." Certainly, the Bible bears that out as well. First Corinthians 5:6b states, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" Let us consider how Jesus employed this expression of *leaven* in Matthew 16:6: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matthew explained in Matthew 16:12 what the leaven was: "the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees." Here *leaven* is referred to as false doctrine. Thus, *leaven* represents corrupt, impure doctrine.

In Matthew 13:33 who is this woman that is mixing leaven (impure and corrupt doctrine) with the meal, or bread (the Word)? Look at the letter series (Revelation, Chapter 2), which also corresponds with the seven periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation. The fourth letter corresponds with the fourth parable, and in the fourth letter we find out who the woman is. Revelation 2:20 calls her "Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

During this Protestant era, Jezebel (a false prophetess) began mixing false, corrupt doctrine with the truth. Truth

was mixed with error. Martin Luther came out with the truth of Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." Then he turned right around and taught a doctrine called "consubstantiation," which teaches that one takes in Christ through the communion. That is just the opposite of "The just shall live by faith." The Protestant sects would say you need to be saved, but then they would say you cannot live holy. They would say you need to give God your heart, but the body is unimportant; there is no need for standards. This is a picture of meal and leaven all mingled together.

Let us look more closely at this Jezebel that Revelation 2:20 speaks about. Obviously, this is an allusion back to the Jezebel of the Old Testament (1 Kings 16:31). Her name actually means "Baal exalts" or "Baal is husband" or "to be unchaste." And Revelation 2:20 lets us know she was unchaste: "to seduce my servants to commit fornication." Revelation 17:5 lets us know that Babylon is "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS." This also lets us know every one of her Protestant daughters are harlots as well. In Isaiah 4:1 we read, "And in that day seven woman shall take hold of one man . . ." Isaiah was getting a picture of false religion working down through the seven periods of time. Everywhere there is truth, there is going to be falsity. This woman, Jezebel, is one of the harlots of which Roman Catholicism is the mother.

### Devilish Spirits Give Life to the Image

Look again at the Old Testament Jezebel. Not only did she worship Baal, but she introduced Baal worship to Israel. What was Baal? Second Kings 10:27 tells us that Baal was an image. (This system we are reading about in our text is also spoken of as "**an image**.") Concerning Baal, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* and *Parson's Bible Dictionary* both say this: "Each locality had its special Baal. And the various local Baals were summed up under the name of Baalim." Several places in the Scripture Baal is found in the plural (Baalim) (Judges 2:11; Judges 10:10; 1 Kings 18:18; Jeremiah 2:23; Hosea 2:17). There were many local Baalim, and each locality had its own special Baal.

**Verse 15** of our text reads, "**And he** [verse 11 tells us this is the beast, representing this system of Protestantism] **had power to give life unto the image of the beast . . .**" Although, this "**beast**" represents the system of Protestantism as a whole, the "**image**" refers to all of the various sectarian bodies that appear in likeness to the "**beast**." In Revelation 2:20, when Christ laid His charge to Jezebel, He spoke of eating "things sacrificed unto idols" (plural). There are many idols, many images. Just as each locality in the Old Testament had its own derivative of Baal, every Protestant organization had its own image: its own particular denominational structure and system. They are similar but not exactly the same. Yet, all are the same in nature and spirit. All of these Protestant organizations, the harlot daughters, have a remarkable resemblance to their mother, "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS" (Revelation 17:5). The old adage is true: "The apple doesn't fall too far from the tree." They have her nature, her characteristics, and her spirit.

What is this "**power to give life unto the image of the beast**" of which **verse 15** speaks? Second Corinthians 3:6 tells us that "the spirit giveth life." Romans 8:10 confirms this, saying that "the Spirit is life." The power of life is in the Spirit. However, this system is denoted in Revelation 16:13 as a "false prophet." So, it is certainly not the Holy Spirit that gives this system life. Revelation 16:13 also says that unclean spirits came "out of the mouth of the false prophet." Verse 14 describes these spirits as "spirits of devils." Therefore, a spirit of devils is what gave life to this system. Every sectarian organization, every denominational organization has been produced and given life by an unclean, devilish spirit. God never ordained the formation of the first sect.

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church [singular]." That is the only thing He ever established, and it came "down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 21:2). All of these other things came *up* (Revelation 13:11) out of the minds of men and were promoted by spirits of devils, because they all bring division, and they all bring confusion. "For God is not the author of confusion . . ." (1 Corinthians 14:33). The devil did a terrible work in this Protestant era by dividing everything up into various sects and denominations. Today he is doing an even more deceptive and terrible work with an ecumenical spirit that is supposedly bringing them all back together in a false unity in the formation of the eighth beast.

Let us look at another instance in the Scriptures where an image is spoken of. In Daniel 3:1 we read, "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold . . ." First, we see that it was manmade. Daniel 3:6 tells us, "And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." The

second truth we see here is that the command was for *all* to fall down before it. Its worship was to be universal. Behind the image and command, according to verse 1, was the king.

Protestantism also has a king. We read of him in Revelation 9:11, which says, "And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." This king's name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*. According to *Thayer's* it means "ruin, destruction." In the Greek his name is *Apollyon*, which according to *Thayer's* means "destroyer." This "beast" (Revelation 13:11) with its devilish, sectish spirits gives "**life**" (**Revelation 13:15**) to all the various sectarian organizations. But every one of them has a king over them, "the angel of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9:11). Every one of them is in a bottomless condition (no foundation in Bible truth). Those systems produce ruin and destruction. They are ruled over by the destroyer, and they are out to destroy the souls of men. There is not one sectarian organization that can trace its origin as a sect to divine instruction or divine foundation. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Christ never laid the foundation for any sectarian organization. Sectarianism is in a bottomless-pit condition; it is without Bible base or foundation.

### Sectism Divides

How is sectism deadly? The Bible enjoins us in 1 Corinthians 1:10 to "all speak the same thing . . . be perfectly joined together." However, sectism has separated and built walls between saints. First Corinthians 1:10 also speaks of having "the same mind." What mind is that? First Corinthians 2:16 tells us it is "the mind of Christ." If we have the same mind, we will think the same thing. It will lead us the same way, teach us the same truths, and bring us to the same place. Christ will not lead you one way and lead me another. Whenever thinking of that nature enters in, another mind and another spirit has begun to work.

First Corinthians 1:10 talks about having "the same judgment." Then, 1 Corinthians 2:15 says, "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things . . ." If we have the same Spirit, we will have the same judgment. What was working on this Corinthian congregation? If you read 1 Corinthians 1:12, you will find they were divided up over men: ". . . every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas." That is exactly the spirit that worked in this Protestant era. They said, "I am of Luther" or "I am of Calvin" or "I am of Zwingli." We must be careful yet today of pledging our allegiance to men and letting men divide us. Revelation 16:13 tells us that these "spirits" have "come out." These spirits are no longer merely housed in the religious systems they gave rise to, but they are working right around the camp of the saints. A true man of God will never divide God's people. Carnality, following the flesh, failing to have the same mind and the same spirit is what causes people to divide and to separate.

On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Peter wanted to build three tabernacles (or three churches), the Lord distinctly told him, "This is my beloved Son . . . hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5). After that, the Scriptures say he "saw no man, save Jesus only." Yet today, if we will "hear ye him" (Christ), we will be in harmony with everyone else who hears Him. I do not mean to imply that everyone who was ever in these organizations back in this dark and cloudy day was unregenerate. God's people were housed within Babel's walls during this Protestant era. But the men who raised up these organizations were *not* operating under the direction of the Holy Spirit. They failed to keep walking in light and stopped and built "**an image**."

Sectism builds walls and divides men. Every sectarian organization has, as **verse 14** of our text describes it, "**an image**." The Greek word is *eikon*, which means "a likeness." Every one of these sectarian denominational organizations has built "**an image**," or a likeness, to the beast (papalism). Just as papalism, each one has a human head and manmade doctrines. Each attempts to enforce those doctrines with physical force. Each brings a division from truth. Papalism presumed to take the place of *God*, but Protestantism presumes to take the place of the *Word and the Spirit*.

Second Thessalonians 2:4 gives the description that Paul prophesied concerning papalism and its leader. He spoke of one "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Papalism presumed to have a man usurp such a position. The Latin words *Dominus Deus Noster Papa* are part of the old Latin mass, which mean "Our Lord God the Pope." But when Protestantism (the "**image**") came along, they presumed to take the place of the Word and the Spirit. Revelation 11:10 says that they "shall send gifts one to another." However, 1 Corinthians 12:1, 7-8 lets us know that the giving

of gifts is an operation of the Holy Spirit.

Speaking of gifts, Proverbs 25:14 reads, "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." In other words, it looks promising, but you do not get anything out of it. Jude described it in verse 12 as "clouds they are without water [in other words, they look promising; they look like they are going to bring refreshment, that which is necessary to life, but they are just an imitation], carried about of winds [winds of doctrine; Ephesians 4:14]." Protestantism is just "**an image**," a likeness to papalism.

Finally, "after three days and an half [or 350 years] the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet" (Revelation 11:11). The Protestant era was forever broken. Concerning that three and an half prophetic days, J. H. Merle D'Aubigne in *History of the Reformation*, Book 2, Chapter 9, says this: "It has been said that the three last centuries, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth, may be conceived as an immense battle of three days' duration." This prophetic three and an half days began in 1530 when the Articles of Faith of the Lutheran Church, were devised at the Diet of Augsburg in Augsburg, Germany. It ended in 1880 when Brother D. S. Warner and others began to preach the unity of the faith.

The Protestant era is comprised of two parts: the Lutheran era (1530 to 1730) and the Wesleyan era (1730 to 1880). We can substantiate the time period of the Wesleyan era by looking at Revelation 9:5 and 10. Both talk about "five months" under the fifth angel. Using thirty days to a Jewish calendar month, 5 months times 30 days is 150 days. The measurement for prophetic time delineation is each day for a year (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6). So, one hundred fifty days is 150 years, the time from 1730 to 1880. That was just the segment when the fourth and fifth trumpet angels sounded—the Wesleyan era. Two segments, a total of 350 years (1530 to 1880), comprised the entirety of the Protestant era, an age which had a mixture of truth and error, light and darkness, meal and leaven. It was indeed a day of deceptive mixture, a "cloudy and dark day" (Ezekiel 34:12).

## The Mark and the Number

**Revelation 13:16** And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

**17** And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

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

### Everyone Received a Mark

As we begin to examine this text, we must first of all notice that it begins with the word "**And**." This tells us that it was written in continuity with the previous verses. The second thing we must do is identify who the "**he**" is in **verse 16**. The word "**he**" is a pronoun, and the noun is found in Revelation 13:11, which says, "And I beheld another *beast* coming up out of the earth." We found in prior study that this "beast coming up out of the earth" is the religious system of Protestantism. Revelation 13:12 tells us that they worshiped the first beast. Also, John said in verse 15 that they "worship the image." So we find that this is a system of worship. We also found that this system of worship is contrary to the truth, because verse 14 says that "he deceiveth." Thus, this is *false* religion or *false* worship. It came up out of the earth, or out of the minds of men.

As we begin to look at **verse 16**, there are two aspects we can consider. The first is a temporal aspect: "**And he causeth all, both small and great** [regardless of one's social standing, no one was exempt from the power of this system], **rich and poor** [financial status did not exempt one from the influence and power of this system], **free and bond** [civil position could not cause one to be immune from the powers of these religious organizations] . . ." Nothing of a natural or temporal level, whether it be societal position, financial bearing, or civil position, could insulate one from this mark. **Verse 16** tells us that "**he causeth all . . . to receive a mark.**" Remember, we are speaking about what occurred during this Protestant era of time (A.D. 1530-1880). During that time "**all**" were impacted by this beast, or this religious system. This text is not teaching some future coming event where "**all**" *will be* affected, but rather a condition during the Protestant era where "**all**" *were* affected.

Next let us view the spiritual aspect of **verse 16**. During the Protestant era even the minds of great men of God became marked with false teaching, because this was an era of time when the Word and the Spirit lay dead in the street. Men began to formulate doctrines and creeds, and they operated as the heads of religious organizations. During this dark and cloudy day, all minds were clouded with the teachings of Protestantism, even great men of God as well as those who held small ranks and positions. The "**rich and poor**" (those who were spiritually "**rich**" as well as those who were spiritually "**poor**") and the "**free and bond**" (those who were unsaved—"bond"—and those who were saved—"free") were influenced in this era as well. While this system dominated the religious landscape, "**free and bond**" were unequally yoked together. The Apostle Paul admonished against being "unequally yoked" in 2 Corinthians 6:14.

During this time an individual who had true "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10) and who had truly gained an experience of salvation would be sitting right beside one who was there merely because of influence or pressure brought to bear by those in the audience. That system would take them both in and unequally join them together. It was not until 1880, when D.S. Warner and others came forth heralding the truth, that people were able to have the "Father's name written in their foreheads" (Revelation 14:1). They were not able to understand those truths until the sixth-seal age when God brought the understanding.

As we look more closely at this "**mark**," we realize that here is where one of the most common misconceptions concerning these verses lie. False religion teaches that there is coming a time when the antichrist will arise and cause everyone to get a mark *on* their forehead and *on* their right hand. The Bible does not say that. It says "**in their right hand, or in their foreheads.**" This is also found in Revelation 14:9 ("*in his forehead, or in his hand*") and in Revelation

20:4 ("*upon* their foreheads, or *in* their hands"). (The actual Greek word for *upon* is *epi*, and it means "in.") So this is not some sort of an external mark that is going to be *on* but rather, this is a mark that is "**in**."

What do the words "**in their right hand**" actually convey to us? When Paul was going up to Jerusalem to meet the brethren, he penned in Galatians 2:9 that "James, Cephas [or Peter], and John . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." The "**right hand**" represents fellowship. That word *fellowship* in the Greek is *koinonia*, which means "share in common." It means they shared a common spirit, a common doctrine, a common burden, a common ministry. They shared a common salvation, and because of what they were able to discern, they reached forth their "right hands of fellowship." They bade Godspeed to them in their labors and in their works and let them go forth unto the uncircumcision, or unto the heathen.

We see this "**right hand**" denoting fellowship in the Old Testament as well. In 2 Kings 10:11 we find that "Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel." Then we read in verses 15-16: "And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart [there is the fellowship—'my heart . . . with thy heart'; both being 'right,' as true fellowship meets in the common experience]? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot." They shared a common heart and a common purpose. They were in fellowship.

When our text tells us this "**mark**" was either "**in their right hand, or in their foreheads**," the word "**in**" is important. What is in your forehead? It is your mind, the place where your thinking takes place. This Protestant "**beast**" was marking people's minds, their way of thinking. He indoctrinated them. False religion is still out to "**mark**" people yet today. Why? Because what we believe governs what we do and how we live. If we believe wrong, we will act wrong, and we will live wrong. For instance, people who have been marked with that "sin more or less" doctrine, live in sin. When they get to thinking in their minds that "you can't live above sin," what they believe affects how they live. The enemy, through false religion, is out to "**mark**" the minds of men. Then, they only extend the hand of fellowship to people who have that "**mark**," or like indoctrination.

When God called Ezekiel, He told Ezekiel that Israel would not listen, for "I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead" (Ezekiel 3:8-9). Certainly God was not talking about literal foreheads; He was not talking about a head-butting contest. He was saying that their minds would be solid, unchangeable. Ezekiel would not be able to influence their thinking. So, "**in their foreheads**" symbolizes in their minds.

When our text speaks of the "**mark**," it is the same "**mark** [singular] **in their right hand, or in their foreheads**." It is the same "**mark**" in both places. That tells us that the "**mark**" they have in their mind is the same "**mark**" that produces their fellowship. Without that "**mark**," one will not receive the hand of fellowship. This "**mark**" is not, as false religion advocates, something looming on the horizon in the future. But rather, it is something that has been working and marking the minds of people ever since the Protestant era, and it is still marking men's minds today.

### The Mark Is Spiritual, Not Literal

If you study this expression "**mark**" throughout the Scriptures, you will find that this could not possibly be taken in a literal sense. In Psalm 37:37 David penned, "Mark the perfect man . . ." Does that mean you are supposed to put a literal mark on him? No! David was saying you should identify them, give them specific notice and attention, place it firmly in your mind. This is not external or literal. Psalm 48:13, speaking of Zion, says to "Mark ye well her bulwarks." Zion is a spiritual place. Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us it represents the church. This is not speaking of an external mark.

God told Ezekiel in Ezekiel 44:5 to "mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary." Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 16:17, where he said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Are you supposed to go out and place a physical mark on their "**foreheads**" and on their "**right hand**"? That is what false religion says **Revelation 13:16** is talking about. It is no different than these other Scriptures. I repeat, this is not a literal marking.



He is telling us to "identify them, give them specific notice and attention, place it firmly in your mind." Why? Mark them so they do not mark you. They will "**mark**" your mind; they will get you to thinking wrong. Then, when they get you thinking wrong, they will stick out the hand of fellowship and take you in.

We read in Philippians 3:17-18 why we should "**mark**" them: ". . . mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample [here is the positive aspect]. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ [here is the negative aspect]." The meaning of the word *mark* in Philippians is the same as it is in the Revelation. False religion is out to "**mark**" men's minds with their deceptive teachings. Yet today the battle is still a battle for the mind. Why do you think they saturate the radio airwaves and fill people's mailboxes with all types of religious literature? The enemy is still out to "**mark**" men's minds.

In 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 the Apostle said: "(For the weapons of our warfare [we are in a warfare, but it is not a physical, fleshly warfare] are not carnal [the Greek says 'fleshly'], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) [what are these strongholds?] Casting down imaginations [the Greek says 'reasonings'], and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought . . . ." What is the battle over? It is our thought life. The enemy is after our thinking. This is why 1 Peter 1:13 tells us, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind . . . ."

False doctrines, false teachings deceive. They "**mark**" the mind with false thinking, which leads to wrong acting and wrong living. Someone may ask, "Is it that crucial what I think and what I believe?" Proverbs 23:7 tells us, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he . . . ." What we think, what we believe governs what we do and how we live. What our minds embrace dictates how we behave and ultimately what we are. Thus, what we believe becomes very crucial. This is why John warned in 2 John 10-11: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Why did John say "receive him not"? If you receive him, he will want you to receive "**a mark**." That is the only reason he knocked on your door. That is the only reason he wants to talk to you: he wants access to your mind. He wants to alter your thinking.

Remember, this is not a literal mark, but a spiritual mark. And every sectarian organization has "**a mark**." Revelation 14:9 states, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand." We found in prior study that the "image" represents the various sectarian organizations that comprise this system of Protestantism. Every one of those individual images has their own "**mark**," their own doctrine, their own teaching, and their own persuasion. And behind every "**mark**" is a spirit. First Timothy 4:1 tells us that they are "seducing spirits." Behind every sectarian organization is a spirit that is out to seduce.

**Verse 17** of our text states, "**And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark . . . .**" To understand this more clearly, let us look at what the Bible says in terms of buying and selling. In Proverbs 23:23 the wise man said, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." From this we can see that our text is telling us that down in sectism (or Babylon) you do not "**buy or sell**," you do not deal in spiritual goods or commodities, unless you have their "**mark**." You do not preach in their pulpit nor do you hold a position in their organization unless you have their "**mark**." Once you are marked in your mind by their thinking and their doctrine ("**in their foreheads**") and you have received the hand of fellowship ("**in their right hand**"), then they will let you "**buy or sell**."

To further confirm this, we can look at the corresponding prophetic parable of the Gospel Day, the fifth parable. This parable prophetically represents the second segment of the Protestant era (A.D. 1730-1880). Matthew 13:44 says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Certainly, this is not speaking in a literal sense, for a treasure *in* the field is not something that lies on the surface. This is talking about the mine of God's Word. Proverbs 2:4 admonishes to search "for her as for hid treasures [Proverbs 2:1 explains this is found in God's words and commandments]." The Word is that field where all of these treasures are hid. So, it is talking here about buying and selling, or dealing in God's Word, spiritual commodities.

Prophetically, the time setting for this text in Revelation is 1530-1880. During that era it did not matter if a man was saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, living a holy life, and called of God to preach. They required him to have their mark: "**causeth all . . . to receive a mark**" (**verse 16**). A man must have their "**mark**," their doctrine, be a graduate

of their school, and be taken into fellowship with them before he could fill their pulpits. When Jesus taught in the temple, "the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15). In other words: "Who is He to be teaching us? He never went through our schools." (If He had gone through their schools, He would have been in the same shape they were in.) Jesus told them in John 7:16, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." It was divine. When considering the Book of Revelation, people often forget that the man who received it was an "unlearned and ignorant" man (Acts 4:13). He was just a fisherman, but this was the one whom God chose.

As we give thought to this idea of not being able to **"buy or sell,"** I would like to quote an excerpt from *The Christian Church, Its Rise and Progress* by H. M. Riggle, pages 341 and 342: "A man must have the doctrines of Babylon and belong to one of the various Protestant sects or he will not be allowed to preach in their houses of worship. A few years a brother in the ministry went into a certain town to find a place to conduct a series of holiness meetings. He was directed by a Presbyterian lady to their pastor, whom she said was a believer in the doctrine of holiness.

"When the brother called on the minister and made known his errand, the first question asked him was this: 'Are you a member of the Presbyterian Church?' The brother answered in the negative. He did not have the name of the beast. The next question that greeted him was this: 'Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith to be orthodox?' He answered, 'No, sir.' He did not have the mark of the beast. The last question was: 'Do you belong to any of the various Protestant denominations?' The brother said, 'No.' He did not have the number of his name. The answer was: 'You cannot have our house.' This explains what is meant by not allowing anyone to buy or sell, preach the Gospel, except those who have the name, mark, and number of the name of the beast. This has a real fulfillment in Protestantism today."

### "The Number of a Man"

Notice in **verse 17** of our text the words **"the mark"** and **"the number of his name"** are separated by the word **"or."** This reveals to us that **"the mark"** and **"the number"** are two totally separate things. False religion commonly says that **"the mark"** is **"the number,"** but the Bible does not say that. The word **"or"** lets us know that there was a distinction between them. In Revelation 14:11 we find **"the mark"** is related to the name, not to a number: "the mark of his [image] name."

Let us clarify who **"the number"** is identifying. **Verse 17** says, ". . . save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This **"his"** reverts back to the previous phrase: **"the beast."** To understand which beast this is referring to (the first beast or the second beast), let us view the context closely. Revelation 13:11 introduces us to the second beast: "another beast." This is the only time throughout the remainder of Chapter 13 that this word "beast" refers to the second beast. Look at how the word *"beast"* is used in every verse thereafter: "first beast" (verse 12); "the beast, which had the wound by a sword [Revelation 13:3 tells us this is the first beast]" (verse 14); "the image of the beast" (verse 15). So when we come to **verse 17**, it stands to reason that it is talking about the first beast because that is the beast spoken of throughout the duration of that chapter.

The question may arise, "Why is this verse located in this position?" After dealing with the Protestant era, why do these verses go back and deal with the first beast? The reason is to reveal to us that in all of composite Babylon, there is **"the mark . . . or the name . . . or the number."** All of spiritual Babylon consists of people who are either under the domination of the man who bears this **"number,"** or they are held in darkness of the doctrines of these images.

Why does this portion of the vision close out with a portrayal of **"a man" (verse 18)**? It is because he is the head of the **"beast."** Every sectarian organization, according to Revelation 13:14, is "an image to the beast" with manmade heads. In reality these verses are letting us know that there is no difference between Protestantism and papalism. All are dominated by men, all are manmade systems with manmade doctrines that are leading men's souls astray.

Babylon, as a whole, is nothing more than organizations of man. No one of them is any more Biblical than the other. All follow the common error of a human head and manmade bodies. All of Babylon is best represented in **"a man"** trying to take Christ's place and position. The Pope calls himself "the vicar of Jesus Christ." In Revelation 11:7 Protestantism killed the true vicars (the Word and the Spirit) and took their places. In Revelation 4:7 when John saw a picture of the redeemed of all ages and the nature the church would have to take on in this particular Protestant age, he said that the living creature "had a face as a man," letting us know it was under man's domination, or human rule.

When **verse 18** speaks of "**the number of a man,**" it is singular. In other words, this beast is best known by one man. One scholar wrote: "The note of the Dewey Version [the version authorized by Roman Catholicism] upon these words deserve attention. 'The numerical letters of his name shall make up his number.'"

Next we read that "**his number is Six hundred threescore and six.**" I want to lift a verse in Deuteronomy 19:15, which says, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." I would like to give the two or three witnesses that will establish the matter. Until the separate, numerical system was introduced by the Arabs in the tenth century (A.D. 1000), letters of the alphabet doubled as numbers. We even employ this system today: MCMLXXIX in Roman numerals means 1979. When you ascribe Roman numerical expressions to the words Vicarius Filii Dei, which is the inscription on the mitre of the popes of Rome, meaning "Vicar of the Son of God," you get 666, the number found in **Revelation 13:18**.

The original name of Rome was Saturnia. That is verified by the historians Ovid, Pliny, and Aurelius Victor. This name meant "the city of Saturn." Saturn was another name for Nimrod who, according to Genesis 10:8-10, was the first king of Babylon. It was the secret name revealed only to the initiates of the Chaldean mysteries, which in Chaldee, spelled with four letters was "Stur." When you ascribe numerical expression to this Chaldean expression, you get 666.

S = 60
T = 400
U = 6
R = 200
—

If you take the Greek letters of the word "Lateinos" (the language of Rome in all of its official acts; the same word also means "Latin man" and is but the Greek form of the name Romulus, from which the city of Rome is named) and ascribe numerical expression to each letter, you will get a total of 666. Lastly, Lateinos or Romulus in the Hebrew language is *Romith*, and Romith equals 666.

**Revelation 13:18** says, "... the number of the beast ... is the number of a man." One man best represents this system. He is the man who wears the inscription "Vicarius Filii Dei." He is the man who officially speaks in Latin (Lateinos). He is the one who rules from Rome (Romith). He holds a predominant position over modern-day Babylon (Stur). What do these represent?

The office of the popes of Rome. Here beyond any fear of contradiction are four different languages, showing that he who wears the inscription, the city from which he rules, and the language which he speaks all point to the same man of sin, the son of perdition, the office of the popes of Rome.

I know there are those who propagate what I term "hyper-spiritualizing" of some of these symbols. They believe it is more spiritualized than what I have presented here.

However, to not use these as identifying factors and to spiritualize them exclusively, we would have no historical reference point. In so doing we eliminate our ability to conclusively prove the identify of these systems. Thus leaving it so historically vague and unsubstantiated is to risk discrediting our own message. Certainly, there are other applications that can be made from these symbols, but we must never discard their prophetic position in the scheme of the Gospel Day or in church history.

We see here in our text a very vivid picture portrayed, revealing to us how foreign the practices of Babylon are to the truth. It portrays how false religion is dominated by men who are usurpers and who are out to dupe and deceive by indoctrination. Sadly, for 1260 years of papalism and 350 years of Protestantism (a total of 1610 years; Revelation 14:20), God's people had to labor with the prevailing condition being the dark night of Catholicism and the dark and cloudy day of Protestantism. But just as God's children were held in Egyptian bondage (a type of Babylon; Revelation 11:8), God's people in this era were held in spiritual bondage. Just as God heard the cry of His people in Egyptian bondage (Exodus 2:23-25), God heard the cry of His people in the Wesleyan era (Revelation 6:9-11). There was a

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

V	5	F	0
I	1	I	1
C	100	L	50
A	0	I	1
R	0	I	1
I	1	D	500
U	5	E	0
S	0	I	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>554</b>
<b>Grand Total (112 + 554)</b>		<b>666</b>	

holiness people, yearning for judgment to be poured out on the earthen systems of religion that had constructed walls of denominationalism that separated God's people. They cried out for God to turn His judgment loose to break down those sectarian walls so that God's people could come out from sectarian bondage and be joined together.

In 1880 God raised up a brother to herald essentially the same call as Moses did. At God's command Moses cried in Exodus 8:1, "Let my people go, that they may serve me." The cry of Daniel Sydney Warner and other brethren was, "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4). As Moses poured out plagues on Egypt and led God's people out to Canaan, so in this evening time, the ministry began to pour out the plagues (Revelation 15:1), and they led a people out to Zion.

Those souls under the altar who were crying were not disembodied spirits. Souls represent people in symbolic language. Under the altar (Christ is our altar), they were in submission to Christ. They had white robes; they were a holiness people, and true holiness yearns for unity. They were crying for vengeance (Revelation 6:10) to be poured out on the earth (earthen or manmade religion). When the trumpet sounded, the walls came down, just like the walls at old Jericho. They wanted that sixth trumpet to sound and the walls of Babylon to come down so they would no longer be separated.

When truth was poured out, the next scene is Revelation 14:1, which says, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion . . ." This is the first time we have seen the Lamb (Christ) since the morning time. Christ is back in His rightful position in the church, and His people are standing with Him. The day of darkness and the day of darkness and cloudiness is forever ended. Now, all do not have to "**receive a mark.**" Thank God, a brighter day has dawned!

In that Protestant era there was nothing better than Protestantism. There was not enough light and understanding for people to avoid being marked in their minds. But now, thank God, there is another mark. You can have the Father's name in your forehead (Revelation 14:1). You can understand the truth about the Father, about the family of God, and about the Church of God. You can have that true teaching in your mind.

## "The Lamb . . . on Mount Sion"

**Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.**

### The "Lamb" Symbolizes Christ

As we begin to view this portion of the Revelator's panoramic vision, we see that the scene has again changed. In the prior chapters of the fifth series (Chapters 12 and 13), the Lord gave John a vision predominantly of the systems that would arise throughout the Gospel Day. As those systems came on the stage of action, they worked as opposing forces to the church and to truth. They were to foster, as Revelation 12:7 states, a "war in heaven," or as Revelation 13:7 depicts it, they would "make war with the saints." They would propagate systems and doctrines and practices, as Revelation 13:14 so vividly tells us, that "deceiveth." But in our Scripture text we have a most encouraging depiction, one that stands in stark contrast to the previous scenes in this series. Here "**a Lamb**" is standing "**on the mount Sion.**" This period of time that commences with A.D. 1880 is commonly called "the evening time" or "evening light" (Zechariah 14:7).

When John proclaimed in **verse 1**, "**And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb . . .**," we must ever remember the fact that he was receiving a "vision" (Revelation 9:17). We must also be reminded that the nature of the language of visions is symbolic language (Revelation 1:1). Here in **verse 1**, as throughout the Revelation, the word "**Lamb**" is capitalized, denoting a reference to deity. Although it is a common noun, the word "**Lamb**" appears twenty-nine times in the Revelation, and it is capitalized every time, with the notable exception of Revelation 13:11, which describes the second beast as having "two horns *like a lamb.*" It is not capitalized there because that was not a divine work, but a deceptive work.

To define exactly who this "**Lamb**" is, go to John 1:29 where John the Baptizer beheld Christ coming and declared, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This "**Lamb**" symbolizes Jesus Christ. We see this again in 1 Peter 1:19, when the Apostle Peter, writing of Christ's sacrifice, described Him as "a lamb without blemish and without spot." What is the significance of seeing Christ signified in this manner at this juncture in the prophetic scheme and why is He referred to as the "**Lamb**"? Why was He not referred to in some other manner, such as "the door" (John 10:9); "the true vine" (John 15:1); "the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25); or "the good shepherd" (John 10:11)? Why this particular imagery in this particular place in the prophetic scheme? This portrayal of "**Lamb**" depicts Christ's sacrificial work. We are first introduced to this portrayal in Revelation 5:6. There the "**Lamb**" is depicted as "a Lamb as it had been slain." Revelation 5:12 also speaks of "the Lamb that was slain."

Much of the imagery employed in the Revelation is drawn from the Old Testament. Ezekiel 46:13 tells us, "Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD of a lamb of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it every morning." The lamb was to be sacrificed every morning. It was a sacrificial animal. Likewise, it was Christ's sacrificial work that produced the church (Acts 20:28). Just as a sacrifice under the old economy yielded its life, gave of its blood, so Christ is the antitype and the fulfillment of those Old Testament sacrificial lambs.

As the result of Christ's sacrificial work, not only is He back in view, but the church is back in view as well. We have not seen Christ in His rightful position in the church nor have we seen Mount Zion (representing a visible view of the church) since the morning time. Our Scripture text also reveals to us that one truly cannot receive a vision of the "**Lamb**" down in false religion. One cannot receive a true vision of the sacrificial work or of what He came to purchase while down in the realms of Babylon. False religion has "trodden under foot the Son of God" (Hebrews 10:29). We read of this happening in Revelation 11:2, which tells us that the "holy city," representing the church, was trodden under foot for a prophetic "forty and two months" (the 1,260 years from 270 and 1530). It had to go underground in the catacombs and caves.

In Matthew 25:40 Jesus said, ". . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When they trod the holy city under foot, they trod the Son of God under foot.

You cannot divorce Christ from His church. You cannot divorce a head from its body; they are one entity. Paul wrote in Galatians 1:13, "For ye have heard of my conversation [that word in the Greek means 'conduct'] in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." Yet, when Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road, He said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me*?" (Acts 9:4). Christ and His church are not separate.

We also read in Hebrew 10:29, ". . . and hath counted the blood of the covenant [the blood that purchased the Church of God; Acts 20:28], wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing . . ." What does that tell us? If you will go back to Revelation, Chapter 9, you will see where the sixth angel began to sound (the same time period that we are now studying, the sixth seal). Verse 13 says, "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar . . ." What was put on the "four horns of the golden altar"? Again, this is an allusion back to the Old Testament economy. In Exodus, Chapter 30, God gave instructions to Moses concerning the construction of the Old Testament tabernacle in the wilderness. Concerning the golden altar, the altar of incense, verse 10 says, "And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering . . ." The blood of the sin offering is what was put on the horns of that altar.

In the New Testament our sin offering is Christ. Hebrews 9:24-26 says: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands [a reference to the Old Testament tabernacle that had been physically constructed with the hands of men], which are the figures of the true [figurative expressions that serve as types to depict spiritual realities]; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he [referring to Christ; verse 24] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Another Scripture that shows Christ as our sin offering is found in Hebrews 10:10-11: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices [speaking of those old Levitical sacrifices], which can never take away sins." The Levitical sacrifices could only give a year's reprieve. Each year on the Day of Atonement, they rolled their sins forward another year, until they finally rolled them to the foot of the Cross. There Jesus took them and "offered one sacrifice [Himself] for sins for ever" (Hebrews 10:12).

The "voice from the four horns of the golden altar" (Revelation 9:13) was the voice of Christ's blood, crying out, saying that sectism, denominationalism, division had done a terrible disservice to the body of Christ. The body that His blood was shed for had been broken up during that dark and cloudy day. Just as the blood of Abel cried from the ground and required judgment to come forth, so the blood of Christ was requiring that judgment come forth. That is why the sixth-seal brethren came out preaching judgment against the organizations of men that had divided God's people.

### **Christ Is Restored to His Rightful Position**

In our text, we see Christ, the One who purchased the Church of God, restored back to a visible position—not only visible in position, but visible in operations. We also see the Word and the Spirit resurrected from where they had been lying dead in the street of Sodom and Egypt (Babylon) during the Protestant era. Revelation 11:11-12 tells us: "And after three days and an half [the 350 years from 1530 to 1880 that comprise the Protestant era] the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven [not God's Heaven, but to 'heavenly places in Christ Jesus'; Ephesians 2:6] in a cloud . . ." Hebrews 12:1 describes this "cloud" as "so great a cloud of witnesses." The only way the Word and the Spirit could ever stand on their feet was when God had a people who were willing to let the Word and the Spirit have their way. They were able to stand to their feet when a people responded to a message, letting the Spirit of God have His way and incorporating the Word of God into their daily living. When the people stood up, the Word and the Spirit stood up.

In our text, when Christ is in His rightful position, we see the Church of God restored to a visible position. You cannot separate Christ from His church. When He came back into visible view in His rightful position, the church also came back into visible view in its rightful position. I repeat, it was not only in its rightful position, but in operation as well. False religion promotes many supposed ways to deal with sin and has many religious bodies, but our text portrays

a "**Lamb**" (singular). There is only *one* sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 9:26), only *one* way to deal with sin, and only *one* body (Ephesians 4:4)—the Church of God (Acts 20:28). First Corinthians 12:13 tells us, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized [immersed, inducted] into one body . . ." The Spirit of God will never put you into a manmade organization, a sectarian body, or a denomination. The Spirit of God will only induct you into one thing: the *one* body of Christ, the Church of the Living God.

The Church of God is more than just having a sign over the door or in the yard that says "Church of God." It is a place where Christ is in His rightful position as Head of the church. It is a place where the Word and the Spirit are allowed free right of way, a place where they are the true vicars of the church. We live in a time when people often have the right name, perhaps even have much of the right doctrine, but they do not have the right Spirit. John told us that the Word and the Spirit agree (1 John 5:7-8). When people who once had light on various parts of the Word start backing up on that light, that grieves the Spirit and He leaves. When He leaves, another spirit comes in.

"**Mount Sion**" is the only place the "**Lamb**" will stand. He "**stood on the mount Sion.**" To understand several truths revealed here to us, first of all, we need to identify what "**mount Sion**" represents. Hebrews 12:22 states, "But ye are come [present tense; this was occurring in A.D. 63 to 69 when this epistle was penned] unto mount Sion . . ." This is representative of the "church" (Hebrews 12:23). In this picture of Christ on "**the mount Sion,**" John saw Jesus only. Just as the Apostles on that Mount of Transfiguration, who after hearing God's voice say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," they "lifted up their eyes, [and] they saw no man, save Jesus only" (Matthew 17:5, 8). When John said, "**I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood,**" in other words, he was saying, "I saw the same thing I saw on the Mount of Transfiguration." Man was out of the picture, and it was Jesus only. Nobody else can occupy the place Jesus occupies. In Matthew 17:4 Peter said that they should "make here three tabernacles." But after God finished speaking, "they saw no man, save Jesus only" (Matthew 17:8). Christ *alone* is the Head of the church (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18), not some eldership or some ministerial body. Anything that has more than one head would be a monstrosity.

"**Mount Sion**" had been out of public view since the morning-time apostasy. It began to go out of view in A.D. 270, and it did not come back into view, as a visible church, until A.D. 1880. I want to quote an excerpt from *History of the Reformation* by J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, Book Number 2, Chapter Number 9: "It has been said that the last three centuries, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth, may be conceived as an immense battle of the three days' duration [there is the 'three days and an half'; Revelation 11:11]." In January 1880 Brother Daniel Sydney Warner was given complete charge of the publication *Herald of Gospel Freedom*. In an article that he entitled "Prophetic Times," he wrote the following: "At the end of three and an half days [350 years, which added to 1530 brings us to the year 1880] the Spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet. This brings us to the present reformation [1880]." D'Aubigne wrote in Book 15, Chapter 1, these words: "The nineteenth century is called upon to resume the work which the sixteenth century was unable to accomplish." This famed historian realized it was up to the nineteenth century (the 1800's) to fulfill the reformation that had begun in the sixteenth century but had not been completed. Brother Warner and other brethren had the wisdom and insight to realize that the three and an half prophetic days was the 350 years of the Protestant era and that they were to end in 1880. Brother Warner and others took pen in hand and began to expose the errors of sectism, sounding the call of Revelation 18:4, "Come out of her, my people."

The appearance of "**mount Sion**" in our text was due to a people who had been grieved by sectism. In Revelation 6:10 we found souls under the altar, crying out for judgment. This was during the fifth seal (1730 to 1880), the Wesleyan era. These souls were not disembodied spirits, but they were a holiness people, grieved by the fact that sectarian walls divided them from their brethren. Each one of them had "white robes" (Revelation 6:11), which is also described as "fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). These were holiness people, who were under the altar (Christ). In other words, they were in submission to Christ. They were crying out for judgment to be poured out on the earth (earthen, manmade religion), because true holiness yearns for fellowship and unity. They were told that just as soon as enough people died out, God was going to do as they requested. As soon as God got a people in position, Revelation 6:12 says that He "opened the sixth seal." That is when we see the "**Lamb**" and "**mount Sion**" come back into visible view, and the great evening-time glory began.

## Zion Is a Mountain of Light

The Scriptures let us know that the evening-time glory is to far surpass the morning glory. Haggai 2:9 reads, "The glory of this latter house [the evening time] shall be greater than of the former [the morning-time] . . ." Isaiah 30:26, speaking of this seventh-seal period of time in which you and I live, says, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days . . ." The evening time light will be seven times brighter than what it was in the morning time. How is this to happen? James 5:7 tells us that "the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early [the morning time] and latter [the evening time] rain." It took both the early and the latter rain to produce the church. According to Deuteronomy 32:2 rain is "doctrine." To see fruit in this evening time, we must get back to some doctrine. When these sixth-seal brethren came out preaching, they did not preach, "Love the Lord," "Be born again," or "Jesus loves you." They preached doctrine.

In our text why is the New Testament church represented by the expression "**mount Sion**"? Again, it is an allusion back to the Old Testament economy. Second Samuel 5:7 tells us, "Nevertheless, David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David." David is a type of Christ (prophet, priest, and king), and Christ in prophecy is referred to as "David." In Ezekiel 37:24 Christ is prophetically referred to as David: "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them." David died in 1005 B.C., and these words were written by Ezekiel in the proximity of 587 B.C., 428 years after the literal David died. This is a prophecy. Also, in the Hebrew language *David* means "beloved." When God spoke out of the cloud on the Mount of Transfiguration, He said this is "my beloved," in other words, "this is My David." So Christ is referred to in prophecy as *David*.

Go back again to 2 Samuel 5:7, and let us look at *Zion*. It became the city of David. The Hebrew word for *Zion* is the word *Tsiyown*. According to *Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon*, it means "a sunny place, a sunny mountain." Mount Zion is a place where people can receive light, a place where the sun shines brightly in all its brilliance. The dark night and the dark and cloudy day are over. Zechariah 14:7 says that "at evening time it shall be light." "**Mount Sion**" is a sunny mountain; it is a mountain of light.

The Hebrew word for *Zion* (*Tsiyown*) also means "a mountain, a castle, a fortress." The same Hebrew word is found in 2 Samuel 5:9 ("fort"), in 2 Samuel 22:2 ("fortress"), and in 1 Chronicles 11:5 ("castle"). This shows us that the church is not only a place where the Prophet, Priest, and King dwells, but it is also a place where people can find security, safety, and protection. We read in Psalm 48:1-2: "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." Zion is where the great King dwells, and in our day the great King is Jesus. Concerning this mountain, *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* says, "Mount Zion is the southern terminus and western tongue of the high tableland and is the highest of its hills." That is just as Isaiah described in Isaiah 2:2, when he said, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." The church is in an exalted position, a position that she alone occupies. There is nothing almost like her.

Let us get the literal picture of Mount Zion and the types this account represents. In 1 Samuel 16:13 David was anointed king, just as Christ was anointed King in the morning time. But for many years David was denied his rightful position while another man filled that role of the king. First Samuel 16:14 tells us that an evil man ruled as king. So, David had to resort to the wilderness, just as the morning-time church had to resort to the wilderness. David was pursued and chased and hunted down, just as the church through the Dark Ages was hunted down. All this occurred while this "one man" ruled. Finally, the rule of that man ended.

Then we read of the Ark (the place where the presence of God dwelled) being brought to Abinadab's house. From there the Ark was moved to Obedom's house, and then it was brought back to Zion. What is the type? This one man who ruled (Saul) is a picture of popery. The Ark being in Abinadab's house and Obedom's house is a picture of the two segments of Protestantism. The Ark made a little more progress, but then it stopped. When David brought the Ark to Zion, we see a picture in type of the evening time. First Chronicles 16:1 says, "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it . . ." That was right in the city of David, in Mount Zion.



When we view the types, we see that they portray a picture. Mount Zion is a place of light. When Jesus began His public ministry, He commenced with the inaugural message that many times we call the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5:14 He said: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill [the Greek word is *oros*, which means 'mountain'] cannot be hid." This city (the church) is a city of light. The church is the beacon of light in a sin-darkened world. If the world is ever going to see any light, they are only going to see it shining from one place—Mount Zion, the Church of the Living God. Every other religious organization has too much cloudiness, which obscures the light. In Revelation, Chapter 9, false religion (or a sectarian ministry) is portrayed as "locusts." When they came up, that smoke obscured the sun and the moon. The light of the sun and the moon was darkened. The locusts got between the people and the light. But where truth is, light shines bright.

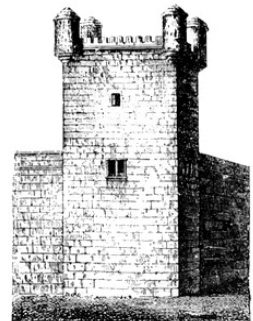
Once Christ was back in His rightful position, when the Word and the Spirit were truly allowed their free course and right of way, "**mount Sion**" was brought back into its proper position. According to Isaiah 2:2 that position is "in the top of the mountains," in an exalted spiritual position, on the high tableland. When the Psalmist penned in Psalm 23:5, "Thou preparest a table. . .," he was actually talking about reaching a tableland, that point of the mountain where there is fresh, untouched pasture. This place where sheep were fed was the best pastureland. Does this represent the evening time? Ezekiel 34:11-12 reads: "For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."

This is a picture of God's people, scattered through the Dark Ages and the dark and cloudy day. Although Ezekiel spoke of them as "sheep," we need to understand who the sheep are. Ezekiel was not talking about literal sheep grazing somewhere. This is made clear in verses 13-15, which state: "And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold [singular] be: . . . and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down [the only sheep that 'lie down' are sheep that are well fed, satisfied, cared for, and secure] . . ." And verse 16 tells us, ". . . I will feed them with judgment." Obviously, literal sheep are not fed "judgment." This is speaking of a people. (In Jeremiah 32:37-39 the prophet said much the same.)

### **Zion Is a Position of Defense**

When we study about this Zion and about this pasture, we find that Christ will "seek out my sheep" (Ezekiel 34:12), and He will "feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel" (Ezekiel 34:14). The position of Mount Zion makes it a virtual fortress because it is in the top of the mountain, a place that can be defended against all the moves of the enemy. It is a position of complete visibility. Spiritually, when one gets to Mount Zion, he is in a position where he has great vision. He can see the enemy; he can see how the devil tries to work. The position of Mount Zion makes it a fortress. We see this described in Psalm 48:12, which says, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof." That word *towers* is used to describe the towers of fortified cities and castles. Second Chronicles 26:9 tells us what the Psalmist was referring to. It says, "Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them." They were defensive towers; they were positions where one could see the approaching enemy from a position of advantage. They helped fortify and secure the city.

We read in Psalm 48:13, "Mark ye well her bulwarks . . ." This is made clearer in 2 Chronicles 26:15a, which says, "And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal." Again, this was a position of strength, a defensive position, a position that enabled them to be secure against the onslaught of the enemy. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, ". . . I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Why? Because it is in an exalted position. The approach of the enemy from any direction can be seen. It is a sunny mountain; it is protected by light. Zion is an area of defense. Paul said in Philippians 1:17, ". . . I am set for the defence of the gospel." The evening-time message is a portrayal of the defense of the Gospel. Sectarian religion does not defend the Gospel; they defend their individual organizations. Mount Zion,



**A Defensive Tower**

this new Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2), is a walled city. Isaiah let us know that wall is salvation (Isaiah 26:1). That is what separates; that is what keeps the enemy out and keeps the saints in a protected position.

Although we are on "**mount Sion**," a strong, defended city, although we are on the inside of the wall of salvation, we must never forget that there is a real enemy who is trying to assault the church. There is an enemy who is working as he did in Nehemiah's day (again, a type of the evening time), saying, "Come down, come down." Our answer should be as Nehemiah's answer was, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" (Nehemiah 6:3). The enemy will try to get you to come down to their bake sales, car washes, spaghetti dinners, ice-cream socials, and singspirations. They will try to get you to come to their revivals. They do not care what tactic they use, as long as they can get you to *come down*. Again, we need to have the same attitude Nehemiah had: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

When Jesus spoke to our day, the Laodicean era, He told us to "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve" (Revelation 3:18). Why? Because the enemy is working to hinder people's vision. He is working to deceive, and that deception is powerful. People who used to rejoice in the truth of God's Word, today you could not tell the difference between them and the world. All they have is a religious spirit. One of those three unclean spirits has slipped in on them. Seducing spirits are loose, and we are not immune from them. Too many have been seduced. What was truth in years gone by is still truth today. Psalm 119:89 tells us, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." Also, Hebrews 13:8 reads, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." If it was truth then, it is truth now. We need to "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1). The enemy is ever working to cause them to slip from us. Psalm 48:13 warns us of another way this truth can slip from us: "tell it to the generation following." Too many times here is where we break down. We fail to communicate this truth from one generation to the next. This is so important! We must tell it to the generation following so they will have an appreciation and understanding of it as we do.

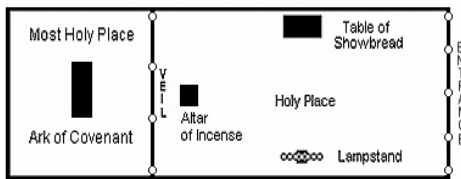
Let us take another look at the Ark being brought to Zion in the Old Testament. (Keep in mind that types have more than one application. Types are somewhat like a kaleidoscope—the more you turn them, the more you see.) We read in 1 Chronicles 15:1, "And David made him houses in the city of David [Zion; 2 Samuel 5:7], and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent [the tabernacle of David; Acts 15:16]." Then, 1 Chronicles 15:25-29 lets us know that David brought the Ark of God (the presence of God) to Zion. There was much shouting, rejoicing, and singing. When the presence of God is in the midst, it will not be a solemn assembly, something dry; but where the presence of God is there will be praises, shouts, singing, and rejoicing.

We read in 1 Chronicles 16:1-2: "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD." When they brought the Ark to Zion, they brought the presence of God to Zion. First Chronicles 16:37 says, "So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required." Here is a picture of the literal, historical occurrence of the Ark being brought to Zion. From then on, to worship in the presence of God, the people had to go to Zion. One could be born an Israelite, but to worship where God was, he had to get up to Zion. Again, this is a beautiful picture of the evening-time church. Yes, there are people who were born again down in the sectarian creeds of men; they have become *spiritual* Israelites. But when the evening-time message began to sound out, all the spiritual Israelites who were scattered were called to come up to where the presence of God was. The call is to come up to Zion. When ones are born again, they are truly an Israelite. They walk as Galatians 6:15-16 says, "according to this rule," as a "new creature." They are part of the "Israel of God," but when it comes time to worship, there is only one place to go where the presence of God is, and that is up to Zion.

This place became known as "my holy hill of Zion" (Psalm 2:6), the place where the king sits. Psalm 2:7 tells us who that king is: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." The King who dwells in Zion is the Son, Jesus Christ. Psalm 132:13 states, "For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." Many people today say, "Choose the church of your choice." But God chose Zion. Zion is where the presence of God dwells (Joel 3:21), and if you want to worship in the presence of God, that is where you must go to worship (Psalm 99:9; 132:7).

## Contents of the Old Testament Ark—Tables of Testimony

To truly get an understanding of this evening-time message, it is important for us to understand what was in the Ark that David brought to Jerusalem. The Hebrew writer, describing the Old Testament sanctuary that was in the wilderness, penned in Hebrews 9:3-5: "And after the second veil, [He was describing the second room. That Old Testament tabernacle consisted of two rooms—the holy place and the most holy place—and they were separated by a veil.] the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold [denoting purity], wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly."

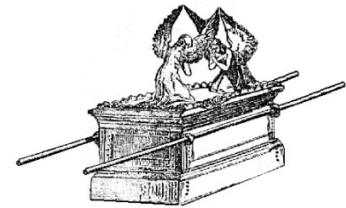


**Tabernacle**

The Hebrew writer listed the contents that were within that Ark in the second room (although, this is not listed in the chronological order of their placement). If we go back to Exodus, Chapter 25, we can read where Moses was given instructions concerning the construction of the Ark of the Covenant. This tabernacle was to be composed of two rooms, and the second room, beyond the veil, was where the Ark of God or the Ark of the Covenant was to be kept. In essence, this Ark was a

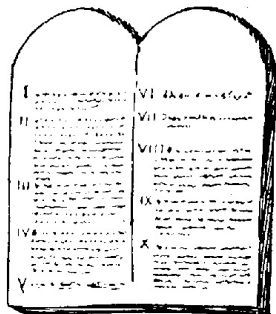
boxlike structure with a lid, and that lid was the mercy seat. At each end of the mercy seat there was a cherub, facing one another with their wings spread over the mercy seat.

The only way to access the contents of the Ark was through the mercy seat. The first thing that was to be placed within the Ark was "the testimony which I shall give thee" (Exodus 25:16). Initially, there was only one thing placed within this Ark. The Hebrew writer clarified "the testimony," calling it "the tables of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:4). In other words, "the testimony" was those tables of stone that Moses received on



**Ark of the Covenant**

Mount Sinai which contained the ten commandments (Exodus 32:15-16). Exodus 34:29 also describes it as "the two tables of testimony." God cut out the first set of tables, engraved them with His hand, and handed them to Moses. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai and heard the people worshiping the golden calf, he broke the tables. Later, he had to go back up into the mount, and God told him, "Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest" (Exodus 34:1). It was this second set that was placed in the Ark. (We can also read of this in Deuteronomy 10:1-5.)



**Tables of Testimony**

We have been dealing in type. Now let us bring up the antitype, or the reality. This is a type of morning time versus evening time. The morning time had the tables (the commandments), but they broke them. An apostasy took place. Many people became so carried away that they worshiped the beast and its image. Because of that, in the evening time the tables had to be hewed out fresh. In this evening time God's people are moving back to the Word of God, to that which God originally gave, to that which God wrote with His own finger. God's people are moving away from the delusions and teachings of men, all of the things that they had to contend with in the Dark Ages and in the dark and cloudy day. In this evening time, when the Ark (with the tables of testimony) is back on "**mount Zion,**" we see a picture of the evening time moving back to the original work and Word of God. The fact that these "tables of testimony" were the first thing to initially go into the Ark reveals to us the place of supreme and unique importance that God attaches to His Word. We read in Psalm 138:2, "... for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." We must accord the Word its proper place before we can ever proceed any further.

In Hebrews 9:24 we are told that these literal items, these places "made with hands," are "the figures of the true." They are figurative expressions of truth, or of realities, that we are to enjoy. Although these items were literal back under the old economy, they serve as a type, which lets us know of the realities that we enjoy in this New Testament dispensation. Through these items that were within the literal Ark, we see revealed to us the ingredients necessary to "bring again Zion" (Isaiah 52:8). The items were put in the Ark progressively to reveal the progressive nature of truth.

One of the things that caused the sixth-seal brethren ultimately to lose the position they held was because some failed to recognize that truth is progressive. Whenever we feel we have apprehended or attained, whenever we stop in the march of truth and all progress stops, then truth is going to outstrip us and leave us settled on our lees.

Paul said in Philippians 3:13, "I count not myself to have apprehended . . . ." Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:1. He said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation . . . ." In Ephesians 5:2 we are told to "walk in love"; in Ephesians 5:15 we are told to "walk circumspectly"; and in 1 John 1:7 we are told to "walk in the light." It is to be progressive. *Walk* indicates movement, advancement, and progress. Throughout the Gospel Day, every one of those sectarian organizations ended up in the position and condition they were in because God gave them light, but then somebody would sit down on it. They failed to continue to walk in the light, and then they built an image. Once the light goes out, all that is left is for ones to build an image, or a substitute.

### Contents of the Old Testament Ark—Manna

The second ingredient that occupied this Ark, according to Hebrews 9:4, was "the golden pot that had manna." Now let us begin to consider this because there are a host of types and truths contained in this manna. If you read Exodus, Chapter 16, you will find that God gave instructions concerning the manna. The Israelites were to go out every morning and gather fresh manna sufficient for that day. If they tried to hoard up more than one day's worth, "it bred worms, and stank" (Exodus 16:20). In other words, if they tried to live off of yesterday's manna, it stank; it was not edible; it was not sufficient. This lets us know that one cannot live on the light of the past. When the sixth-seal brethren came, bringing the message concerning the church, God's people could no longer go back to the weak and beggarly elements of sectarianism, or of the dark and cloudy day. They had to go with that which is fresh, not what was in the past. Every sectarian organization gets the bones of their old reformers (Luther, Wesley, and others) out, and they rattle them. Every religious system (except the true church) lives on the past. They live on teachings and doctrines that were formulated by some man in the past. However, yesterday's light will not suffice for today. The true church gets its bread fresh and daily from God (Matthew 6:11; Luke 11:3).

We read in Exodus 16:14-16: "And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat. This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man . . . ." In other words, every man was responsible for his own sustenance, for his own welfare. Likewise, today you are responsible for your own spiritual sustenance, your own welfare. God's man may give you guidance and instruction, just as Moses did, but it is still your responsibility to make sure the needs of your soul are taken care of. You cannot set your light by your father's and mother's light (Ezekiel 22:7). They did not live in the same day in which you live. They may not have been exposed to the same truths that you have been exposed to. You are responsible for the light and the understanding you have. Do not set your light by their light.

There are many lessons to be learned by studying this manna. Let us look at the thought of this manna being the bread from Heaven. We have seen the type; now let us look at the reality. We read in John 6:49-54: "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. [Why? Because that manna only sustained physical life.] This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread [Jesus is speaking here] which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Manna was a type of the true bread (Jesus). In John 6:33 He said, "For the bread of God is *he* [not *it*, but *he*] . . . ." It is Jesus Christ. When He said in John 6:53, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man," John 1:14 tells us that "the Word was made flesh." His flesh represents the Word. Again, John 6:54 says, "Whoso eateth [present and continual tense] my flesh, and drinketh my blood . . . ." What is that a picture of? Under the Old Testament the life was in the blood (Deuteronomy 12:23); in the New Testament Romans 8:10 tells us that "the Spirit is life." Also, John 6:63 says, "It is the spirit that quickeneth [or makes alive]; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are

spirit, and they are life." We read in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that we are "made to drink into one Spirit." His flesh is the Word; His blood is the Spirit.

When these sixth-seal brethren came on the stage of action, they had the manna in the Ark (a type of the bread of life, Jesus Christ, who has provided for us the Word and the Spirit). The people were able to continually eat on a daily basis fresh from the Word and the Spirit. As long as they kept eating and drinking, the church stayed in visible view, and they continued to dwell in Christ (John 6:56).

Look again at Exodus 16:21, which states, "And they gathered it every morning, every man . . ." There is where the responsibility lies yet today. It rests with every individual, and it requires daily activity. We must never come to the point where we try to live in the past. They had to exert fresh effort; they had to get a fresh supply each day. They could not hoard it up and store it up for the future. The Lord wanted them to realize He would take care of them on a daily basis if they would meet the conditions. Philippians 3:13 speaks of "forgetting those things which are behind, [you should be] reaching forth." What was behind was behind. They were not to leave any of the previous day's manna until the next morning. Just as we are told to eat all the book (Revelation 10:9), they had to eat it all. The spirit that motivates sectism is the spirit that causes ones to fail to progress in truth. It is a spirit that causes ones to fail to recognize individual responsibility, to fail to understand that everyday activity is required. False religion produces a false security, causing people to believe that which was done in the past is adequate.

Read the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew, Chapter 25. Five were wise, and five were foolish. Why were the foolish deemed so? Because they took no extra oil with their lamps. They thought that what they had at the present was sufficient to carry them all the way through, but it was not. So it is today. What God's people have right now will not carry them all the way through. You cannot live on yesterday's truth. You have to have it fresh every day. You have to keep a fresh, up-to-date experience. You have to keep going back to the bread of life (Jesus Christ).

### **Contents of the Old Testament Ark—Aaron's Rod**

Since the items to be contained within the Old Testament Ark were so limited, there is a special importance attached to each one. Hebrews 9:4 tells us that there was only a trio of contents (or a trinity of items) in this Ark: the tables of the covenant, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. Viewing it from a prophetic aspect, these contents depict items that are absolutely essential for us to be the church in visible view and remain that church. One truth portrayed by the contents of the Ark is that there is not room in the church for everything. The move of the enemy today is to get people to make room in their experience for all types of things, but in this Ark there were only three items. Its dimensions were very narrow; its space was very limited. There was not room for everything. Matthew 7:14 tells us that the way is narrow. Our experience is not wide enough to take in the world or to take in Babylon. Not only is the experience narrow, but Revelation 22:2, speaking of the church, speaks of "the street [singular] of it." There is only one street. There is not an inordinate amount of room for things that do not belong. There is not room for things that detract and distract us from the vital items necessary to be the true church.

To begin to understand the third item in the Ark—"Aaron's rod that budded" (Hebrews 9:4)—we must first understand one of the clear types concerning Aaron. When the Lord was dealing with Moses in Exodus 4:10, Moses said, "O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." God was not pleased with this. In verses 14-16 we read that God said: "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Moses, as the deliverer to the children of Israel, is a type of Christ, our Deliverer. Aaron, his mouthpiece, is a type of the ministry. God puts His Word in the mouth of His ministry. We read in Ezekiel 3:17, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me." Ezekiel 3:3-4 tells us: "And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them." The roll is the words that God put in his mouth. (We also read of this in Ezekiel 33:7.)

Aaron was the chosen mouthpiece; he was the one chosen to speak for Moses. Moses, a type of Christ, was to be a god to him and put the words in his mouth. Aaron was to speak what Moses told him. In Numbers, Chapter 16, we read that some men rose up, claiming to be as qualified as Moses and Aaron. So God told them to take twelve rods, one for each tribe, and lay them up in the Ark. Out of the twelve rods that were laid up, only one of them budded, and that was Aaron's. That was God's way of vindicating Aaron as the chosen mouthpiece. This is a typical portrayal of the evening-time ministry bringing God's Word to the people; a true ministry that was fruitful and produced. The evening time of the sixth seal had a true ministry that was chosen of God. They were farmers and men from all types of trades. They were not professional preachers, nor were they highly educated men. Like Aaron, they were men that God chose to put His Word in their mouths. When they were questioned, their rods budded. In other words, their ministry brought forth, it produced, it was fruitful right in the face of all the challenges of sectarian religion around them.

### **Zion Has Everything We Need**

Overshadowing the Ark is where God met with man in the Old Testament. We read in Exodus 25:21-22: "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat . . . ." That is where God met with His people. When the Ark and its contents were brought to Zion, that is where God's presence dwelled. Spiritual Zion is where the presence of God is today. That is where He meets and communes with His people. Everything we need is in Zion. All of God's springs are in Zion (Psalm 87:5-7). Everything we need for the welfare of our experience is right in Zion. God sets it right in the church.

God's people do not need one thing from Babylon. Jeremiah 51:26 says, "And they shall not take of thee [Babylon; verse 1] a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations." We do not need one Babel stone to try to build the church with. Isaiah 31:1 warns us, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt [a type of Babylon] for help." In the Old Testament it was a practice of false religion to build their *own* high places and groves and practice their manmade ways of worship. That stirred God! He said in Numbers 33:51-52: "When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan [a type of the church]; Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places." God hated the practice of false religion, and He wanted all of the high places torn down (Deuteronomy 12:2-4).

When Israel entered into Canaan, they were instructed to tear down and destroy the high places of false religion. This is a picture of what began to occur in this sixth-seal ministry. Before David brought the Ark to Zion, what did Israel do for worship? The tabernacle of Moses was in Gibeon, but there was no Ark there. There was no presence of God there; it was just an empty form—a type of Protestantism. If you read 1 Chronicles 16:39 and 1 Chronicles 21:29 you will see that the tabernacle was there in Gibeon—the forms were there—but God's presence was not there because the Ark was not there. That is a picture of the condition that Israel was in before David brought the Ark back and brought it to Zion. As this sixth-seal ministry came out of Babylon and came to Canaan land, or as **verse 1** of our text says "**to mount Sion**," they began to destroy and tear down all the falsities that were held in high places in the minds of men. They began to herald the truth that there is only one acceptable place to worship, and that is where the presence of God is—in His tabernacle, in "**Sion**." If you read Ephesians 2:21-22, you will find that the "habitation of God through the Spirit" is this "holy temple in the Lord."

What is this holy temple? Second Corinthians 6:16 says, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The temple of God is a people. But it is not just any people. Second Corinthians 1:1 tells us Paul was writing "unto the church of God." It is a people who understand these truths, who let the "**Lamb**" have His rightful place, who let the Word and the Spirit have their rightful position. They take the Word that came from God Himself, that daily sustenance, and continue to walk in the light as He is in the light. They continue to listen to the ministry that God ordained they hear, a ministry that will produce fruit in their lives and in their experience. That is what makes up the temple ("**Sion**").

The sixth-seal ministry began to tell all of those who were spiritual Israelites (those who had had a spiritual birth) to "Come up hither" (Revelation 4:1), to "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4). The Lord had, as Isaiah 52:8

declares, brought "again Zion." The message on the church had been restored. When the Word and the Spirit were back in their rightful positions, this produced a visible church ("**mount Sion**"). Isaiah 2:2-3 prophesied of this day, saying: "And it shall come to pass in the last days [a prophetic expression for this Gospel Day; Hebrews 1:2], that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Certainly there were things that were not opened in the manner God truly wanted them opened until the seventh seal (Revelation 11:19; 15:5), but in this sixth seal "**mount Sion**" was back in visible view. The message on the church had been restored. People in the various denominations began to flow unto it.

In "**Sion**," the city of light, God's people are in an exalted spiritual position. They are above the low level of this old world and the lowly hills of Babylon. They are on a tableland where they are being fed. They have the safety and security of a defended fortress. They have the privilege of eating fresh bread, everyday, from Heaven through a God-ordained ministry. In "**Sion**" God's people can worship where the presence of God is, free from the false systems of worship that have been devised by the minds of men. What a glorious and refreshing scene John saw when his vision progressed to the evening time in 1880, and he saw that "**a Lamb stood on the mount Sion.**" Thank God for a precious vision of the church! This "**mount Sion**" is never going to go out of visible view again. As so beautifully expressed in the song entitled *From Babel to Zion*, verse three states, "God's church can be no longer Obscured from human sight; For see, on yonder mountain, A city filled with light!" From here to eternity, the precious church will always be in sight. God will have a people who will live in visible view so that the world may see.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART TWO

### The Hundred Forty and Four Thousand With His Father's Name

**Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.**

#### The "Hundred Forty and Four Thousand" Have Heard Christ's Voice

As we begin to examine this portion of John's apocalyptic vision, we must ever recall that John was receiving a "vision" (Revelation 9:17). We must recognize that the language of visions does not lend itself to literalism. Throughout the Scriptures, whenever men received dreams and visions, there was always a symbolic nature to the language. We must ever recognize that the nature of the language employed in the Revelation is "signified" (Revelation 1:1), or "revealed by signs." As we study the Revelator's visions of this "**hundred forty and four thousand**," we must dismiss from our minds any thought of literalism. This is a symbolic expression. The second truth of which we must be mindful is the prophetic time setting of our text. It occurred when the "**Lamb stood on the mount Sion**," or when the church came back into public view. The "**Lamb**," assuming His rightful position in the church, is a prophetic picture of the evening-time restoration that began in 1880.

As we consider this portion of **verse 1**, notice how the inspired penman introduced the reader to this scene. He said that the "**hundred forty and four thousand**" were "**with him**" (the "**Lamb**"). False religion has many false concepts concerning who comprises this "**hundred forty and four thousand**," but our text tells us they are the ones "**with him**" on "**the mount Sion**." They are representative of a people who had heard the voice of the "**Lamb**" and accordingly followed Him back to "**Sion**." Keep in mind the prophetic scheme: God's sheep had been scattered in the cloudy and dark day (Ezekiel 34:11-13), but John 10:27 tells us how His sheep respond to His call. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

This "**hundred forty and four thousand**" are "**with him**," because they have heard Christ's voice. Revelation 14:4 says, "These are they which . . . follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." We find in Revelation 14:2 and Revelation 1:15 that this voice was "as the voice of many waters." Revelation 1:11 says that this voice came from one who is "Alpha and Omega." Who is that? In Revelation 22:13 this expression is used again, and Revelation 22:16 tells us that it is Jesus. He is the Alpha and the Omega, and so it is Jesus who had the voice as the sound of many waters. How does one hear this voice? What did John tell us came out of His mouth? According to Revelation 1:16, it was "a sharp twoedged sword." We read in Hebrews 4:12 that this is "the word of God." We hear the voice of Christ when we hear the Word of God preached. People were "**with him**" because they had heard His voice (the message) and had responded to the call of His Word. Revelation 14:4b describes them like this: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

These are the ones who responded to the message and came leaping and shouting home to Zion. We read in Isaiah 35:10-11: "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return [they had been scattered through the dark papal night and the dark and cloudy day of Protestantism], and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The "sorrow and sighing" came from being separated from their brethren by sectarian walls. There had been a famine in the land, not a famine of bread and water, but a famine of "hearing the words of the LORD" (Amos 8:11). But when God's people came back to Zion, they came with songs and everlasting joy: "sorrow and mourning shall flee away" (Isaiah 51:11).

Our text is a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 52:8, which says, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice [not *their* voice, but *the* voice]; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion." This happened because people heard the voice of Christ, or the Word of God. Jesus told us in John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." When ones lift up the voice of Christ (the Word), they are lifting up Christ. When Christ is lifted up, every honest heart will come to Him. When the watchmen



began to sound out the Word of God concerning the evils of sectism, the sin of division, and the falsity of manmade systems, then that which was prophesied in Genesis 49:10 began again to be fulfilled: ". . . unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Look again at Isaiah 52:8, which reads, ". . . with the voice [the voice of Christ] together [unity] shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, [That does not mean that every brother, every minister, every pastor is going to see every minute point of the Scripture exactly alike. To understand this Scripture we need to see who the 'eye' is. Revelation 5:6 tells us that the 'seven eyes . . . are the seven Spirits,' or the Spirit of God working through the seven periods of the Gospel Day.] when the LORD shall bring again Zion." When the ministry "shall see eye to eye" (are all led by one Spirit), they were able to bring together a people to Zion.

In Isaiah 52:11 we read what part of the watchmen's message will be: "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." When the voice began to sound out the Word of God in the evening time, this was the message. Paul picked up on the same prophetic truth in 2 Corinthians 6:17, saying, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Jesus let us know that there would come a time when He would be bringing sheep from other places. In John 10:16 Jesus said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice [the Word of God]; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." How are they going to be brought to the one fold? By the voice, by the Word of God, by the message. We see a picture of that being fulfilled in the sixth-seal period of time.

### **The "Hundred Forty and Four Thousand" Are All-Inclusive**

Let us begin to consider this expression employed in **verse 1** of "**an hundred forty and four thousand.**" There are many false conceptions that are taught in the realms of religion, but let us see what the Scripture says. Speaking of the "**hundred forty and four thousand,**" the last part of Revelation 14:4 tells us: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men . . ." The "**hundred forty and four thousand**" are a portrayal of the redeemed. Certainly, reason alone would dictate that we must discard the notion that this is a literal number, that there are only going to be "**an hundred forty and four thousand**" who are redeemed. But when we lay line upon line and precept upon precept and examine other verses in the Revelation, we find that when John saw the redeemed back in Revelation 5:11, he described them as an innumerable, unmeasurable throng. Revelation 5:9 tells us that the redeemed come "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Verse 11 says that "the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands [the Greek actually says 'myriads of myriads'; in other words, 'an innumerable number, an immeasurable throng']."

When John received a vision of the church in the evening time, he said in Revelation 7:9, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues . . ." Here is a number so great that no man could count them. So, we must immediately dismiss the thought that this "**hundred forty and four thousand**" has any literal reckoning or significance to it. The employment of this expression is symbolic. However, since this employment is of a specific number in our text, it must have specific symbolic significance. Let us read the entirety of Revelation 14:4. It states: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." These redeemed were the saints who were the "firstfruits" of the sixth seal, or the evening-time message. They were the ones who heard the clarion call to "come out," and they came out from among men, or from manmade religion. These were the first ones to come out.

In 1 Corinthians 6:15 the Apostle Paul penned: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ [when you get saved you become a member of Christ]? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid." When one is born again, he becomes a member, but the member has to be set in the body. If one is saved while out in the realms of sectism, he does not have a knowledge of truth. Especially in that dark and cloudy day, when people gained a real experience of salvation, they took their "member" and they joined it to a harlot body, to a religious denomination. First Corinthians 6:16-17 states: "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." The redeemed were "virgins." They did not become one in spirit with the harlot bodies of Babylon, but they were one Spirit with the

Lord. When they heard the truth, they came out. Even without a knowledge of truth, for the true saints of God who were in Babylon, there was always a dissatisfaction. Though physically they were in Babylon in the dark and cloudy day, these "virgins" did not have Babylon's spirit.

What are the terms "virgin" and "not defiled with women" symbolizing? Isaiah 4:1, speaking of women in the plural (just as Revelation 14:4), says, "And in that day [a prophetic expression of this Gospel Day] seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." These "seven women" represent the false church throughout the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day. These are the women who were working to woo and allure God's people into spiritual adultery.

Why are the ones designated in Revelation 14:4 as "the firstfruits" denoted in this numeric manner: **"an hundred forty and four thousand"** (verse 1)? John introduced this expression earlier in Revelation 7:4. He wrote, "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." This portion of the Revelation also has its prophetic time setting during this sixth-seal period of time. If you go back to the previous chapter (Revelation, Chapter 6), you will see that it is describing the sixth seal which was opened in 1880, as soon as God got a people in position (Revelation 6:12). The duration of Chapter 6 deals with the sixth seal. So, when we read in Revelation 7:1, "And after these things," and in Revelation 7:4, "And I heard the number of them which were sealed," we see that we are still dealing with a continuation of what occurred in the sixth-seal period of time.

As we continue to read Chapter 7, it is beginning to move, as the songwriter proclaimed, *"Back to the light of the morning, Jesus our Captain leads."* We find the expression that lets us know that the evening-time brethren were beginning to gain understanding of that which occurred at the commencement of this Gospel Day when the church was divinely instituted on the Day of Pentecost. This expression of "an hundred and forty and four thousand" is associated as representing "all the tribes of the children of Israel" (Revelation 7:4). Under the Old Testament economy, the twelve tribes of Israel represented *all* of God's people, those He chose to dwell in the midst of (Genesis 49:28). It began with a man by the name of Jacob. After he wrestled with Christ, his name was changed from Jacob ("supplanter or trickster") to Israel ("a prince with God, or power with God"). Jacob and Israel were the same individual (Genesis 49:1-2). Jacob had twelve sons, and those twelve sons were the original twelve tribes (Genesis 49:28), representing all of Israel. As the tribes grew and journeyed, they were led by the presence of God (Exodus 40:35-38). When they camped, His presence was in their midst. If you read Numbers, Chapter 2, you will find they divided into four major divisions and pitched on the four sides with the tabernacle and God's presence being in the midst.

How does this tie in to the numerical expression found in Revelation 7:4 as well as in our text of **"an hundred forty and four thousand"**? One hundred and forty-four is a multiple of twelve, and twelve holds a special place in the Scriptures. There were twelve sons of Jacob, or Israel (Genesis 35:22). There were the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:28). There were the twelve Apostles (Matthew 10:1). There are twelve months in a year. Jesus said there are "twelve hours in the day" (John 11:9). There were the twenty-four courses of Levitical priesthood (1 Chronicles 24:4). There were the "four and twenty elders" (Revelation 4:4). The number twelve represents the complete or entire, the perfection of its object, the perfect number. Jacob's twelve sons were his complete, entire number of sons. The twelve tribes of Israel represent the entirety of Israel, the complete number of the people of God. The twelve Apostles were the entirety of Jesus' Apostles. Twelve months comprise the entire year, and twelve hours comprise a complete (Jewish) day. The entirety of the Levitical priesthood consisted of twenty-four courses. The twenty-four elders represented the entirety of the ministry. All of these examples show that the number "twelve" represents the completion, the entirety, or the perfection of whatever object it is referring to. **"An hundred forty and four,"** being a multiple of twelve, is merely a greatly enlarged and enhanced number of completion, entirety, or perfection.

Concerning this expression, one scholar said this: "The number one hundred forty-four thousand stands not for limitations, but it stands for completeness and perfection. It is twelve multiplied by twelve, the perfect square. And then rendered even more inclusive and complete by being multiplied by one thousand. So far from being a limited and selected number, the number in Jewish imagery is the number that is inclusive, perfect, and complete." So this **"hundred forty and four thousand"** is just the converse of what false religion says. They say that this is a literal number of all there is going to be; everybody else is out. But according to Jewish imagery, it is an all-inclusive number. It is designed to take in *all*. It is a number representing entirety, perfection, completeness. Psalm 50:2 says, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

## A Transition From the Old Economy to the New

In Revelation, Chapter 7, the portrayal being received was that in Christ a new economy had been ushered in. A new testament had commenced. There was a new Israel, a new Jew, and a new Jerusalem. Concerning this passage (Revelation 7:4) the famous Scottish scholar, Dr. William Barclay, wrote: "It is the church which is the Israel of God [Galatians 6:16]. It is the Christians who are the real circumcision, those who worship God in the Spirit who rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh [Philippians 3:3]. Even if this passage is stated in terms of the twelve tribes of Israel, the reference is still to the Church of God, which is the new Israel, the Israel of God."

When John received a vision of "an hundred and forty and four thousand" in Revelation 7:4, it was the prophetic time period of the sixth seal. During this time an understanding and vision of how the church was originally instituted was revealed. They had to be taken back to morning light concerning the institution of the church. They needed to see the transition from the old economy over to the new economy, from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion. This picture of the **"hundred forty and four thousand"** portrays that there was a successful transition from the old economy to the new, from an Old Testament people of God to a New Testament people of God, from an old Israel to a new Israel, from an old Jew to a new Jew, from the old Jerusalem to a new Jerusalem. There had been a complete, entire, and perfect transition from the old to the new.

Second Corinthians 5:17 is commonly used in regard to salvation, but let us look at it in light of our study. It reads, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Notice that this verse starts out with the word "Therefore"; in other words, because of what was said previously. That is what the word *therefore* means. To see what was said previously, read verse 16, in which Paul wrote, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh . . ." The old economy, the old Israel, was all based on "the flesh"—a physical, fleshly lineage. When Paul spoke of the flesh in Philippians 3:3-6, he brought up his credentials in old Judaism. He mentioned the fact that he was a literal Jew, that he had experienced a literal birth of the stock of Israel, that he was of the tribe of Benjamin. He told how he went through the observance of circumcision, that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He brought up all of his credentials, because Judaism was an observance after the flesh that represented the old economy, old Israel.

So when we look at 2 Corinthians 5:17 in light of verse 16, we see that Christ came and brought a new covenant. He instituted a new testament. When ones come in through the New Testament, they are new creatures. What is a new creature? Galatians 6:15 tells us that it is a spiritual work: ". . . neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." It is no longer measured by fleshly works but rather by spiritual works. It is gauged by "as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). The "Israel of God" are those that "walk according to this rule," being new creatures, having a spiritual work. Paul was letting us know a new economy, a new covenant had been instituted. "Old things are passed away" (2 Corinthians 5:17) is not talking about the habits of life, but it is talking about the Old Testament, one dominated by "the flesh" (2 Corinthians 5:16). "All things are become new" refers to the New Testament, the new economy, one that is spiritual (2 Corinthians 3:6). There has been a transition from old to new.

In Revelation, Chapter 21, you can see much of the same language employed that Paul used. Verse 5a says, ". . . Behold, I make all things new." Verse 4 tells us that "the former things are passed away." Verse 1 tells us what "the former things" are: "the first heaven and the first earth." Those things that were under old Judaism have passed away, and verse 1 says that there is "a new heaven and a new earth." There is a new economy with new Jews. Romans 2:28-29 tells us: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." This was a transition from old to new, fleshly (or literal) to spiritual. John saw this new Israel, or new Jerusalem, "coming down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 21:2). It is the church.

The portrayal in Revelation 7:4 of "an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" is speaking of the church. Look at how James began his epistle: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting" (James 1:1). Who are the ones who were "scattered abroad"? Acts 8:1 tells us that "there was a great persecution against the church which was a Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad." The "twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" are the church. That "hundred and forty and four

thousand of the [twelve] tribes of the children of Israel" represents a transition from old literal Israel to the New Testament church.

God now has a new people. First Peter 2:10 says, "Which in time past were not a people [that is us], but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." God has a people who are led of Him, who enjoy His favor in their midst, who enjoy His presence, just as Israel did under the old economy. The only difference is that then He dwelled overshadowing a mercy seat in a tabernacle. He was *with* His people, but He could not truly be *in* His people. Thanks be to God, when Jesus said, "It is finished," that veil of the temple was rent, and God got out. Ever since the Day of Pentecost, God has been able to enter right into the hearts of His people and dwell in them.

Coming back to our text, this "**hundred forty and four thousand**" has been totally out of view since the morning time, but here in the evening time we see the same expression employed. The expression in Revelation 7:4 represented the church as it was originally instituted; it represented the morning-time church. When Christ was restored back to His rightful position in "**mount Zion**," we see the church back in visible view. When we see the "**hundred forty and four thousand**" again in our text in the evening time, it is letting us know that the church has now come out of the wilderness, out of obscurity. She is back in view, and she is as intact as she was when she went in. Although there was a dark age and a dark and cloudy day, she came out just as complete, entire, and perfect as when she went in. She came out "leaning upon her beloved" (Song of Solomon 8:5). This is a fulfillment of Isaiah 54:17, which says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 16:18, ". . . I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

How did all of this come about? **Revelation 14:1** says this is due to their "**having his Father's name written in their foreheads**." Verse 2 says that he "heard a voice"; he heard the message. What was that message and what did it do? Here in **verse 1** we again see a reference to the expression "**in their foreheads**." This is the same expression used in Revelation 13:16. However, there is a stark contrast between these two passages. Revelation 13:16 speaks of "a mark . . . in their foreheads," and Revelation 16:2 refers to it as "the mark of the beast." Our text says, ". . . **having his Father's name written in their foreheads**." This terminology is repeatedly employed in the Revelation: "till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:3); "seal of God in their foreheads" (Revelation 9:4); "his name shall be in their foreheads" (Revelation 22:4).

As we consider this expression "**in their foreheads**," what is in our "**forehead**"? It is our mind. When God spoke in Ezekiel of "thy forehead strong against their foreheads" (Ezekiel 3:8), what was He speaking of? He was not talking about having a head-butting contest; He was talking about making their minds "adamant," like a "flint." He made "thy forehead strong against their foreheads," so that their minds could not be changed by the minds of others, their thinking could not be changed by others' thinking. Ezekiel was writing of that which was fixed and settled in his mind.

### Understanding Concerning the "Father's Name"

In Revelation 13:16 when we read about the mark of the beast, we realize that they had the false teachings of men ingrained in their minds. But in our text we read that these have "**his Father's name written in their foreheads**." What does this tell us? Tie it together with the other Scriptures that speak of "in their foreheads." Revelation 7:3 tells us that those who were truly interested in serving God were "sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The seal is the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). Revelation 9:4 refers to it as "the seal of God in their foreheads." The Holy Spirit knows those who are His (2 Timothy 2:19). Romans 8:9 states, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." His are those who have the Spirit; that is the seal, and the seal (the Spirit) brought understanding and truth to their minds. Looking at 2 Timothy 2:19b, what will the seal (or the Holy Spirit) do? "And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ *depart from iniquity*." The whole episode of the Dark Ages and the dark and cloudy day all came about because of the "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

When the Word and the Spirit rose to their feet in this evening time (Revelation 11:11), people were called out of those works of iniquity, out of every false, manmade system. The Spirit of God (according to Ephesians 1:17-18) enlightened the eyes of their understanding and began to reveal the "**Father's name**." God's people received understanding that they were not to be scattered out on the hills of Babylon following men, but they were to be under

the Father and have the "**Father's name.**" We read in Ephesians 3:14, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? It is God. Verse 15 tells us, "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." The family is named after God: the family of God, the Church of God. The people in **Revelation 14:1** embraced the message and began to receive understanding concerning the truth of the Church of God. It was not the Lutheran Church or the Wesleyan Church, it was not any other man's organization, but it was a family that was kept in the Father's name—the Church of God.

The family is not named after some man or a group of men, but it is in the "**Father's name.**" It is *one* family, and it should be kept in *one* name. That is what Jesus prayed in John 17:11-12. This is confirmed in the Scriptures. There are eight verses that refer to "the Church of God" (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 10:32; Galatians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Timothy 3:5). First Timothy 3:15 speaks of "the church of the living God," and then there are three verses that talk about "the churches of God" (1 Corinthians 11:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:4). This is a total of twelve times (the number of completeness and perfection) that God's church is called "the Church of God."

In the prophetic setting of the evening time, we see a people who had understanding enlightened in their minds. They came, as Ephesians 4:13 says, to "the unity of the faith." They came back to what Ephesians 4:5 calls the "one faith." The one faith was again restored to visible view. These saints understood the precious truths concerning the "**Father's name,**" the Church of God. They took a clear-cut stand with the "**Lamb**" (Christ), the Head of the church, and they stood "**with him.**" That "**hundred forty and four thousand**" was seen in the morning time, showing the successful transition from the old to the new. But then that was lost sight of through the Dark Ages and the dark and cloudy day. When Christ brought again "**Sion,**" one of the first things He revealed was the "**hundred forty and four thousand**" again, denoting that the church came out just as she went in. Thank God, the gates of hell shall not prevail against her! No weapon that is formed against her will prosper.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART THREE

### The Firstfruits

**Revelation 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:**

**3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.**

**4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**

**5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.**

#### Christ's Voice Is Sounding in Zion

As we view this passage of text, we see additional descriptions of the nature, character, and activities of those denoted in **verse 3** as "**the hundred and forty and four thousand.**" In **verse 3** they are referred to as the "**redeemed from the earth.**" **Verse 4** tells us "**they are virgins,**" and it also speaks of them as "**being the firstfruits.**" As we begin to consider these verses, we must recall their prophetic placement. Revelation 14:1 reveals to us that this portion of John's vision portrays the time when the Lamb (Christ) was back in His rightful position on Mount Zion, or back in his rightful position as Head of the church. Those who were with Christ are described in **verse 4** as "**being the firstfruits.**" What does this word "**firstfruits**" mean? The Greek word is *aparche*, and according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* it is the same word that is used in the *Septuagint* (the Old Testament version that was in use at the First Advent of Christ) and means "the first fruits of the production of the earth."

The latter phrase of **verse 3** tells us that these were those who "**were redeemed from the earth.**" In the context of Chapter 14, what does this expression symbolize? Revelation 14:1 begins with a conjunction, letting us know that it is a continuance of the thoughts that were being brought forth earlier in the vision. In Revelation 13:11 John said, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth." This beast that came "up out of the earth" is the religious system known as Protestantism. When Chapter 14 speaks of "**the firstfruits**" being those that were "**redeemed from the earth,**" it is a symbolic picture of "**the hundred and forty and four thousand,**" those who came out of sectism (earthly, manmade religion) at the commencement of the evening-time message (1880), the period of time commonly referred to as the sixth-seal period of time.

As we begin to examine our text, **verse 2** begins, "**And I heard a voice from heaven . . .**" Upon hearing such an expression, men's minds automatically run to the celestial realm. But let us consider what this expression is actually conveying. When we look at the Gospel accounts, we can see that the word *heaven* is not used as we commonly think of it. In that famed discourse to Nicodemus, Jesus spoke of Himself as "the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). The interlineary portion of *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says the same thing as well: "in heaven." Here Jesus stood before him during His earthly sojourn, in bodily form, and said that He was "in heaven." That reveals to us that heaven is not only a place, but it is also a spiritual position. Ephesians 2:6 shows this as well: "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places [or the Greek say 'heavenlies'] in Christ Jesus." Right while Jesus traversed the shores of time, He was in this heavenly position, this ecclesiastical realm.

Understanding that Heaven is not only a place but a spiritual position, whose "**voice**" did John hear "**from heaven, as the voice of many waters**"? In the introductory portion of this apocalyptic writing, John gave a description of Christ as He appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos. Revelation 1:15 reads, "And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his *voice as the sound of many waters.*" So, this "**voice**" was the voice of Christ. Where did John hear the "**voice**"? It was "on the mount Sion" (Revelation 14:1). Mount Zion is where the "**voice**" of Christ is heard. His voice is not sounding down in Babylon. There are many voices sounding there, but not the voice of Christ. Revelation 18:23 tells us that "the voice of the bridegroom [Christ] and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee

[Babylon]." Christ's voice is where His presence is: "in Zion" (Joel 3:21).

**Revelation 14:2** goes on to say, "**And I heard a voice from heaven** [or in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, this ecclesiastical realm], **as the voice of many waters** [voice of Christ], **and as the voice of a great thunder . . .**" "**Thunder**" symbolizes the voice of God (Psalm 18:13; John 12:28-29). This shows that the "**voice**" of Christ is the "**voice**" of God. Jesus said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). The "**voice**" of Christ holds all of the force and authority that God holds.

In **verse 2** why are these particular objects ("**many waters**" and "**great thunder**") employed as symbols to represent the "**voice**" of Christ and the "**voice**" of God? We read in Isaiah 28:17, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." The last phrase of Isaiah 28:15 says, ". . . for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Men had hid themselves under falsehood, false teachings, false doctrines, and false creeds. But verse 17 says that "the waters [the voice of Christ, the Word of God] shall overflow the hiding place." It will uncover those falsities in which men rest their eternal salvation. We also read of this in Ephesians 5:26, which says, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." This sounding forth of the "**waters**" is the sounding forth of the Word.

**Revelation 14:2** has its prophetic time placement in the evening time, commencing in the sixth-seal period of time. This evening time is when the "**waters**" (the "**voice**" of Christ) began to overflow the hiding places, the many falsehoods that people trusted in. These include: church joining, card signing, baptismal regeneration, once saved always saved, millenniums, raptures, and many other falsehoods. The Word of God overflowed those hiding places; it uncovered them for what they were. It exposed those falsehoods so that men could see the futility of what they had been hoping in. It is the "**voice**" of Christ (the Word) that brought souls out of all of the false hiding places that Babylon and their teachings provided.

Why is the expression "**thunder**" employed? Peals of "**thunder**" arrest men's attention. Just as literal thunder can awaken people out of a dead sleep, so God wanted to wake people up spiritually. God wanted to get them out of their sleepy condition. Not only did He want to wake them up, but to get them up as well. The prophet said to "Awake" and "arise" (Isaiah 52:1-2). In other words, he was saying move, change positions.

A peal of "**thunder**" commands men to take notice. When the children of Israel came to the nether part of Mount Sinai, Exodus 19:16 says, "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled." Here we find that the purpose of "**thunder**" is to get people's attention, to get them to where they are not distracted but focused, to where they tremble. When this "**thunder**" (the voice of God) goes forth, people tremble (Isaiah 66:2). That is why God uses "**thunder**." He wants people to tremble at His Word. He wants to get our focus, our attention. God designed this evening-time message to command attention, to wake up people so that they can see the peril they are in; so they can see their need of going to where the "**voice**" of God is, rather than remain scattered in the realms of sect Babylon. "**Thunder**" is a strong and convincing display of divine power.

### Harps of God

In our text the ones who heard the "**voice**" and the "**thunder**" responded appropriately to the message of truth. They took heed to the message and came out of Babylon as the "**firstfruits**." On their way out, they grabbed their "**harps**." Keep in mind that the expression in **verse 2**, "**I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps**," has no reference whatsoever to the eternal realm. John envisioned these same saints in Revelation 15:2, when he said: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass [the Word; James 1:23] mingled with fire [a symbolic expression of the Word of God under the anointing of the Holy Spirit]: and them that had gotten the victory [the Word and the Spirit are what produces the victory] over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Who had the "harps of God"? Only the people who had victory, the ones who responded to the call of His Word, the ones who the Spirit led unerring to the land we hold today. When they responded to the Word and the Spirit, it put them in a position of victory, and every one of them had "harps of God."

People who have victory will have a "**harp**." It is needful to understand that this expression of "**harpers harping**

**with their harps**" is an allusion back to the Old Testament. The harp had its beginning with a man by the name of Jubal. Jubal "was the father of all such as handle the harp" (Genesis 4:21). As with most Hebrew names, the name *Jubal* has a significance, and it means "jubilee," which later in Hebrew history became a year of emancipation. Every fifty years ancient Judaism had a year of jubilee. All of the slaves were able to go free; all of the debts were canceled (Leviticus 25:10). In his writings, Ezekiel referred to it as "the year of liberty" (Ezekiel 46:17).

When you read our lesson text, keeping in mind the prophetic time setting is in this evening time, you will see that it is a picture of a people who had been emancipated from Babel's bonds and Babel's lords. People who had heard the truth had a "day of jubilee." Debts were canceled. People could leave Babel's bondage and go leaping, shouting home to Zion! It is a picture of a people who found the "day of jubilee." One songwriter penned it in these words: *"O church of God, the day of jubilee Has dawned so bright and glorious for thee; Rejoice, be glad! Thy Shepherd has begun His long-divided flock again to gather into one."* Today, we do not have a year of jubilee every fiftieth year, we have a day of jubilee. This Gospel Day is a day of liberty; ". . . where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17)!

When the Spirit of God shows people the Word of God and leads them out of the darksome courts of Babel to fair Zion instead, they are moving from manmade bondage and man rule to a place of liberty! That emancipation will give you a song; it will give you a **"harp."** The **"harp"** was an instrument that was incorporated into worship for thanks and praise under the old economy (1 Chronicles 25:3): "Praise the LORD with harp" (Psalm 33:2); "upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God" (Psalm 43:4); "sing praise upon the harp unto our God" (Psalm 147:7). The harp indicated one's expression of praise and thanksgiving that was borne of victory. Victory will produce worship, joy, praise, and thankfulness. Praise is a natural by-product of victory. Every one of those in Revelation 15:2 who had victory (regardless of whether it was over the beast, the image, the mark, the number, or the name) had a **"harp."** They may not have all had victory over the exact same thing, but they all had the common victory, and they all had common praise.

### Victory Produces a "New Song"

Notice that **verse 2** of our text ends with a colon, letting us know that the sentence is not complete. **Verse 3** begins, **"And they sung as it were a new song before the throne . . ."** With the **"harps"** came a **"song."** What good is an instrument if there is no music, no song? When God's people were down in Babylon, they could not sing this **"song."** We read in Psalm 137:1-4: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" You cannot sing of freedom in bondage. You cannot sing of liberty in captivity. You cannot sing of Zion in Babylon. You cannot sing of truth in false religion.

The **"harps"** were hung on the willows. The German text calls them "weeping willows." God's people were in a sorrowful, mournful state. They were unable to truly have the liberty to sing the Lord's song in Babylon. But in our text, when they came back to Zion, they brought their **"harps."** **Verse 3** tells us they had a **"new song."** Victory produces praise! Each one of these people had "victory" (Revelation 15:2). (Yet today, more people would be convinced of our victory if we did more **"harping"** with our **"harps."**) This **"new song"** in **verse 3** was such a unique song that **"no man could learn that song."** Why? It is a **"song"** of experience. You cannot learn it intellectually, but you must experience it practically. No college or seminary can teach you this **"song."** It is a **"song"** that **"no man could learn."** David spoke of this **"new song"** in Psalm 40. In verse 3 David said that the Lord "put a new song in my mouth." What was this song? "Even praise unto our God."

Although Psalm 40:1-3 is commonly used to speak of salvation, let us view these verses in light of their connection to the prophetic time setting of our text. Verse 2 says, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit." Where did the Protestant beast ascend from? "Out of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 11:7). The saints had gotten loose "out of the miry clay" (earthen doctrines, which had held them bound in the pit of the low level of sectarian religion), and they found their way to where they could get their "feet upon a rock" (true Bible foundation, which is Jesus Christ). That bottomless pit has no foundation (no Bible foundation). Jesus Christ is the only true Bible foundation upon which to build an experience (1 Corinthians 3:11).



When the Psalmist wrote of being brought "up also out of an horrible pit," it is another picture of being raised up from the low levels of manmade religion. When he denoted "miry clay," he spoke of that which keeps people held and stuck to a low level. Glory be to God, when truth came along, people were delivered out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and got their feet on a Rock, Christ Jesus, the true Bible foundation of the church. This deliverance, this victory produces **"a new song,"** a song of praise!

In Revelation 5:8-9 we see a portrayal of the redeemed. Verse 8 says that "every one of them [had] harps," and verse 9 tells us that "they sung a new song." Verse 9 tells us why every one of them had harps and why they were able to sing a new song: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof." They were rejoicing in the fact that understanding was going to be given. The seals were going to be opened. The seal is the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30), and loosing the seals is merely the loosing of the Holy Spirit to bring understanding. This understanding in the sixth-seal period of time is what enabled people to get out of the horrible pit of sectism, to get loose from the miry clay of those doctrines that had held them, and get back to the Rock, back to Zion. They had **"harps"** and a **"song"** of praise, because they had understanding that the Holy Spirit had brought them. This is a **"song"** of victory and a **"song"** of deliverance.

Revelation 15:3 talks more about the song. It says, "And they [the ones whom verse 2 denotes as 'having victory,' that had 'the harps of God'] sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb . . ." Exodus, Chapter 15, tells us that the song of Moses is the song of victory, a song of deliverance from captivity. Israel was singing because they had gained victory over their Egyptian captors. They had come through the Red Sea victoriously, and the Red Sea had drowned their enemy. They had been delivered from bondage!

Let us look at a few verses of the song of Moses. Exodus 15:1-2 states: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." Then verse 6 says, "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." This was a song of deliverance, a song of victory over their Egyptian captors. Revelation, Chapter 11, tells us that Egypt is a type of Babylon. Verse 8 says, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city [Babylon; Revelation 16:19], which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt . . ." Egypt is a type of bondage that false religion brings to the souls of mankind.

### God Is Calling the "Redeemed" Out of Babylon

In our lesson text the people who were singing a song of deliverance had been **"redeemed from the earth."** This was the same **"earth"** that the "beast" (sectism, Protestantism) came up out of (Revelation 13:11). That is what they had been redeemed from. They were **"redeemed"** from earthen, manmade religion, **"from among men" (verse 4)**. This earthen system and its doctrines were concocted by **"men."** That is who dominates these systems. So when **verse 3** says they were **"redeemed from the earth,"** **verse 4** clarifies it by saying, **"These were redeemed from among men."** There is no true victory in false religion. Even so-called holiness groups, if they are engaged in division, are not truly standing for Biblical holiness, because division is sin. Although they may look as though they are a good holiness group that holds a good Biblical standard, if they do not come to the light of truth, then that organization (not necessarily the people that compose it) is engaging in the sin of division. Those entangled and involved in manmade religion are a part of that which is opposing Christ and truth. "Unclean spirits" (Revelation 16:13) are anti-holiness spirits. Anything unclean is unholy. If they do not promote anything more than the sin of division, it is anti-holiness because division is sin (Romans 16:17-18).

Revelation 16:14 says that the spirits of false religion "are the spirits of devils, . . . which go forth . . . to gather them [a people] to the battle [against God and against truth]." These systems and the spirits that promote them are battling against Christ and truth. It is important to understand the spirits back of these systems and the danger they are to the individual who stays in any of those systems. That is why the call of Revelation 18:4 is to "Come out of her, my people." Why? "That ye be not partakers." If you stay in a false system, you will ultimately become a partaker of its spirit. God is calling His people out, so that they do not succumb to those spirits. The spirits that produced those

systems are spirits of devils, spirits that battle against Christ, anti-holiness spirits.

People who should know better have made ignorant remarks concerning false religious institutions, such as, "Well, they are almost like the church." There is nothing *almost like* THE church. Song of Solomon 6:9 tells us that "she is the only *one* of her mother, she is the choice *one* of her that bare her." The church is unique; she is singular. Every representation of the church in the Scripture—whether it is a body, a house, a fold, a bride, a wife, or a mother—is in the singular. We read in Ephesians 4:4 that "There is *one* body." There is only *one* church.

These spirits are most deceptive spirits, and they are working under the guise of religion. Every one of them (the spirit of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet) is a religious organization, and behind them are religious spirits. Too often people embrace the thought, "If it is religious, it is good." No, if it is religious, it is probably wrong. These spirits are very deceptive. But, thank God, we are seeing in our lesson text a portrayal of when the evening-light message began to be heralded in 1880, that God got the message to honest hearts. People who heard the "**voice**" and who were moved by the "**thunder**" of God's Word came leaping, shouting home to Zion. Yet today, honest hearts will come to the light. Jesus said in John 3:21, "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light." What is truth? John 17:17 says, ". . . thy word is truth." There are honest hearts who are living to all the Word they understand. But God has greater light, purer light; and as they are exposed to this light, honest hearts will still come to the light. Christ has fanners that He is using to empty Babylon of the saints. John the Baptizer, prophesying concerning Christ, said in Matthew 3:12, "Whose fan is in his hand . . ." What was in Christ's hand? Revelation 1:16 tells us that "he had in his right hand seven stars." Then, Revelation 1:20 tells us that the "seven stars are the angels [the Greek word *aggelos*, meaning 'messengers'; a picture of a ministry]." In Christ's hand is the ministry, and the ministry are the fanners.



Seven Stars in His Hand

The term *fanners* is an allusion to an Old Testament agricultural process. The wheat was brought in to the threshing floor, and the ox would tread over the wheat, breaking it down to separate the wheat from the chaff. Then a fan was used to lift the grain up into the air, and the wind would carry the chaff away. Because the wheat had substance to it, it would come back to the floor. The fan did the separating. This is a picture of a ministry that God uses to separate the wheat from the chaff. When the chaff is blown away and the wheat comes to the floor, Matthew 13:30 says that Christ will "gather the wheat into my barn," or into the church.

We read in Jeremiah 51:2, "And will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land . . ." God is emptying Babylon out of every honest heart. When Jesus Christ comes in His Second Advent, there will not be one saint left in Babylon. God not only has "fishers of men" (Mark 1:17), but He is using hunters as well. Look at what Jeremiah 16:16 says: "Behold, I will send for many fishers [out-and-out sinners, people who are unsaved need to be caught], saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after [in this evening time] will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." When truth came forth in the sixth seal, people were hiding in "dens and in the rocks of the mountains" (Revelation 6:15) and in all kinds of imaginable positions in sectism. God has "hunters" who will hunt them out from all those creeds of men they are hiding in and bring them home to Zion.

### The "Virgins" Represent the Church

In **verse 4** we find that the "**redeemed**" (**verse 3**) are "**they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.**" Remember that these are symbolic representations (Revelation 1:1). When our text talks about "**virgins**," it is not speaking of the devilish doctrine of celibacy. Paul, when writing to the young minister Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:1 and 3, spoke of "forbidding to marry" as one of the "doctrines of devils." The expression "**virgins**" is not unique to the Revelation. The Apostle Paul referred to the congregation in Corinth of the Church of God as "a chaste virgin" (2 Corinthians 11:2). The Apostle said, ". . . I have espoused you to one husband, . . . to Christ." In this setting he was talking about the purity and the singleness of their affections and devotions to Christ. He admonished affections and devotions be not divided, but rather focalized around Jesus Christ.

Jesus also associated the saints, or the church, in the evening time with the term "**virgins.**" In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, we read that "the kingdom of heaven" is "likened unto ten virgins" (Matthew 25:1). Jesus concluded the

parable by saying, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13). This shows us that the prophetic time setting of this parable was immediately prior to Christ's Second Advent. In Matthew, Chapter 24, Jesus was speaking of conditions immediately preceding the end. Matthew 25:1 begins with the word "Then," referring to the subject under discussion in the preceding chapter, the Second Advent of Christ.

First, let us examine the expression "the kingdom of heaven." Although some make an artificial distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church of God, they are synonymous and interchangeable terms. When the Scripture says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened," we could just as well say "the Kingdom of God" or "the Church of God" and be doing no disservice to the Scriptures whatsoever. When Jesus commenced His public ministry, Matthew recorded it in Matthew 4:17, saying, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the *kingdom of heaven* is at hand." Yet, when John Mark recorded it in Mark 1:15, he referred to it as the "*kingdom of God*." Now if the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven were two distinct, separate entities, it would require two Gospels. But the Bible lets us know there is one Gospel. Matthew 4:23 tells us that "Jesus went about . . . preaching *the* gospel of *the* [singular] kingdom." The Gospel is singular; the kingdom is singular. Paul wrote of one Gospel ("*the* gospel of Christ") in Galatians 1:7. He continued in verse 8, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." There is only one Gospel.

Just as the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are interchangeable terms, likewise, the expressions *kingdom* and *church* are synonymous as well. The nearest distinction you can make between them is that the *kingdom* speaks more to the individual reign of Christ in the heart, and the *church* speaks more of the collective unit of the body of believers. But they are the one and self-same thing. The church is comprised of those who have the reign of Christ in their heart as King. In Matthew 16:18-19 we read these famous words of Christ: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter [the Greek word is *petros*, which means 'a piece of rock'], and upon this rock [the Greek word is *petra*, which means 'a massive rock like Gibraltar'; the church is not built on Peter, but it is built on solid, massive truth] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven . . . ." Why would one need the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven if Jesus was building a church? It is because the *kingdom* and the *church* are synonymous; they are the same thing.

### The Lampstand Is Fed by the Two Olive Trees

We read in Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come [present tense] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church . . . ." All these are various expressions, denoting different aspects or facets of the church. Then verse 28 says, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom . . . ." All the way through the previous verses, the Hebrew writer talked about the church. He never changed his topic of address. Now he speaks of the kingdom, showing that the kingdom and the church are the one and self-same thing.

As we continue to study the Parable of the Ten Virgins, we find that they had "lamps" and "oil." These two things were essential for them to have a real experience of salvation: the lamps and the oil. What do these two things represent? We read in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet . . . ." One cannot have an experience without the Word. A born-again experience only comes by meeting the conditions of the Word (1 Peter 1:23). But there is a second thing that is necessary as well. A lamp without oil is no good. The Word without the Spirit is nothing but a dead letter that "killeth" (2 Corinthians 3:6). The oil represents the Spirit of God (1 Samuel 16:13), and the lamp represents the experience of salvation (Isaiah 62:1) that meeting the conditions of the Word brings.

These "**virgins**" had hold of the Word and the Spirit. That is what produced their experience. The church is a candlestick, or the Greek says "*a lampstand*," all the lamps brought together in a collective unit (Matthew 5:15). The ten "**virgins**" represent the church as a collective unit. When Christ appeared on the scene before John in the introductory chapter of Revelation, he was in the midst of the "seven golden candlesticks [the Greek says 'lampstand']" (Revelation 1:12). There is a vast difference between a *candlestick* and a *lampstand*. Candlesticks are much more susceptible to the wind. They flicker and give less dependable light. However, a lampstand that is fed by oil-fed lamps is much more dependable, steadier, and more consistent. It is less affected by the wind. We read in Revelation 1:20 that

"the seven candlesticks [or lampstands] which thou sawest are the seven churches [or the church throughout the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day]." So, we see that the lampstand represents the church.

Go back with me to Zechariah, Chapter 4, for this is vitally connected. (Keep in mind, what John saw in its entirety, many of the prophets saw only a portion. But when they saw their narrow portion, many times they saw greater detail than what John saw in his overview.) We read in Zechariah 4:2-3: "And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick [the Hebrew says 'lampstand'; in other words a luminary object] all of gold [representing purity; Ephesians 5:27], with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon [the lamps are salvation, the individual experiences of salvation that make up the collective unit of the church], and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof."

What produces the light? What keeps each individual experience of salvation going? Let us continue reading verses 11-14: "Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the LORD of the whole earth."

The lampstand with seven lamps is a picture of the light that God has chosen to shine forth through the church through the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day. But in order to keep that light fed, there are two olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand. The golden pipes are the "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4) that pipe the golden oil out of those two olive trees into the lampstand to feed the lamps and to keep the lamps burning. What are the "two anointed ones" spoken of in Zechariah 4:14? We find the answer in Zechariah 4:6, which states, "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the *word* of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my *spirit* . . ." There are the two anointed ones: the Word and the Spirit. If we turn to Revelation 11:3-4, we find that the "two olive trees" are the "two witnesses."

What are the two witnesses? Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness . . ." One of the witnesses is the Gospel, or the Word. We read of the other witness in Hebrews 10:15, which says, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us . . ." These are the two witnesses: the Word and the Spirit. They are the two olive trees. They are the ones that possess the golden oil. According to Zechariah, Chapter 4, they are on each side of that lampstand, and through the golden pipes, the exceeding great and precious promises, they pipe out golden oil that goes into the lampstand. If you read Zechariah, Chapter 4, very closely, you will find that before the oil goes to the individual lamps, it goes into the lampstand. Zechariah 4:2 tells us that the lampstand has "a bowl upon the top of it." In other words, they Holy Spirit and the Word of God pump the golden oil into the bowl (a picture of the ministry), and then the ministry feeds it into the lamps, which are the saints who produce the light that shines to the world.

During the dark and cloudy day (350 years), the two witnesses laid dead in the street of Sodom and Egypt. Spiritual Babylon would not let the Word and the Spirit operate. But in this evening time, when God got enough people in position who were ready to take hold of the truth, the two witnesses stood to their feet (Revelation 11:11-13). In the fifth seal (1730-1880), souls were under the altar (Christ; Hebrews 13:9-15), crying for judgment to be poured out on the earth, or on this earthen system of religion (Revelation 6:9-10). God let them know, in essence, "Just as soon as I get enough people in place who have died out as you have, I will loose it." When He loosed the sixth seal, people stood on their feet, and the Word and the Spirit rose up as well.

Let us tie all this in with **verse 4a** of our text: "**These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.**" In other words, God's people were in sectism, but they did not have a sectarian spirit. They were not defiled by sectism. They were just like Daniel who, although he was down in Babylon, was not a Babylonian. He would not defile himself with the king's meat (Daniel 1:8). These saints were the same way. They were "**virgins.**" They did not take in the things of Babylon and its spirit. They were being preserved by God, so to speak. When Revelation, Chapter 6, speaks of the souls under the altar, souls are people (not martyrs or disembodied spirits; read Genesis 12:4-5; 46:15, 18, 22, 27). The altar is Christ. This is a symbolic representation of a people who were in subjection to Christ. The people in the Wesleyan era were a holiness people, a people who were in subjection to Christ. Revelation 6:11 says that

"white robes were given unto every one of them." White robes, according to Revelation 19:8, represent "the righteousness of saints." In the Wesleyan era a holiness people was crying out for judgment to be put on the earthen system of Protestantism. Why? Because this system had built sectarian walls and divided brethren from other brethren. True holiness yearns for unity. These are the "**virgins**" that "**were not defiled with women**" (sectarian religion).

Let us examine who these "**women**" are spoken of in our text. Notice that it is "**women**," in the plural. Obviously, these "**women**" were out to take one's virginity, or purity. Revelation, Chapter 17, talks about the eighth beast and the rider that sits upon it. Verse 4 describes the rider as "the woman [who] was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour." Then verse 5 states, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS [plural]." This rider, the mother, is a symbolic representation of that system of Roman Catholicism. The mother is a harlot, and all of her daughters, the various sects of Protestantism, are harlots as well. All these "**women**" represent false churches. Prophecy will help clarify who these "**women**" represent.

Isaiah 4:1 tells us, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isaiah 4:1 begins with the prophetic expression "And in that day." In Isaiah 2:2 the Prophet introduced us to a prophetic expression, saying, "And it shall come to pass in the last days." Biblically, when did the "last days" commence? Written in the proximity of A.D. 63-69, Hebrews 1:1-2 reads: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past [speaking of the Old Testament dispensation] unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days [present tense; they had already commenced in A.D. 63 when he wrote this epistle] spoken unto us by his Son . . . ." When Peter stood up to preach on the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 33), he declared in Acts 2:16-17: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel [Joel 2:28]; And it shall come to pass in the last days . . . ." Here is the same prophetic expression, and Peter said in verse 16, "But this is that." In other words, these are the last days to which Joel and Isaiah were referring. It commenced with the Day of Pentecost and this New Testament dispensation.

Going back to Isaiah's prophecy, in Isaiah 2:2 he introduced us to that expression, "And it shall come to pass in the last days." Then throughout the rest of his writings, he merely made reference to that, saying, "And in that day." So Isaiah 4:1 is a prophetic expression of these last days, or this Christian dispensation. In Isaiah 4:1 the Prophet spoke of "seven women." These are the "**women**" spoken of in **Revelation 14:4**.

### **"They Which Were Not Defiled With Women"**

Notice the nature of these "**women**." First, they said, "We will eat our own bread." What bread are we to truly partake of if we want to please God? Look at the words of Jesus in John 6:51. He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh . . . ." Let us dismiss thoughts of literalism. John 1:14 tells us what His flesh is: "And the Word was made flesh." The flesh, or the bread, is the Word. But these "**women**" did not want to take in the Word. They want to eat their own doctrines. (According to Matthew 16:6-12, bread represents doctrine.) False religion puts out their own bread, their own teachings, their own doctrines. If you try to give them the real living bread, they say: "Oh, I don't want to take that. That's not how we teach it. That's not how we feel." They want their own bread.

Next, these "**women**" do not want to wear "the garments of salvation" or "the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10). They want to "wear our own apparel" (Isaiah 4:1). Why? Because they could not seduce anybody with the right kind of apparel. They want to wear apparel that is seductive to seduce men. How does false religion refuse to wear "the garments of salvation" and "the robes of righteousness"? False religion will not accept the clear truths concerning salvation. Matthew 1:21 clearly states that Jesus came to "save his people from their sins [not *in* their sins, but *from* their sins]." But false religion will not take that. They advocate, "Everyone sins more or less everyday." They will not eat that bread, or that part of the Word.

When the father of John the Baptizer, Zacharias, began to prophesy in Luke 1:74-75, speaking of Christ, he said, "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." However, these "**women**" will not take that. They do not believe holiness is possible. They do not teach holiness is possible. As a matter of fact, they advocate just the opposite is true, thus seducing and deceiving men and women.

Although these "**women**" want their own bread and their own apparel, they want to "be called by thy name [they want to be called Christians], to take away our reproach." Proverbs 14:34 tells us that "sin is a reproach to any people," but the name does not take away sin. When Jesus spoke to the Sardian Age, He said, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Revelation 3:1). In this age, the second segment of the Protestant era, there was a people who wanted to have the name, but they did not have the goods. They merely had the profession of religion.

Let us take a closer look at these "**women**" and how they work to defile God's people. These "**women**" are harlots, and they wear the apparel or "the attire of an harlot" (Proverbs 7:10). A harlot wears the attire that she does for the sole purpose to attract attention, entice, and seduce. Paul prophesied about conditions that would give rise ultimately to the Dark Ages. He talked about people who would depart from the faith. Why? Because they gave "heed to seducing spirits" (1 Timothy 4:1).

When John came off the Isle of Patmos and wrote First, Second, and Third John (which chronologically are the last Books of the Bible), he wrote in 1 John 2:26, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." Spirits do not just work by inhabiting the atmosphere; they work through people. These spirits picked up bodies. It started out as seducing spirits, and then it ended up as "them that seduce you." Ever since that time there has been one of these "**women**" working to seduce in every period of the Gospel Day.

What does the "**woman**" want to seduce you to do? Proverbs 7:16 says, "I have decked my bed . . ." She wants to get you in bed. She wants to defile you, take your purity. A warning is given in Proverbs 7:1 to "keep my words." Verse 5 tells us why: "That they may keep thee." If you will keep the Word, the Word will keep you. That is the key. But if you do not keep the Word, you are on your own. You are easy prey for any spirit that is working through individuals out there. Look again at Proverbs 7:5, which says, "That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words." False religion will flatter you. They will say things like: "Oh, we could really use a person like you. Won't you come down? Won't you talk to our young people? Won't you come down and speak to our congregation?"

You need to remember what old Nehemiah said when he was asked to come down to the plains of Ono. He said, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" (Nehemiah 6:3). These "**women**" will flatter you. In *Pilgrim's Progress* one of the foes that Christian was confronted with was called the Flatterer. Whenever you hear the words "come down," that is not a good thing. When the two witnesses stood on their feet, the cry was "Come up hither" (Revelation 11:12).

Proverbs 7:7 says, "And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding." Understanding these truths is vital, because Hosea 4:6 said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge . . ." There is an old adage that says, "What I don't know won't hurt me." But what you do not know could hurt you greatly. It is needful we understand these truths. Proverbs 7:8 tells us, "Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house." If you start lending your mind to false religion, it is going to bring you "In the twilight" (Proverbs 7:9). In other words, you will be in the dusk, a mixture of light and darkness; the light is going to start going out. You will be "in the black and dark night" (Proverbs 7:9). It will ultimately leave you in darkness.

Continuing with the description of these "**women**," Proverbs 7:11 tells us that "She is loud and stubborn." A woman without a head gets out of divine order and assumes characteristics that are inappropriate. The reason this woman is an harlot is because she is not a wife; she will not submit to the husband. The husband is Christ, but false religion does not want to make that commitment. False religion does not want to be exclusively His; they do not want to be loyal. Because of that, they are loud and stubborn. They are self-willed, and they get out of place. They fill a role that was never designed for them to fill.

Proverbs 7:12 says, "Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner." What a true expression about false religion! You can find a church building on about every street corner, just enticing men to come. We read in verse 13, "So she caught him, and kissed him . . ." She tries to arouse affections and feelings. Verse 16 tells us the object: "I have decked my bed." Her object is to get you in a position where she can rob you of your purity. Verse 18 says, "Come, let us take our fill of love . . ." But look at the end of it. We read in verses 22-23: "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." Then verses 26-27 tell us: "For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going

down to the chambers of death." The end of false religion is death and hell. What kind of representation did John give the spirit of compromise that gave rise to this system of Protestantism? Revelation 6:8 says, "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell . . . ."

### "Redeemed From Among Men"

The Scriptures are very clear that we are not to take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot. First Corinthians 6:15-18a says: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication." What kind of fornication was he speaking of? Spiritual fornication is taking the member of Christ and going down to an harlot body where Christ is not the Husband, where Christ is not the Head, where they will not eat His bread, where they will not wear His apparel, where they are wearing something seductive to entice you to lose your experience, and then joining or affiliating with that organization. The Bible warns to "Flee fornication." In our text we find that the "**virgins**" do not follow the harlot, one who refuses to take vows and be loyal to a husband. They do not follow her to her bed to defile themselves with her, but rather they are ones who "**follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.**"

When Jesus spoke to the Thyatiran Age (the first segment of the age of Protestantism) in Revelation 2:20, He said, "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." In this period (1530-1730) when the beast called the false prophet rose "up out of the earth" (Revelation 13:11), the spirit of this woman Jezebel began to seduce "my servants to commit fornication." What type of fornication? "Eat things sacrificed to idols." Revelation 13:14 tells us that the Protestant beast caused them to make "an image to the beast." Under the old system of Baal worship, every locality had its own Baal, its own idol. Likewise, Protestantism has taken on many manifestations, many different sectarian and denominational types of images. That is what Revelation 2:20 is speaking of when it mentions "idols," or images. They have been seduced to commit fornication with the many sects, creeds, and denominations. The "**virgins**" in our text were "**redeemed from among men.**" The Greek word here for "**redeemed**" literally means "taken out of the marketplace." Babylon and the harlots make merchandise out of the souls of men. But when one takes a real stand for truth and follows the Lamb to Mount Zion, he or she is "taken out of the marketplace."

Look at Revelation 18:3, which says, "For all nations [or denominations] have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." In Revelation 18:12-13 we see where the souls of men rank in their pecking order: "The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and [last of all] souls of men." All of the worldly, earthly things—things that feed and please the flesh—are put far above the "souls of men." They are last. They are regarded as mere "merchandise" (verse 12). Those in our text who followed the Lamb and the message of truth were taken out of the market. No one makes merchandise of them anymore. They have been taken out of the market of sectarian religion, "**redeemed from among men.**"

In **verse 5** we see the character of the "**firstfruits**" depicted, which is why they so readily came leaping, shouting home to Zion: "**And in their mouth was found no guile . . . .**" This is the same Greek word as was used to describe Nathanael back in John 1:47. When Philip brought Nathanael back to Jesus, Jesus said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" This word lets us know that he was in no way duplicitous, deceitful, or dishonest, but rather he was open, honest, without deceit, and purely forthright to the Divine. The account of Nathanael was one of a man who was quick to embrace the truth. He was attuned to right and truth because his character was without guile. This is the reason **verse 5** of our text says, "**. . . for they are without fault before the throne of God.**" In other words, they lived in a manner where they recognized that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to

do" (Hebrews 4:13). The Greek word for "**fault**" is the word *amomos*, which is rendered as "without blemish" or "unblamable" in other Scriptures. This is telling us that the way to initially receive truth and to remain in truth is to have an honest and open heart and to respond quickly and properly to the truth.

When Jesus gave the Parable of the Sower, He let us know there was only one good ground. Luke 8:15 says, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it . . ." Those who have "**no guile**" are ones who are honest, open, and receptive. The reason the brethren were so imminently successful at the commencement of this sixth seal was because they were receptive to truth. They were honest and open and responded quickly and properly when truth was presented to them. They were willing to "**follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.**" May God help us to ever have the same willingness.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART FOUR

### The First Angel in Revelation, Chapter 14

**Revelation 14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,  
7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.**

#### The Hour of Judgment

In this text of Scripture the scene the Revelator was envisioning has changed. In Revelation 14:1-5 the predominant view is of the "hundred forty and four thousand" (verse 1), those who were redeemed from among men (manmade organizations) and were, according to verse 4, the "firstfruits" of the evening-light message. But in Revelation 14:6-18 we are introduced to six angels. In this study we will consider the first "**angel**." As we begin to consider this text, we must again be mindful that the prophetic time placement was during the first segment of this evening time, or that period of time commonly called the sixth-seal period (A.D. 1880-1930). This is substantiated in **verse 7**, which tells us that "**the hour** [singular] **of his judgment is come**." What judgment has a symbolic one-hour connotation associated with it? Revelation 18:10, speaking of Babylon, says, ". . . for in *one* hour is thy judgment come." This verse and our text both refer to the "**hour**" (singular) when judgment is to be poured out upon Babylon.

In Revelation, Chapter 18, the Revelator envisioned that which the angel was bringing forth upon Babylon. Verse 6 says, "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." This "**hour**" symbol is in reality two half hours. Babylon is to have two cups of judgment poured out on her—one in the sixth seal and one in the seventh seal. So when our text says that "**the hour of his judgment is come** [present tense]," it is telling us that it was just commencing. Therefore, the first cup was poured out upon Babylon in this sixth-seal period of time.

As we begin to look at our text, keep in mind that John was receiving a vision (Revelation 9:17). God was using, as it were, the panorama of the skies to paint a vision. When we read, "**And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven . . .**," we must recognize the expressions "**angel**" and "**heaven**" are not speaking of celestial beings nor of the celestial realm. This is confirmed when **verse 6** continues, ". . . **having the everlasting gospel to preach . . .**" Celestial beings do not preach the Gospel. They do not understand redemption's plan as those of us do who are participants. They do not possess the Holy Spirit. (Read 1 Peter 1:12.)

Second of all, **verse 6** tells us that this "**angel**" is preaching to "**them that dwell on the earth**." It is not speaking of something transpiring over in God's celestial Heaven, but rather it is speaking of that which was transpiring here on the "**earth**." Also, the word "**angel**" here, as it is throughout much if not all of the Revelation, is the Greek word *aggelos*. According to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, that word means "a messenger, envoy, one who is sent." Romans 10:15 tells us very clearly the one who is sent is the preacher. These angels represent the ministry. Paul used the same Greek word (*aggelos*) in Galatians 4:13-14, when he wrote that he had "preached the gospel unto you," and they had received him "as an *angel* of God."

In Revelation 22:8-9 when John "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel [the same Greek word *aggelos*]," the angel told John, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren . . ." I repeat, these angels that we are going to study in Revelation, Chapter 14, are not referring to celestial beings, but rather they are a symbolic portrayal of a ministry. It is necessary to reinforce the fact that the "**heaven**" spoken of in **verse 6** is not the celestial Heaven. Rather it is an ecclesiastical heaven, or as Ephesians 2:6 says, "heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is "the third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2), where, according to 2 Corinthians 12:1, you "come to visions and revelations of the Lord." It is an exalted spiritual position.

## Four Angels Bound in Euphrates

Now the question arises, who is this "angel" spoken of in **Revelation 14:6**? As a matter of fact, we must ask an even broader question, because there are six angels spoken of throughout this chapter. Therefore, we must ask: Who are these six angels that are incorporated in Chapter 14? To truly understand what is being portrayed before us and to address these questions, we must remember we are viewing the evening time in these verses, a time that began with the sixth trumpet being sounded. Too many times when people view a text of Scripture, if they are not cautious, they are prone to isolate texts from each other. But the Bible lets us know that if we are going to rightly divide the Word of Truth, we cannot isolate any Scripture from the scheme of other Scriptures (Isaiah 28:13). To rightly divide the Word of Truth, we must do as Isaiah 34:16 tells us, "Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them." For every dark, obscure, or unclear portion in the Scriptures, there is another Scripture that the Spirit will mate up with it to shed light or bring understanding.

Let us go back and look at what occurred when the sixth-trumpet message began to be sounded. In Revelation 9:13 we read that "the sixth angel [the sixth-seal ministry] sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar." This is an allusion back to the Old Testament tabernacle and the literal golden altar with four horns. In Exodus 30:1-3 God gave the instructions to Moses of how to construct these articles of furnishings for the Old Testament tabernacle, in particular the golden altar. Exodus 30:10 tells us that the blood of the sin offering was applied to the four horns of the altar. Our sin offering, according to Hebrews 9:24-26, is Jesus Christ, and Hebrews 12:24 lets us know that Christ's "blood . . . speaketh." So when we read in Revelation 9:13 about the "voice from the four horns" speaking, we find that it is the voice of the blood of Christ speaking.

Revelation 9:14 reveals what the blood said: "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." What does *Euphrates* symbolize? *Smith's Bible Dictionary* says that "on its banks stood the city of Babylon." Thus, this expression is synonymous with Babylon. The literal river Euphrates was the lifeline that flowed right through the center of Babylon. Babylon was built on its banks. Therefore, Euphrates and Babylon are synonymous terms. Revelation 9:14 is talking about a ministry that was bound in Babylon. When the sixth angel began to sound, the voice of the blood of Christ said, in essence, "Loose those ministries; loose that ministry; loose those ones that are bound down in Babylon." Why did the voice of the blood of Christ cry out? Because it is the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28) that purchased the Church of God, and it is Babylon that did disservice to the body of Christ (the church) by separating and scattering the saints. The cry of this sixth-seal ministry was, in essence, "Loose those men; let them out of Babylon; bring them back to Zion where they belong."

Next, we read in Revelation 9:15, "And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year [that takes in every major measurement of time] . . ." Once this evening-time message was ushered in by the sixth angel, from there throughout the duration of all measurement of time, God is going to have a church. He is going to have a people who are gathered together, who have come out of Babylon. His church will forevermore be in visible view as long as time stands. The four angels mentioned in Revelation 9:14 are a picture of a ministry that did despite to the church, the body of Christ. They were the ones who caused the apostasy and the division of God's people. These four angels are the second, third, fourth, and the fifth trumpet angels. The second angel caused the mountain burning with fire to be cast into the sea (Revelation 8:8). That ministry helped advance an apostasy. The third angel was in the Lutheran age (Revelation 8:10-11), and the fourth and the fifth angels were in the Wesleyan era (Revelation 8:12; 9:1-11). These angels helped produce sect Babylon and build sectarian walls that divided God's people.

In the sixth trumpet age, the ministry heard the blood of Christ crying out. Hebrews 12:24 compares it to the blood of Abel (Genesis 4:10). When Cain slew Abel, he took the life from his body (Genesis 4:8). Abel's body could no longer function as God ordained. It could no longer operate as God wanted it to operate. So it was with what these ministers did to the body of Christ. After this ministry worked throughout what led to the Dark Ages and the dark and cloudy day, the body of Christ could no longer function as God had ordained for it to function. It had been cast down and was no longer able to do that for which God created it. We see the same four angels in Revelation 7:1, which states, "And after these things I saw four angels [or a ministry] standing on the four corners of the earth [the low level of human, manmade

religion, showing that they were from the system that came 'up out of the earth'—Protestantism; Revelation 13:11], holding the four winds ['winds' represent spirits and also doctrines, because spirits produce doctrines; Ephesians 4:14 and 1 Timothy 4:1] . . . ." These four angels were the ones holding forth the winds of doctrine.

So when Revelation, Chapter 14, which has its time setting in this sixth-seal and seventh-seal periods, speaks of six angels, they are the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh of these trumpet angels. In reality, what was the sixth seal comprised of? Where did the people and its ministry come from? Ezekiel 34:12 says, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." When the cry was, "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4), where did the people and the ministry come from? They came out of Babylon; they came out of the systems that had been produced and propagated by the ministries of these previous periods of time. That is where they had been scattered.

When we talk about these six angels, we must realize that these angels are certainly not the literal angels (or ministries) that operated during those historical time periods. Those ministers had passed off the stage of action. These six angels are a representation of that which had been lost during those periods and that which has now been restored through the sixth-trumpet message. This is a symbolic portrayal, showing that the effect caused by the failure of these angels, or ministry, has now been rectified and remedied by the evening-time message.

The "**angel**" John "**saw**" in **verse 6** is a representation of the second trumpet angel who had failed to stay true to the message. Because of that failure, a terrible apostasy took place (an apostasy so far reaching we are still feeling the effects of it today). But Zechariah 14:7 plainly tells us that "at evening time it shall be light." There will never be another dark age or another cloudy day. The Gospel sounding forth now, according to **verse 6**, is the "**everlasting gospel**." It shall sound until time reels into eternity. It is essential that it is denoted as the "**everlasting gospel**" because had this "**angel**" not succumbed to the spirit of apostasy, it could have been an "**everlasting gospel**" from the morning time throughout the duration of the Gospel Day. But there was a failure, and the result of that failure was an apostasy. The outgrowth of that apostasy was the hideous beast that warred against the very cause of Christ. However, our lesson text is letting us know that although the second trumpet angel failed to stay true to the message and a terrible apostasy occurred, that which had been lost through apostasy is being restored in this evening time.

### **The Second Angel Was Responsible for an Apostasy**

Let us study this second angel a little bit more. According to Revelation, Chapter 6, a spirit of apostasy was working. In Revelation 6:5 John said that he "beheld . . . a black horse." Each of those horses represents spirits (Zechariah 6:2-5). Every one of them is a religious spirit. Zechariah 10:3 tells us that horses represent an implement of battle. These spirits are militant spirits, out for the conquest of men's souls. The black horses that went "forth into the north country" (Zechariah 6:6) "have quieted my spirit" (Zechariah 6:8). That is what produces apostasy. Thus, this black horse represents a spirit of apostasy. That is the militant spirit that was working in this period of time, the Smyrnan Age (A.D. 270-530), the time when "the second angel sounded" (Revelation 8:8). Because of this apostasy, "a great mountain burning with fire [a representation of the morning-time church; Daniel 2:35 and Revelation 21:9-10] was cast into the sea" (Revelation 8:8).

Two things happened when that "great mountain burning with fire" was cast into the sea: the fire was extinguished, and it sank into the sea, or out of visible view. There was no visible church from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1880. This second angel was the one responsible for the mountain burning with fire being cast into the sea. What does the "sea" represent? Revelation 17:15 tells us it represents a people, and Isaiah 57:20 tells us what type of people: "the wicked." What does God consider to be the height of wickedness? We read in Psalm 50:16-17: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." A spirit of apostasy will cause people to take God's Word and cast it behind them, yet keep professing, practicing, and preaching. That is what gave rise to these false religious systems. The sea of apostasy that this mountain went into (Revelation 8:8) is the same sea the papal beast came out of (Revelation 13:1).

In our text we see this "**angel**" portrayed as "**having the everlasting gospel**." In other words, the evening-time ministry is going to make reparation for the failure of the second angel to stay true to this message. This also tells us that in this evening time it shall be light. There will never be another Dark Ages; there will never be another cloudy day.

The Gospel sounded forth is "**the everlasting gospel**"; it will sound until time reels into eternity. When this "**angel**" began to go through with this "**everlasting gospel**," notice where he started: "**to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.**" This expression takes us back to Revelation 13:12, which speaks of the second beast (the religious system of Protestantism), the system the Revelator saw "coming up out of the earth" (Revelation 13:11).

When this "**angel**" began to "**fly in the midst of heaven**," the first place it went was "**unto them that dwell on the earth**," those that were in the manmade, sectarian religion. Although they thought they knew the Gospel, they did not know what the Gospel truly is. Paul spoke of it in Galatians 1:6-7: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." The doctrines of Protestantism, such as eternal security, are a perversion. It is not the true Gospel. It is "another Gospel," and it is all produced by "another spirit." Second Corinthians 11:4 speaks of these and reveals they are produced by their concept of "another Jesus." Every one of the false religious organizations has their own view of Jesus because another spirit is working. It is not the Spirit of God, but it is the spirit of "the beast" or the spirit of "the false prophet" (Revelation 16:13). False religion needs to hear "**the everlasting gospel**," a Gospel that has not changed (Psalm 119:89). It does not change because its source is unchangeable (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).

This "**angel**" not only preached to "**them that dwell on the earth**," but also "**to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.**" Remember, this is symbolic. When the second angel failed to stay true to the truth of the Gospel back in the morning time, the "great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea" (Revelation 8:8). The *sea* is a large body of water. Speaking of water, Revelation 17:15 tells us, "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Here we have almost the same expression as in our text in **verse 6**. This denotes the same realm that was a product of apostasy. Our text is portraying the restoration that began to take place at the beginning of the sixth seal.

In Matthew 24:35 Jesus said, "Heaven and earth [speaking of the firmamental heaven and earth] shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." It is an "**everlasting gospel.**" The enemy thought he had done away with the effectiveness of the Gospel through the Dark Ages and through the dark and cloudy day, but when that sixth trumpet began to sound, the "**everlasting gospel**" arose back on the scene (Revelation 11:11)!

The Apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:25: "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." The morning-time brethren preached the "**everlasting gospel**," and the sixth-seal ministry began a restoration, as one songwriter said, "Back to the light of the morning, Jesus our Captain leads." In F. G. Smith's book entitled *The Last Reformation*, he wrote the following: "The present reformation is the work of the Spirit affecting all true Christians, drawing them together. The term *reformation* signifies the act of reforming, or the state of being reformed, changed from worse to better, correction or amendment of life, manners, or of anything vicious or corrupt. In its application to the religion of Christ, *reformation* means the correction of abuses and corrupt practices that have been associated with the Christian system. The elimination of all unworthy foreign elements. In other words, it implies *restoration*, a return to the practices and ideals of primitive Christianity."

### Godly Fear Produces Glory

Let us look at the message this ministry declared. **Revelation 14:7** says, "**Saying with a loud voice, Fear God . . .**" What an appropriate message to people who were under the bondage of men and manmade rules for 1610 years. In other words, the cry was: "Do not fear the Pope, the priest, or the preacher, but fear God. Do not fear the system, the denomination, the council, or the district superintendent, but fear God." This is indeed the truth of the morning light. Jesus said in Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body [do not fear the popes, the Inquisition, the tortures, being on a battlefield against another Protestant sect; do not fear what the denomination may do—cut you off, excommunicate you, disfellowship you], but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The message of this ministry was: Get your eyes off of man and what man can do to you, and get your eyes back on God. Psalm 118:6 says, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"

The wise man let us know that fearing God is "the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). He also wrote in Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." This is exactly how the sixth-seal brethren began

to come to a knowledge of truth. They were tired of man-rule, denominational boundaries, and manmade walls; and they were tired of being separated from other saints. They began to fear the repercussions of what God was going to do if they did not start obeying God rather than man.

When we study the word "**fear**" (**verse 7**), we find that the Greek word, according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, means "to reverence, venerate, treat with deference or reverential obedience." When the people began to "**Fear God**," next we read "**and give glory to him**." When true "**fear**" that produces obedience is working, it will produce "**glory**." Where there is a lack of "**glory**," there is not enough "**fear**" of God and not enough obedience. "**Glory**" only appears when we reverence Him enough to fully comply and obey. We can read examples of this in the Old Testament. When Moses had been fully compliant and obedient, the glory of the Lord came on the scene (Exodus 40:16, 34). In Solomon's day the "**glory**" of God came on the scene at the dedication of the temple when full compliance to God's Word had been met (2 Chronicles 7:1-3).

**Verse 7** of our text says that "**the hour of his judgment is come**." For people to be moved away from worshipping "the dragon" (Revelation 13:4), "the beast" (Revelation 13:4), and "the image of the beast" (Revelation 13:15), some "**judgment**" had to be put on Babylon. *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* says "**judgment**" (*krisis*) means "separating, sundering, separation." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* tells us it is "the act of distinguishing and separating." Here we begin to gain an insight as to what was required to "**worship him**" (**verse 7**). It required one to separate from everything else. Before people could see their need of separating, "**judgment**" had to be poured out. God wants a people who are separate, distinct, and distinguishable. In Hebrews 10:33 we are called "a gazingstock." Peter referred to us as "a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him" (1 Peter 2:9), not talking all the time, but showing it through one's life. In 2 Corinthians 6:17 we are told to "be ye separate." Second Corinthians 6:14 tells us what we are to be separate from: "unrighteousness." Every false religious organization is engaged in unrighteousness.

Second Corinthians 6:17 continues, ". . . and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Here the Apostle was quoting prophecy. Isaiah 52:11 says, "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." We can also see in Isaiah (in prophetic type) a picture of the morning-time apostasy. Isaiah 1:21 says, "How is the faithful city [speaking of Jerusalem, a type of the morning-time church] become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers." Then we read in verses 26-27: "And I will restore [the evening-time] thy judges as at the first [in other words, as in the morning time], and thy counsellors as at the beginning [the same as John's burden in 1 John 1:1—'That which was from the beginning']; get people back to the original]: afterward thou shalt be called [the evening time], The city of righteousness, the faithful city. [How is it going to happen?] Zion shall be redeemed with judgment [judgment was going to produce it] . . . ."

It takes the same type of "**judgment**" preaching to not only separate people from Babylon, but to also cleanse their teachings, beliefs, and practices from sectarian taint. It is not only necessary for people to come out of Babylon, but it is also necessary that Babylon come out of them. D. S. Warner wrote in the song entitled *The Evening Light* about being "Free from Babel in the spirit, Free to worship God aright." We read in Isaiah 4:4 that God has to wash away "the filth of the daughters of Zion . . . by the spirit of judgment." "**Judgment**," or solid truth, will help us to know how we should separate ourselves unto God. It will wash away the filth, and verse 5 says, "And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion . . . ." He will create a dwelling place for us in Zion as long as we will take the truth and allow Him to wash away the filth; let Him cleanse us. Then, when we have a dwelling place on Mount Zion, we will be like old Israel that had "a cloud and smoke by day" and "the shining of a flaming fire by night" (Isaiah 4:5). We will have the presence of God. We will have the "**glory**" of God, and the "**glory**" will be our "defence" (Isaiah 4:5).

Regardless of how long you have been around truth, there are some things that need to be washed away by the water of the Word (Ephesians 5:26). Second Corinthians 7:1 talks about the need to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." There will be some filth that needs to be cleansed. Many times we are more tainted by past associations, past teachings, and upbringing than we realize. God has to take His Word and wash away all that filth. If we will allow God to do that, He will create upon Zion a dwelling place for us, and in that dwelling place, there will be the "**glory**" and the presence of God.

The last part of **verse 7** declares, ". . . worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains

**of waters."** Certainly there are greater depths here, but in simple overview it is telling us to worship the true Creator, the One who truly made the **"heaven, and earth, and the sea."** Do not any longer be duped by the imitations that Satan has foisted upon humanity through false systems. Those false religions systems came "up out of the sea" (Revelation 13:1) and "up out of the earth" (Revelation 13:11). Thank God, we no longer have to be "ignorant of [Satan's] devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). In this evening time we have "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). We no longer have to be one of those who "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). We do not have to worship that which came out of the sea or the earth, but we can worship the true Creator, He who is greater than all the creation. That is what this **"angel"** with **"the everlasting gospel"** was saying: **"worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."** Do not worship those creatures or their manmade organizations, but worship the Creator who is above all, "the only true God" (John 17:3). When the evening-light message was loosed, **"judgment"** was put on Babylon, and people were able to separate from it and worship "the Creator of the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 40:28). This message frees man to truly worship God as the Lord intended: "in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 96:9) and free from the sin of division, to truly worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). This is what true **"fear"** and obedience will produce.

I trust you can understand this first **"angel"** in a little clearer manner and see exactly its placement prophetically and what occurred when he began to **"preach"** (verse 6).

## The Second Angel in Revelation, Chapter 14

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

### Prophetic Placement Is the Sixth Seal

In this text the Revelator envisioned "**another angel**," the second in a series of six angels incorporated in this chapter. We found in a prior segment that the word "**angel**" used here is symbolic and is not speaking of celestial beings. According to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, it means "a messenger, an envoy, one who is sent." In Romans 10:15 the Apostle Paul gave insight as to who God sends forth: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Therefore, the one who is sent is the preacher, or the minister; this "**angel**" is a portrayal of the ministry.

The prophetic placement of this text is still in that first segment of the evening time (A.D. 1880-1930). This is proved by the message heralded in this text: "**Babylon is fallen, is fallen.**" This is the first time the word "**Babylon**" appears in the Book of the Revelation. This reveals several truths to us. First, it confirms the prophetic time placement. This portion of the vision began with John saying, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion . . ." (Revelation 14:1). In other words, the church ("mount Sion") was back in visible view, and Christ ("a Lamb") was back in His rightful position as Head of the church (Zion). Psalm 87:3-4 lets us know wherever the "city of God" (Zion) is, "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me." This is fulfilled when the ministry began to herald the cry, "**Babylon is fallen, is fallen.**" This also lets us know that we are still dealing with the first segment of the evening time of this Gospel Day, the period commonly called "the sixth seal," because this is when the message began to be preached. The usage of the word "**Babylon**" also reveals that these brethren had a clear vision of what Babylon was. They clearly saw its spiritual state: it "**is fallen, is fallen.**" They also began to understand why "**Babylon**" was in such a spiritual condition.

As we direct our attention to this ministry styled as "**another angel**," we must recall that this "**angel**" corresponds with the third trumpet angel. In Revelation 8:10-11 we see a picture of that ministry: "And the third angel sounded [there was no trumpet or public message heralded during the Dark Ages; so the third trumpet has its setting over in the fourth candlestick age: A.D. 1530-1730], and there fell a great star [a great ministry; Revelation 1:16-20] from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." In this period of time, known as the Lutheran era, there was a great star. After the great darkness of that papal night, this star came forth "burning as it were a lamp" (Revelation 8:10) with the message on salvation. This is what is "as a lamp that burneth" (Isaiah 62:1). God got hold of Martin Luther and other reformers and they took the truth of Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith," and they laid a deadly wound to that papal beast. A great star, or a great light, arose and men began to clearly see that salvation was by faith, not works. It was a *great* star because the era of papalism had been such a *great* darkness.

Sadly this great star fell, and when it went down, a beast came up (Revelation 13:11). The religious system of Protestantism arose. All this occurred because they began to "**drink**" of the wrong cup. They began to be affected by the wrong thing. The correlation between the "third angel" (Revelation 8:10) and "**another angel**" (**Revelation 14:8**) reveals to us that the failure of the ministry in the Lutheran age has been rectified and remedied by the evening-light message. Zechariah 14:7 tells us that "at evening time it shall be light." Light represents understanding (Psalm 119:130). Thus, in the evening time Zechariah prophesied that there would be understanding of the precious truths of God's Word. We see portrayed in our text an understanding of what produced "**Babylon**" and an understanding of the condition that she is in. She has "**made all nations [to] drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**"

## Babylon Brings Confusion and Bondage

The woman spoken of in our text (Babylon) worked on people to cause them to become defiled, and many were defiled. Our text also gives insight concerning those who were defiled, how they became defiled, and why "**Babylon**" was so effective: it was because of her "**drink**." As we consider the message proclaimed in **verse 8**, we need to understand this expression "**Babylon**" is an allusion back to the Old Testament. Let us look at the literal Babylon and study its origin. Genesis 10:10 tells us that the first kingdom mentioned in the Bible was the kingdom of Babel. Verse 8 tells us that Nimrod "began to be a mighty one." The Hebrew word for "mighty one" is *gibor*, and it means "a tyrant." Verse 9 says that he "was a mighty hunter before the LORD," or ahead of God. Nimrod's name literally means "let us rebel." *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume 9, page 309, says, "It was he who made all the people rebellious against God."

This kingdom called "Babel" that rebellion built was built by a man who set himself before God and was a tyrant over the people. Genesis 11:1 gives a type of the Gospel Day as well as a description of how literal Babel came to be named and known. It says, "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." There is a type of when the church was instituted on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1 says, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." What type of "one accord"? Acts 1:14 says, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication . . ." When the Genesis account says that "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech," this depicts typically the unity, the harmony, and the oneness that was enjoyed at the commencement of this Gospel Day.

Genesis 11:2-3 progresses typically through the Gospel Day. It reads: "And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, [East is the source of light, the place where the sun rises; they began to journey 'from the east,' away from light, away from the truth. This is a picture in type of the morning-time apostasy.] that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another [no consulting of God; they consulted with each other], Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."

Genesis 11:3 tells us "they had brick for stone." Our life, our experience, the church is to be built on the Stone (Acts 4:10-11). Only God can make stone, and that Stone is Christ. However, in Genesis we find that man began to make manmade substitutes: "let us make brick." God did not make it, no more than He made the teachings, the dogmas, the doctrines, and the creeds of spiritual Babylon. When they said "let us make," we read that they consulted one with another: "And they said one to another." In other words, they got their heads together, and they formulated ideas. What came out of that was manmade substitutes. That is what gave rise to Babylon.

With those bricks (manmade substitutes), Genesis 11:4 says that they decided to "build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven." They attempted to construct a manmade way to Heaven. That is exactly what false religion is doing today. They tell people to just sign a card, shake the preacher's hand, be baptized, or join a supposed church. These manmade ways are supposedly substitute ways to Heaven. We also read in Genesis 11:4 that the people said "let us make us a name." Sectism is out to make us a name. That is why they are so particular about the names of their organizations. They are named after men because they are men's organizations. If you read Genesis 11:6, you will find that the people were "one, and they have all one language." That is the picture of the Dark Ages. Although, they had manmade substitutes, they were all still one. But when God began to "confound their language" (Genesis 11:7), everyone was saying something different (a picture of Protestantism in type), yet still trying to build the same tower to get to Heaven.

Yet today if we do not want God's way, He will confound us. Second Thessalonians 2:10-11 tells us that "because they received not the love of the truth [the Word; John 17:17] . . . God shall send them strong delusion." That is what God did back in Genesis, Chapter 11. They did not want to go God's way, so He confounded them. Then Genesis 11:9 says, "Therefore is the name of it called Babel [or *The Septuagint* says 'confusion']." The same Hebrew word used for *Babel* is used for *Babylon*. Both words mean "confusion."

To summarize, we see in Genesis, Chapter 11, a clear type of spiritual Babylon: a manmade kingdom, built by rebellion, built by turning away from light, using manmade substitutes rather than the Stone, Christ Jesus. This is a system that wants to construct its own way to Heaven and make a name for man, a system where everyone is saying something different. What a clear picture of false religion! It is no wonder that through divine inspiration the Apostle



John heard this angel go back into the annals of Old Testament terminology and pick up that expression of "**Babylon**" to speak of the conditions in the spiritual realm in the New Testament dispensation.

What else does the word "**Babylon**" represent? If you read 2 Kings 25:6-7, you will find that Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon is a picture of bondage. Zedekiah's sons were slain, and he was blinded, bound, and carried to Babylon. Likewise, false religion (false teachings and systems) works to blind people to the truth. It wants to put their eyes in a position where they cannot see the light, where they cannot gain understanding. It wants to blind and bind. It wants to hold people in bondage. Revelation 18:2 tells us that "Babylon the great is . . . the hold . . . and a cage." A "cage" and a "hold" are used to keep something in bondage, and that is exactly what "**Babylon**" is doing.

### **Babylon Has Fallen Into Darkness**

The next truth we see revealed in our text is that this evening-time ministry clearly saw Babylon's state. They did not attempt to try to deny its state or prop it up, but they *denounced* its state, saying "**Babylon is fallen, is fallen**" (**Revelation 14:8**). If you study that, you will notice that it is a strange expression in our English language. Grammatically, that is what is known as "present progressive tense." In other words, a present progressive forms as a verb to express ongoing action. Thus, our text reveals that "**Babylon**" has already "**fallen**," never to rise again, and she continues to sink lower and continues to fall. Spiritual Babylon continues to fall, going lower and lower into moral depravity and spiritual darkness.

The words "**Babylon is fallen, is fallen**" are a quotation from prophecy. Let us look at it. In a prior study, we found when the beast came up out of the earth that "they should make an *image* to the beast" (Revelation 13:14). Just as in the Old Testament each locality had an individual Baal (image or idol), each organization in Protestantism has its own image or idol. According to prophecy, when "**Babylon is fallen, is fallen**," Isaiah 21:9 says that "all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground." These images were brought right down to an earthen level, showing that they were not divine but they were just manufactured works of the earth.

We see the same cry in Revelation 18:2, which states, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen . . ." When it speaks of *fallen*, what has it *fallen* from? The antecedent of "he" is found in Revelation 18:1, where we read, "And after these things I saw another angel [a messenger, a ministry] come down from heaven [a divine call], having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." A true minister who has a divine call will bring some light, and his message will produce some glory when people understand it, take hold of it, and walk in it. When we come to verse 2 and read that "Babylon the great *is fallen* . . . and *is become* the habitation of devils," we realize it was not always in this state. There was a time when "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand" (Jeremiah 51:7). During the various reformations, there were times when the cup that they offered was a cup that the Lord had in His hand. That cup was "the cup of salvation" (Psalm 116:13). When the cup of salvation was being offered throughout the various aspects and portions of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries Reformation, when they were being true to God and true to the message and holding forth the cup of salvation, as individuals they were "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). But when people turned their backs on light and started producing manmade substitutes, it went from the "habitation of God through the Spirit" to a "habitation of devils" (Revelation 18:2).

"**Babylon**" fell from that high spiritual position which salvation and truth had raised them to. Again, "**Babylon**" was not always in the "**fallen**" state that it is in today. However, when they failed to continue to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), they went into darkness. Fellowship was broken, because "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Out of those darkened minds, teachings arose, doctrines were formulated, and systems were developed. There were spirits behind those doctrines. First Timothy 4:1 lets us know that the "seducing spirits" come first, then the "doctrines of devils." Behind every doctrine there is a spirit. When men fail to stay in fellowship with God, when they start drinking of this cup, they imbibe a spirit, and the spirit begins producing doctrines.

Why is "**Babylon**" in a "**fallen**" state? All of "**Babylon**" is in the same condition. Regardless of what sectarian organization they may be and what particular doctrines they may espouse, they all "**drink**" the same thing. **Revelation 14:8** says, ". . . she made all nations [or denominations] **drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**" Because they all "**drink**" the same thing, it produces the same condition. In 1 Corinthians 10:4 the Apostle, alluding to what occurred back in the Exodus, said, "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that

followed them: and that Rock was Christ." When Moses was told to speak to the rock, it was so that water would come forth. This water had the same effect on everyone. It provided for the common need and sustained them. They all drank of the same drink, and they all derived the same benefit. They were all in a common position. So it is with all who "**drink**" from Babylon's cup; they will be in a common position.

### Drinking From Babylon's Cup Causes Drunkenness

Our text tells us the contents of this cup is "**wine**." The wise man told us in Proverbs 20:1, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Wine is deceptive, and that is exactly how "**Babylon**" works—through powers of deception. Jeremiah 51:7 tells us, "Babylon hath . . . made all the earth drunken . . . of her wine; [If you study it in the original language, you will find that word '*wine*' actually means 'an intoxicant.' When one takes in an intoxicant, it begins to cloud their thinking. We speak of it today as 'being under the influence.' It impairs their judgment and hinders them from walking straight.] therefore the nations are mad [in other words, they had taken leave of their sensibilities]."

Many times people will engage in activities that they never would have engaged in while sober. Then, the next morning they have no recollection of what they have done. Many a drunken man has awakened the next morning in a woman's bed, having no idea who she is, where he is, how he got there, or what they did. Why? Because he was intoxicated. This is exactly what false religion is trying to do: get people so intoxicated that their thinking is clouded and their judgment is impaired to the place that they will get in bed with this woman (harlot Babylon), engage in illicit relations, and lose their purity.

In Ephesians 5:18 we see a contrast between being under the influence of the Spirit and being under the influence of an intoxicant. Being "drunk with wine" is the opposite of being "filled with the Spirit." Being "drunk with wine" is being under the influence of something totally opposite to what God desires you to be influenced by. This cup portrays a picture of this "**wine**" that false religion desires men to drink as the opposite of what the Holy Spirit would direct. "**Babylon**" is working to get men to become intoxicated and thus affect their judgment and behavior.

Revelation 17:4 describes Babylon's appearance: "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls [she puts on many outward appearances, seemingly vitally interested in truth], having a golden cup [a form of godliness'; 2 Timothy 3:5] in her hand [it is no longer 'in the LORD'S hand'; Jeremiah 51:7] full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." Verse 5 reads, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS . . ." "**Babylon**" is a harlot "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication" (Revelation 17:2). A harlot is one who makes merchandise out of people. She is not interested in them as individuals; she is merely interested in the monetary gain. That is exactly what false religion is—a harlot. It is not interested in people as individuals or their welfare. It is merely interested in the monetary gain; it makes merchandise out of the souls of men.

Why would the "kings of the earth," men who hold responsible positions, men of reasonable intelligence, commit fornication with an harlot? Revelation 17:2 answers this question. It is because they "have been made drunk." Their judgment is impaired; their thinking has become clouded. Look at it in the natural. A man might go into a bar and see a woman who is physically unattractive. But after he gets a few drinks "under his belt," she starts looking good to him. Why? He is drunk; he is not thinking clearly; his judgment is impaired. Likewise, false religion is ugly, an abomination, a habitation of devils, a cage, a hold. It is not attractive. However, when people start sipping of her cup, things that would not normally have any attraction start looking attractive. In the end they commit spiritual fornication by having illicit relations with false religion.

"**Babylon**" is a harlot, a whore, because she will not be faithful to a husband. She will not take vows. She will not devote her all or forsake all others and be loyal and faithful to Christ. She does not want to be chaste; she wants to engage in illicit relations with as many men as she can. The reason is that she can monetarily gain from every one that she traffics with. Proverbs 7:12, speaking of this woman, says, "Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner." Babylon still has the form—they still have a sanctuary, and they still have services—but there is no power. It is evident that they no longer hold out the cup of salvation because there is no change in the lives of the people who drink from it.

God desires that the church be true to her husband. Who is the husband? "For thy Maker is thine husband" (Isaiah 54:5). Ephesians 3:9 tells us clearly that "thy Maker" is "Jesus Christ." Second Corinthians 11:2 reads, "For I am jealous over you [the Church of God] with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Christ is the Bridegroom; He is the husband. The church is chaste, loyal, devoted, and faithful to Christ, forsaking all others. The message of the sixth-seal ministry was beginning to uncover not only the spiritual condition of Babylon, but it also began to reveal why Babylon was in that condition. She had become a spiritual harlot, out to make merchandise of people. As a result, "the merchants of the earth are waxed rich" (Revelation 18:3). Revelation 18:11, speaking of judgment being put on Babylon, reads, "And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more." When truth is poured out on "**Babylon**" and people begin to see "**Babylon**" for what she really is, then "**Babylon**" cannot make merchandise out of them any longer.

Look at what Jesus told the Thyatiran age (the same time period as the third trumpet angel—from A.D. 1530 to 1730). In Revelation 2:20 He said, "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." This woman Jezebel, "**Babylon**," works hard to cause the members of Christ to join themselves to a harlot. In 1 Corinthians 6:15-18a the writer penned: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication." The writer was not talking about literal fornication, but he was warning against taking the members of Christ and joining them to an harlot body (Babylon). This system is an impure system, and it defiles all who are drunk on her "**wine**." Once you "**drink**," you can imbibe her spirit. That is why you must never sip from Babylon's cup!

First Corinthians 12:13 tells us that we are to "drink into one Spirit." That inducts us into the body of Christ. Likewise, if we start drinking of Babylon's cup, we are going to be taken into a harlot body. Drinking from this cup and becoming drunken is what produced the spiritual conditions of this third trumpet age: the star fell and the beast arose. Thank God, this ministry in the sixth-seal period of time rectified and remedied what occurred in that age by preaching a clear message concerning Babylon and her cup. That message was, as Revelation 18:4 says, "Come out of her, my people." Yet today, if we heed that call, we can enjoy all of the bountiful blessings of Zion. Obadiah 17 describes those blessings: "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob [or Israel] shall possess their possessions."

In the true Zion you will find all the truth of all the previous ages: deliverance, or salvation (preached in the Lutheran era), holiness (preached in the Wesleyan era), and possessing all of our possessions are the truths of this evening-light message. We have the benefit of it all in this day and time in which we live. All of these truths that were lost during that Thyatiran period were rectified and remedied by this sixth-seal ministry. That is what we see portrayed in our text. They clearly saw Babylon's condition, and they also realized its cause. Because they faithfully heralded forth a message, people were able to be called out of Babylon to take a stand for this precious truth. In the Old Testament, Babylon was a location, but in our day, this New Testament Dispensation, it is a spiritual condition. Anywhere that a people sink to these conditions, it becomes "**Babylon**," regardless of what it may call itself or profess.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART SIX

### The Third and Fourth Angels in Revelation, Chapter 14

**Revelation 14:9** And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

**10** The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

**11** And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

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

**13** And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

**14** And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

**15** And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

**16** And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

#### The Importance of Viewing These Angels Together

As we begin to consider these verses, the question that arises is, why is it necessary to view these angels together? It was under the "third angel" that the "Son of man" appeared, having "in his hand a sharp sickle" (verse 14). Yet, the cry to "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap" (verse 15) was not heralded until the fourth "angel" began to cry. Therefore, these two angels are intricately related and must be considered together. There is also another reason for that as well. In a prior segment we found that Revelation, Chapter 14, has six angels incorporated in it, which equate to the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpet angels. These angels represent that which comprises the sixth-seal and seventh-seal periods of time. These two angels in our text correspond with the fourth and fifth trumpet angels in the trumpet series (A.D. 1730-1880). Just as these two angels must be viewed together, likewise in the trumpet series, the fourth and fifth trumpet angels must be viewed together because they occupied the same period of time and helped shed understanding on each other.

The prophetic time setting for this text is, as Isaiah 52:8 declares, "when the LORD shall bring again Zion," or when the church was brought back into visible view. In our text we are seeing the first segment of this evening time (A.D. 1880-1930), because **verse 15** depicts the first reaping of the "earth." To understand what this "earth" is referring to, go back and read Revelation 13:11. This Scripture tells us that "another beast [came] up out of the earth." That is speaking of the religious system known as Protestantism, a manmade, earthen system. So, this first reaping occurs when those from the earthen systems of religion were first harvested. This occurred in the first segment of the evening time, the Philadelphian period of time also called the sixth-trumpet age.

#### The Third Part

Let us go back and look at those fourth and fifth trumpet angels, which have their setting in the Wesleyan era, or the Sardian Age, the second portion of the Protestant era. The last phrase of Revelation 9:10 tells us that "their power was to hurt men five months." Now if you take five months, using thirty days to a Jewish calendar month, you have a total of one hundred and fifty days. By using the Biblical delineation for prophetic time ("each day for a year"; Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6), the total is one hundred and fifty years. The Wesleyan era was one hundred and fifty years

(A.D. 1730-1880). The fourth and fifth trumpets both sounded forth during this era. Thus, these two trumpets must be viewed together to truly understand what is being conveyed and in order to rightly divide that portion of the Word of Truth.

When reading of the sounding of the fourth trumpet in Revelation 8:12, notice there is a predominate message portrayed in the expression "the third part." This symbol in this setting has a dual meaning. It represents the result of someone's disobedience or rebellion. It is employed repeatedly throughout Chapter 8: "the third part of trees" (verse 7); "the third part of the sea" (verse 8); "the third part of the creatures" (verse 9); "the third part of the ships" (verse 9); "the third part of the rivers" (verse 10); and "the third part of the waters" (verse 11). Every one of these things that is symbolized by this "third part" expression was the result of someone's disobedience and rebellion. In verse 7 "the third part of trees was burnt up" because of rebellion against the truth. In verse 8 "the third part of the sea became blood" because of disobedience.

If you look back to the Old Testament, you will read that to crush Absalom's rebellion, David had to divide his forces into three parts (2 Samuel 18:2). Then in 2 Kings, Chapter 11, when it came time to rise up against the evil Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah who had tried to destroy all of the royal seed and who usurped the throne, Jehoiada divided the soldiers into three parts. Second Kings 11:4-5 says that "A third part . . . shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house; And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard." Why did this have to happen? Because of Athaliah's rebellion and disobedience. So, one aspect of the symbol "the third part" is that it represents the result of someone's disobedience or rebellion.

But this figure has another significance. Revelation 8:12 breaks down all of God's luminary agents into three parts: "the sun" (the New Testament), "the moon" (the Old Testament), and "the stars" (the ministry). Yet, Revelation 8:12 says that "the third part . . . shone not," indicating that truth, or light, is broken down into three parts. Mark 4:28 speaks of the three major aspects of truth: "first the blade" (the justification message); "then the ear" (the message on holiness); but it was not until the evening time that they had "the full corn in the ear" (the message on unity). The many kernels but one ear is a picture of many members, but one body. The third part, the message on the unity of the faith, the oneness of the body of Christ, was not understood in the Wesleyan era. "The third part . . . shone not." They understood justification by faith that had been restored in the Lutheran era. They understood holiness that had been heralded by the Wesley brothers. But they did not understand the third part. The message on unity was not shining forth during the Wesleyan era.

History tells us that John and Charles Wesley were faithful and true men of God until their dying day. God did not lay any charge to those brethren. They did not see the "third part," but they were true and faithful men of God. As a matter of fact, we read in Revelation 14:13 that the third angel (which corresponds with the Wesleyan era) said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord . . . ." However, those who arose following the Wesley brothers were not faithful men of God. Revelation 9:1 says that they had a "key," but they did not have a *key* and a *chain* as the true ministry had. In Revelation 20:1-2 the true ministry "bound the dragon" and cast him down in "the bottomless pit," because they had a key and a chain (the Word and the Spirit). But in Revelation, Chapter 9, when this fifth trumpet ministry fell from its lofty position, all they had was a key (the Word). ". . . for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6). Because of that, they let something out of the pit. Out of that pit came "the beast" (Revelation 11:7), locusts, smoke, and a plague on humanity—religion (Revelation 9:2-3).

During the Wesleyan era, people did not have the truth concerning unity, but in our text, in the sixth-seal period of time, this was remedied. In **Revelation 14:9-10** we find a clear denunciation of Babylon, its worship, and its indoctrination. This ministry had a clear message and clearly put judgment on Babylon. The lack of the fourth trumpet age, where "the third part . . . shone not," was rectified as it tells us in **verse 12** of our text: "**Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.**" They were back to the truth of "one faith" (Ephesians 4:5). They were back to the place where Christ could be clearly seen and the faith of Jesus was restored.

In Ephesians 4:13 we read, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith . . ." That is why the call of Revelation 18:4 is to "Come out." God wanted His people to come *out* of those manmade systems so they could come *in* to the unity of the faith. Deuteronomy 6:23 tells us, "And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers." He brought them *out*, so that He might bring them *in*. Both are important. That

is why He told the ministry in Isaiah 62:10, "Go through, go through the gates." He said it twice because you have to go through the gates of Babylon to get out and go through the gates of Zion to get in. There are two sets of gates, and both are just as important. There are a lot of people who do not go along with everyone down in sectism, and they go *out*; but they will not take the truth and come *in*. It takes both. He brought us *out* that He might bring us *in* to the unity of the faith.

### God's Wrath Is True Judgment

Let us examine the message of this third angel. **Revelation 14:10** tells us that "**the wrath of God**" was "**poured out.**" We see a detailed description of this in Revelation 16:1, which says, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." Dismiss the thought that this is in the eternal realm, for when Revelation 15:1 introduces us to these vial angels, it says, "And I saw another sign . . ." The Amplified Bible renders this as "Then I saw another wonder (sign, token, symbol)." This is symbolic.

The word *wrath* used in Revelation 15:1 as well as in **Revelation 14:10** is the Greek word *thumos*, and it means "passion as if breathing hard," according to *Strong's Concordance*. What is it portraying? Have you ever seen someone who was so displeased with the actions of someone else that he started breathing hard and you could see the passion and the stir because he was disturbed by what was taking place? That is what the word "**wrath**" used here is speaking of. It is a picture of God breathing hard as if stirred with passion in reaction to an action that He saw taking place.

What form does this reaction of God take? Revelation 15:1 says it has "filled up the wrath of God." Then Revelation 15:4 defines and clarifies the last phrase of verse 1, stating, ". . . for thy judgments are made manifest." So "the wrath of God" in this context is speaking of His judgments. Revelation 16:5 says that "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus." Then we read in Revelation 16:7, ". . . Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." In other words, God puts judgment on those things that stir Him.

Isaiah 28:16-17 tells us: "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion [the 'church'; Hebrews 12:22-23] for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation [every one of those references is to 'Jesus Christ'; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:9 and 11]: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line [one rendering says 'measuring line'], and righteousness to the plummet." Both the measuring line and the plummet (or plumb bob) are instruments used in proper building.

To get a better understanding of what this line is, read Zechariah 2:1-2. It says: "I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem [the 'church'; Hebrews 12:22-23] . . ." This measuring line is used to keep the church straight. What is it measured by? Every good builder knows that everything is measured to the cornerstone. It has to be true to the cornerstone. Likewise, that is how the church is built. As each member is set in the body, he or she is measured to Christ. Amos 7:7-8 reads: "Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the LORD stood upon a wall [the wall of salvation; Isaiah 26:1] made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand. And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the LORD, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel." God is going to plumb His people to make sure they are all in a right position. He has a line (judgment) and a plummet (righteousness). Those are the two instruments of measurement that He uses to properly build.

### The Judgment Is the Word

True judgment, as the line, exposes any deviation. Our text is telling us that judgment (or proper measurement) is put on any man who worships "**the beast and his image**, [or receives] **his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.**" This is *severe* deviation from the line, and God puts judgment on anything that deviates from the line. What is this judgment? What reveals God's judgment in a matter? Psalm 119:160 answers this, saying, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." The judgment is the Word. We read in Psalm 119:43, "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments." The judgments are the Word of Truth.

Some people may feel that our text takes place out in eternity, after the Judgment. There are many preconceived ideas concerning **verse 10**, which tells us, ". . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." Some teach that takes place in hell, but this verse has nothing to do with hell or eternity. These events transpired during the sixth seal. Let us look at the context: (1.) The prophetic time setting is the sixth seal. Eternity was not ushered in during the sixth seal. (2.) Christ is still referred to as a "**Lamb**" (**verse 10**). He is only a "**Lamb**" while He is taking away sin (John 1:29). When time reels into eternity, He is not going to be taking away any sin; He will not be a "**Lamb**." (3.) **Verse 9** tells us this "**man**" is still engaged in "**worship**." (4.) **Verse 11** says that "**they have no rest day nor night**." There is no time in eternity. All of this is a symbolic representation. We read about the same "**fire and brimstone**" under the sixth trumpet. Revelation 9:18 says, "By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." It had nothing at all to do with eternity or hell fire; it was symbolic of judgment. It came out of their mouth because that is the message they preached: a message full of "**fire and brimstone**." Their power was in their message. What came out of their mouth was the message, and that message produced a people. It is symbolic.

I am not doing away with Christ's Second Advent or the Final Judgment or an eternal place of damnation that Mark 9:43 describes as "hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched." I am not dismissing or dealing with that aspect whatsoever. Let us stay in the context and see what it is revealing to us. Where is "**the presence of the Lamb**" and where are "**the holy angels**" (**verse 10**)? When John received a vision in Revelation 14:1, he saw Christ standing right "on the mount Sion" (or in the midst of the church). When John first saw Jesus in Revelation 1:13, He was "in the midst of the seven candlesticks [or the church]" (Revelation 1:20). Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). "**The presence of the Lamb**" is right in the midst of God's people.

"**The holy angels**" are in the same place. Revelation 14:6 says, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven . . ." Ephesians 2:6 tells us this is "heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Revelation 14:15 reads, "And another angel came out of the temple . . ." Ephesians 2:19-21 tells us that the "holy temple" is "the household of God," or the church. Second Corinthians 6:16 tells us that "the temple of the living God" is a people, but more specifically, it is a people who are "the church of God" (2 Corinthians 1:1). That is who the temple is, and that is where the "**angels**" are: in the temple, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Our text is not speaking of the eternal realm, but rather, it is speaking of what occurs when a ministry pours truth (or judgment) out on those who "**worship the beast** [papalism] **and his image** [Protestantism], **and receive his mark** [indoctrination]" (**verse 9**). This judgment will cause those people to "**be tormented**" (**verse 10**). Truth torments people who are not walking in the truth. It puts fire on them, and it burns them up. Malachi 4:1 prophesies, "For, behold, the day cometh [future tense in his day, looking to the New Testament], that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up . . ."

### **Tormented Day and Night**

Let us look at this a little further. Revelation 11:7-10 states: "And when they [the two witnesses: the Word and the Spirit] shall have finished their testimony [at the end of the Dark Ages, A.D. 1530], the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit [Protestantism] shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city ['Babylon'; Revelation 16:19], which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half [the 350 years of Protestantism; A.D. 1530-1880], and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets [the Word and the Spirit] tormented them that dwelt on the earth [Protestantism; Revelation 13:11]." Or The Amplified Bible says, ". . . because these two prophets had been such a vexation and trouble and torment to all the dwellers on the earth."

Once an individual comes in contact with truth, "**they have no rest day nor night**" (**verse 11**). Once you know what you ought to do, it takes your "**rest**" away. Your goods may have been at peace. The strongman's goods may have been at peace until the stronger than the strongman came along, and then there is no peace left, until the strongman is

expelled (Luke 11:20-22). Once an individual hears truth, there is no hiding place.

Isaiah 55:10-11 says: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Even when people do not accept it, it still accomplishes what God sent it for. They **"shall be tormented"** by what they heard, **"day"** and **"night."** They will never be the same. Once they hear truth, they will never walk away from it and be the same as they were. That truth will follow them.

The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 139:1-12: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Once God uncovers you, once truth searches you out and locates you, there is no place to hide; there is no resting until you humble yourself down and walk in the truth that God has showed to you.

Let us again notice the tense employed concerning those who are **"tormented."** **Revelation 14:11** describes them as those **"who worship."** That is present tense, not *worshipped*, past tense. The reason they are **"tormented"** is because they continue to go against light and truth. *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "those worshipping," in the present and continual tense. What torments them? **Verse 10** tells us that this **"cup"** that has the **"wrath"** (or the judgment) is of **"fire and brimstone."** What is it that really does the tormenting? According to Jeremiah 23:29 fire is a representation of the Word: "Is not my word like as a fire?" God's "judgments are made manifest" (Revelation 15:4) through the Word.

What about the **"brimstone"**? This thought brings an Old Testament allusion to mind. We read in Genesis 19:24, "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven." The Hebrew word for *brimstone* is *gophriyth*. According to *Strong's Hebrew-Chaldee Dictionary*, its root meaning is "resin." The word *resin* in *Webster's New World Dictionary* is defined as "an organic substance." When this brimstone came with fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, it eliminated their position, all their dwelling places; it took all their shelters away. It was an organic substance that was visible which destroyed the place they occupied.

What is the spiritual lesson? When God sends forth His truth, His judgments on false systems and those who worship in them, the **"fire"** (the Word) and the **"brimstone"** (the organic substance, God's people living out the message—that which is visible) eliminate their positions and their dwelling places; they take away their shelters. When people see an organic substance living it, they cannot say that it is not possible. This is a picture of judgment being put on the people by not only the message, but by the saints living the message. The message and a people living it are a powerful combination.

Psalm 149:5-9 says: "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds [that is not talking about Heaven, for there are no beds in Heaven]. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword [the 'word of God'; Hebrews 4:12] in their hand [the hand of God's workmen, the saints; 2 Timothy 2:15]; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains [God's people are to take that sword (that truth) and the chains (the Spirit of God) and bind up some things], and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them [according to verse 5, the saints are to do this] the judgment written: this honour have all his saints."

God has **"fire and brimstone"** falling on modern Sodom and Egypt (Babylon). How is it falling? First, through the Word, but then through a people who take hold of that Word, incorporate it in their living, and live it out. "This honour have all his saints." God's people can execute His judgments by putting them in their lives and speaking them forth. That is the **"brimstone"** that falls on those who **"worship"** false systems. In 1 Corinthians 6:2 Paul said, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" Certainly, the fire and brimstone that fell on Sodom was literal, but it has been lifted as a symbolic expression in the Revelation. When that **"fire and brimstone"** fell, we are seeing a



portrayal in symbolic language of God sending forth His judgment (His Word) on false religion and those who **"worship"** in it. The **"fire"** (the Word, the message) and the **"brimstone"** (a people who embraced that message and put it on) eliminate their position, their dwelling places, their shelters out of false religion. Isaiah 28:17 says it will "sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."

When people do not want to live truth and they rationalize it, saying that people cannot live that way, yet nearby is a witness who is living it, it torments them. It puts **"fire"** on them. It acts like **"brimstone,"** removing all their hiding places. As long as they stay in those false systems and keep that **"mark"** and refuse to move, they **"shall be tormented."** Verse 11 says, ". . . and they have no rest day nor night." But, thank God, Hebrews 4:9 says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." People who take truth will find a resting place, and they do not have to be **"tormented."** *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* tells us: "Therefore, a Sabbath-rest remains for the people of God. For he having entered his rest, will also himself rest from his works, like as God from his own" (Hebrews 4:9-10). When we embrace truth and stand for it, we will quit our manmade works. Truth will no longer torment us, and we will have rest—Sabbath rest—not just one day a week, but every day will be a Sabbath. If we want to see people come out of Babylon, we are going to have to pour some judgment out on her. We are going to have to put some **"fire and brimstone"** on her to take away her rest. This will cause honest souls to be willing to move, to come to where they can have that blessed rest for their souls.

## Two Harvests

The first harvest is described in **verses 14-16**, and the second harvest is portrayed in verses 18-20. It is important to realize that there would have been no need for a second harvest if it were not for the developing conditions depicted in verse 17. (We will consider this in the next segment.) But what I want you to particularly notice concerning this second-and-final harvesting is that "her grapes are fully [the Greek word means 'complete or entirely'] ripe." This time of fullness or completeness is portrayed on the pictorial chart in the seventh-seal period of time.

Speaking of when the seventh angel will begin to sound, Revelation 10:7 says, "But in the days [plural, time is still standing for there will be no *days* in eternity] of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished [or completed] . . ." That seventh angel is the seventh and final of the trumpet angels. Therefore, this second-and-final harvest has its time setting in the seventh-and-final period of time. The preceding harvest, the **"harvest of the earth" (verse 15)**, has its prophetic time setting in the first portion of the evening time, the sixth-seal period of time (A.D. 1880-1930).

As we begin to consider these two harvests, there are a couple of symbols that we need to identify. In **verse 14 "the Son of man"** had **"in his hand a sharp sickle."** Yet, it was not until the fourth angel appeared that he was enjoined to **"Thrust in thy sickle, and reap" (verse 15)**. In this cry and reaping we see rectified the terrible work that was wrought by the fallen fifth angel in Revelation, Chapter 9. After this fifth angel fell from a heavenly position in Christ Jesus down to an earthen, manmade level, Revelation 9:2 tells us "he opened the bottomless pit." In so doing, he let loose a terrible plague (false religion) on humanity. That is the worst plague that man has ever had to or ever will have to endure!

**Verse 14** reads, **"And I looked** [John was receiving a vision; keep in mind that dreams and visions are always spoken of in symbolic language], **and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man . . ."** This **"white cloud"** was upholding and presenting Christ. What does this **"cloud"** represent? In Hebrews 12:1 the Hebrew writer penned, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses . . ." This verse begins with the word "Wherefore." Anywhere you see a Scripture beginning with the words "Wherefore" or "Therefore," you need to back up a few verses and see what is being talked about. These words mean "as a consequence of what was said previously."

Keep in mind, these epistles were not originally written in chapters and verses. Several centuries later man broke them up for ready reference's sake. Originally, they were written as letters in continuity. So, to understand who Hebrews 12:1 is talking about, we must back up to Chapter 11. There we find that the writer began a list in verse 4, saying, "By faith Abel." He then brought us all of the way down through the annals of the Old Testament, speaking of the many ones who by faith wrought great things. Thus, the "cloud of witness" Hebrews 12:1 is speaking of is the Old Testament

brethren mentioned in Chapter 11.

Notice in our text that these witnesses are clearly denoted as a "**white cloud.**" What does this special designation represent? Revelation 19:8 tells us that "white" represents "the righteousness of saints." This particular cloud of witnesses in **Revelation 14:14** is a picture of the saints who were "the firstfruits" (Revelation 14:4) of this evening-time message and who were witnesses to its truth. They were upholding Christ and this evening-time message.

Christ will not appear on the scene unless there is a people willing to uphold Him with holiness in their lives. The only way Christ is going to appear is in a "**cloud**" of witnesses, a people who are upholding the message. (Remember, we are dealing in symbolic expressions.) **Revelation 14:14** is a picture of Christ sitting on the "**white cloud.**" The "**cloud**" was upholding Him, and the "**cloud**" was transporting Him. The only way Christ will be transported from locality to locality is in a "**cloud**" of witnesses—through a righteous, holy people who have taken the truth, put it on, and lived it out. In so doing, they uphold the message, or uphold Christ. That is the only way He is going to appear to a world.

For the world to see Christ, it is going to require a people to "make straight paths for your feet" (Hebrews 12:13). When Ezekiel received a vision of the living creatures (the redeemed of all ages), he wrote that "they went every one straight forward" (Ezekiel 1:9). God's people have straight feet; they walk straight forward. Why is this so important? Hebrews 12:13 tells us, ". . . lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." In other words, one who is having trouble getting their spiritual footing might look to others who have been walking this way for many years for help. However, if he sees the older saint failing to make straight paths, failing to walk straight, he can easily become discouraged and be "turned out of the way."

### **Christ Is Gathering a People to Be a Witness**

Hebrews 12:14 tells us, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This has nothing to do with the Second Advent, for when He appears every eye is going to see Him. This is talking about how Christ appears to this world right now. The only way the world is going to see the Lord is through a people having straight paths, straight feet, living holy, being part of that "**cloud**" of witnesses that upholds Christ, the message, the truth. Today many people are having trouble walking straight and seeing what is right because there is not a big enough "**cloud**" holding up the message, holding up Christ, walking with straight feet. If a so-called Christian continues to live in sin, the world is not going to see any of Jesus in that. They see plenty of sin. To see Jesus, they must see saints who are part of that "**white cloud,**" that holy cloud of witnesses that is upholding Christ.

Jesus spoke of this same truth in Matthew 24:30-31, which says: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn [whenever this sign appears, all of the various sectarian organizations of earthen, manmade religion mourn], and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Please dismiss literalism from your mind, and let us look at what the Scripture is actually telling us. Looking at verse 30, what is "the sign of the Son of man"? That word *sign* in the Greek is the word *semeion*, which, according to *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, is akin to *semaino*, the word used in Revelation 1:1, translated as "signified." In other words, Matthew 24:30 tells us this is a symbolic representation.

What did Jesus say the sign would be? In Matthew 16:4a Jesus said, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." For further understanding, let us look at what Jonah was commanded to do in Jonah 3:1-2: "And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." Preaching is the sign. In other words, Jesus was saying that the only sign they would receive was the message. If they did not believe the message, they would not get anything else. That is "the sign of the prophet Jonas": the preaching.

We see this same truth presented in Luke, Chapter 16. The rich man asked for Lazarus to be sent back to his five brothers. What was the answer? "They have Moses and the prophets" (verse 29). In essence, He was saying that if they will not take the Word, if they will not take the message, then if one came back from the dead, they will not believe it either. Look again at Jesus' words in Matthew 24:30-31. He said: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven . . . And he shall send his angels [the same Greek word that is used in the Revelation, meaning 'a messenger']

... " When Jesus comes again, 1 Thessalonians 4:16 tells us He will "descend." He is not sending any heavenly angels to gather a people. The angels spoken of in Matthew 24:31 are the ministry. How do we know? They are sent "with a great sound of a trumpet." According to Isaiah 58:1, the trumpet is a picture of preaching, a picture of the Word going forth. Also, we read in 1 Corinthians 14:8-9: "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood . . ." The sounding of the trumpet is God's Word bringing understanding to people.

In Revelation 1:10 John said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Who was it? Verse 11 says, "Saying, I am Alpha and Omega . . ." He employed this same expression in Revelation 22:13, and Revelation 22:16 tells us that the Alpha and Omega is "I Jesus." The trumpet is the voice of Christ, the Word of God. So, in Matthew, Chapter 24, when He sends forth His angels (His ministry) with the sound of a trumpet (with a message), it is to gather together His elect from the four winds, or from all earthly directions, from all the spirits and doctrines that are of earthly origin, and bringing them out. Ephesians 4:14 talks about "every wind of doctrine," and behind every doctrine, 1 Timothy 4:1 tells us, is a spirit. According to Ephesians 2:2, "the prince of the power of the air" is a spirit. Air or wind represents spirits, and behind every false doctrine is a false spirit. This ministry had a message to gather God's people from all of those systems that were devised by devilish spirits, systems that teach devilish doctrines and hold men in earthen organizations.

The phrase in Matthew 24:31 "they shall gather together his elect" is the same picture we are seeing in Revelation 7:1, which states, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds . . ." In verse 2 you can read of "another angel ascending from the east [the source of light], having the seal of the living God." And they began to seal people out. They began to bring a people out of Babylon and bring them together as a people of God. This is also the same picture that we are seeing in our text. Matthew 24:30 speaks of "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." Ephesians 2:6 talks about "And hath raised us up together [Christ is gathering His people out from the four winds (earthen, manmade religions)], and made us sit together in heavenly places [or the Greek says 'heavenlies']." These are the heavens that the "**cloud**" of witnesses occupy. Christ is gathering a people to the "**cloud**," or gathering a people to be a witness, to come together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The convincing agent to this message is a people who have embraced it and been elevated to heavenly places, a people who uphold Christ and this truth. Certainly, there is more depth in the figures employed in Matthew 24:30-31, but in essence, it is depicting the same truths as portrayed in Revelation, Chapter 14.

When our text speaks of "**one [who] sat like unto the Son of man**," we know this is a reference to Jesus Christ, for in Matthew 16:13 Jesus asked, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" In this question He answered who "the Son of man" is by saying "I the Son of man." This imagery is drawn from the Old Testament. We read in Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions [he was receiving visions; remember, the nature of visions is symbolic], and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Notice that Daniel described this scene as "an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away." The prophetic setting of Revelation, Chapter 14, reveals that the evening time has restored the church to visible view, that all the apostasy, dark age, and dark and cloudy day still did not "prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). It is "an everlasting dominion" that the "**Son of man**" ushered in.

Another attribute of Christ in **verse 14** is that He has "**on his head a golden crown**." The Greek word for "**crown**" here is the word *stefanos*, and it means "the victor's crown." This crown is given to the victor in public games, to the one who has been victorious in a contest. This is not a crown that was just given, such as a royal crown by birthright, but this word is commonly used to describe the winner of a strenuous competition.

During this evening time, not only does Christ have the victory, but He has elevated a people and given a people the victory He has. Revelation 15:2 says, "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire [a picture of the Word of God under the anointing of the Spirit]: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast [papalism], and over his image [Protestantism], and over his mark [indoctrination], and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Not only did He gain victory Himself, but He gave victory to His people. First Corinthians 15:57 tells us, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory [how?] through our Lord Jesus Christ." He not only conquered Himself, He made us (as Romans 8:37 says) "more than conquerors." God will give victory to everyone who

will respond to this evening-time message, take a stand for precious truth, and come out from the four corners of the earth (manmade religion). Glory be to God! He will give every one victory who will stand on the sea of glass (the unadulterated Word of God).

### A Sharp Sickle

Next, let us draw our focus to the harvesting instrument He is equipped with: **"in his hand a sharp sickle."** If you notice what it does, it will help to identify what it is. In **verse 15** the **"angel"** (a ministry) cried out, **"Thrust in thy sickle, and reap."** Then **verse 16** tells us that **"he . . . thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."** This **"sickle"** was an instrument for reaping. Look at what was **"reaped"**: **"the harvest of the earth is ripe."** What does **"the earth"** in this context represent? When John "beheld another beast," it came "up out of the earth" (Revelation 13:11). This beast, which has some lamb-like features, is called "the false prophet" (Revelation 16:13). It is Protestantism, the religious system that came up out of the minds of men. **"Earth"** is a symbolic representation of man; man is "dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7). The teachings of this system did not come from the Word of God. They are a product of that beast that came out of the earth, or out of the minds of men.



Sickle

Yet, there are good people who are caught up in those organizations. So, in this evening time, the message was to **"Thrust in thy sickle . . . for the harvest of the earth is ripe."** In **verse 15** we read that the **"angel came out of the temple, crying** [a picture of praying; Psalm 61:1]." This verse is a picture of a ministry praying for Christ to reap His people out of the earthen systems of religion. In this symbolic portrayal, Christ is upheld by the **"cloud"** of witnesses (saints witnessing to the truth of the message), and a ministry is **"crying"** for the **"sickle"** (the Word) to be put out in such a way that **"the earth was reaped."** God wants a "sharp threshing instrument having teeth" (Isaiah 41:15) used so that the hearer can feel the bite of it. The purpose of these instruments—a "threshing instrument" (Isaiah 41:15) and **"a sharp sickle"** (**Revelation 14:14**)—is to sever and separate. It is to loose that which is valuable, that which is fruit, from that which holds it. You cannot get fruit off a vine without severing or separating it from the vine. If you leave it on there, it will rot.

Likewise, people who stay in Babylon are going to rot spiritually, because it was not meant for them to stay there. There is a time of harvest, a time when they have to be separated, when the fruit has to be taken away. We are now in the harvest time, in this evening time of the Gospel Day. **Verse 15** says that **"the harvest of the earth is ripe."** **"A sharp sickle"** is being used to sever, to separate, to divide asunder. This is symbolic of the Word of God. This is what the Word of God does. (Read Hebrews 4:12.) Second Timothy 2:15 in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says "cutting straight the word of truth." To cut straight there are some things you have to cut off from, some things you have to be severed or separated from.

Notice that the **"sickle"** is described in **verse 14** as being **"sharp."** Isaiah 41:15 uses this same description: "a new *sharp* threshing instrument." A threshing instrument that does not have a sharp edge will not do any good. It is like trying to cut grass with a dull blade. The blade does not cut it; it does not separate it, but it just rolls it over and lays it down. As soon as the lawnmower moves on, the grass pops right back in the same position. The **"sickle"** or the "threshing instrument" must be **"sharp."** It takes a **"sharp,"** pointed message to cut people loose from Babylon. The message must have some **"Thrust"** (**verse 15**), or some power behind it. Our text says to **"Thrust in."** It must get in; it must have some depth. Superficial preaching will never cause people to cut loose from Babylon. Our text tells us who **"thrust in [his] sickle."** It was **"him that sat on the cloud."** In order for it to be effective, it must be a divine work. The **"sickle,"** **verse 14** says, was **"in his hand."** The ministry did not take it in their hands. One cannot use the Word at their own discretion to straighten people out. The Word must be **"in his hand."**

In **verse 15** we read that **"another angel"** was **"crying."** This same **"crying"** is spoken of in Revelation 6:9-10. Speaking of the fifth-seal period (1730-1880), it states: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice . . ." How did they remedy it? They did not take matters into their own hands, but they cried, or prayed. I repeat, the **"sickle"** was in Christ's **"hand."** Look at John's first vision of Christ in Revelation 1:16. Christ was portrayed as having "in *his* right hand seven stars: and out of *his* mouth went a sharp twoedged sword." Then we read in Revelation

2:12, "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith *he which hath* the sharp sword with two edges." It is Christ who has the sharp sword. It went "out of his mouth," showing that it is under His dominion. It is His sword, the sword of the Spirit. It is not to be in our hands. To be effective it needs to be in divine control: "**in his hand.**"

### The Great Wickedness of False Religion

Let us look at the last part of **Revelation 14:15**, which says, ". . . **the harvest of the earth is ripe.**" This imagery is drawn from the prophecy of Joel. In Joel 3:13 the Prophet revealed why souls must be reaped from Babylon (religious confusion). It says, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; [The Hebrew word for *fats* means 'the trough,' the place where the excesses went. In a human context, excess fat is too much flesh. Sectism is one of the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:20 as 'heresies.' *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says it is 'Sects.' Sectism is just as much a work of the flesh as adultery and fornication, because it causes people to commit spiritual adultery and spiritual fornication.] for their wickedness is great."

What is the great wickedness of false religion? Whom does God consider to be at the apex of wickedness? It is not the literal harlot, the whoremonger, or the murderer, but it is those who profess, practice, and preach religion but will not take instruction and will not obey God's Word, according to Psalm 50:16-17. That is the greatest wickedness there is, and false religion is full of it. That is why the "**sickle**" needs to be put in. God has something far better for His people.

We have come full circle from what produced false religion. When we began our study of these angels in Revelation, Chapter 14, we referred to Revelation 8:8, which tells us that "a great mountain burning with fire" (a symbolic representation of what had been the morning-time church) was cast into the sea. We also read in Isaiah 57:20 that "the wicked are like the troubled sea." This portrayed the morning-time apostasy, showing that much of what had been the morning-time church fell out of the hands of God and into the hands of wicked men. These were men who cast God's Word behind them, men who would not take instruction, but wanted to continue to preach, practice, and profess religion. Then, up out of that sea, Revelation 13:1 says that "a beast" arose. This first, supposedly Christian system was actually the product of apostate men. It was produced by "the wicked."

Now we have come to where the "**sickle**" is being put in, because the wickedness is great (that wickedness which caused apostasy and produced false religion in the Dark Ages and in the dark and cloudy day). In this evening time the cry is, "**Thrust in thy sickle.**" In other words, it is time to reap, to call God's people out of all that for the "wickedness is great" (Joel 3:13). This wickedness caused "the sun to go down at noon" and the earth to be darkened "in the clear day" (Amos 8:9). It caused "the stars [to] withdraw their shining" (Joel 3:15). But, thank God, "at evening time it shall be light" (Zechariah 14:7).

We see "the fifth angel" portrayed as falling in Revelation 9:1, which correlates with the fourth angel in our text. Because of this Revelation 9:2 says that "the sun and the air [the Word and the Spirit] were darkened." But thanks be to God, this was rectified and remedied by the "**angel**" in our text, and Joel 3:16 says, "The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem." According to Hebrews 12:22-23, Zion and Jerusalem are figures of the church. The evening-time church has come back into visible view, and God's voice (His Word) has begun to be heard again. The "**sickle**" was "**thrust in,**" and the "**earth**" (people) was reaped. People came out of Babylon, out of those systems of manmade religion. We read in Joel 3:17 that "there shall no strangers pass through her [heavenly Jerusalem (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22), the city where the Prince of Peace is] any more." Thank God, Ephesians 2:19 says that we "are no more strangers." How did this happen? "The middle wall of partition between us" (Ephesians 2:14) was broken down by "Christ" (verse 13). This enabled us to be cleansed from all sin, and then we became "one new man [in Him]" (verse 15). We were made to drink of "one Spirit . . . into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). We were inducted into the body of Christ, the one new man, and now we are the household of God. We are not strangers, but the people of God are coming back to Zion, the place where God is and where His Word is going forth and His Spirit has free rein.

## "The Earth Was Reaped"

Let us confirm the prophetic placement of this first harvest portrayed in our text. We read in Mark 4:26-29: "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man [Christ; Matthew 13:37] should cast seed [the 'word of God'; Luke 8:11] into the ground; And should sleep [a picture of the morning-time apostasy], and rise night [the dark night of papalism] and day [the cloudy day], and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade [the message on justification brought by the Lutheran era], then the ear [the message on holiness brought by the Wesleyan era], after that the full corn in the ear [that is the evening-time message]. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come [in the evening time]." As the soon as the evening time came on the scene, the first harvest took place in A.D. 1880.

The first harvest transpired in the earlier portion of the sixth-seal period of time. **Verse 16** of our text states, "**And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth.**" That is exactly what has to happen if the saints are going to get free from that earthen system of religion. Truth has to be put "**on the earth,**" on the earthen system and organizations of man. Truth is not put on them because we are hateful or unloving, but because we love the souls of men. God's ministry realizes that Babylon is fallen, and she is being plagued. And those who stay in, according to Revelation 18:4, will receive "of her plagues." Therefore, God is calling His people out. He does not want them to receive of those plagues. He wants them reaped and brought home to Zion.

When truth was put on those organizations in the system of Protestantism, "**the earth was reaped.**" Isaiah 35:10 prophetically shows the people coming home to Zion, saying, "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This does not occur over in some eternal realm, but this is a people coming to truth, no longer having to mourn over the sorrowful conditions in religion that they have been subjected to. Isaiah 51:11-16 says: "Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, [This is not speaking of God's Heaven, for you cannot return to a place you have never been. The church started out in the morning time in Zion, and in this evening time she has returned to Zion.] and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die [if this was eternity, there would be no 'man' and no death to be concerned about], and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?"

"The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed [those who were in exile in Babylon, those who were captives, in this evening time, when the '**sickle**' has been put in, have been loosed; they can come back to Zion], and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. But I am the LORD thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

Zion is where "my people" (God's people) congregate together, where He has put His Word in their mouth, where they are loosed from being captives down in Babylon. When Christ is allowed to have His way, when we cry (pray) to Him, and when He has a "**cloud**" of witnesses that will uphold Him (a people who will prove His message true), Christ will use truth to harvest honest hearts out of the earthen, manmade systems of religion. Our text says that in the sixth-seal period of time "**the earth was reaped.**" It was a productive time. Meeting Bible conditions made the Word of God effective. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Believing the message, that it is the Word of Truth, did an effective work then, and it will still do an effective work today.

## The Fifth Angel in Revelation, Chapter 14

**Revelation 14:17** And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

### The Sixth Trumpet Angel's Message

Although this is a very abbreviated text, it contains a host of Biblical truths. In this verse we are introduced to **"another angel."** This is the fifth in a series of six angels that we find incorporated in Revelation, Chapter 14. (Always keep in mind that the expression employed as **"angel"** is symbolic and refers to a ministry.) These six angels correspond with the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpet angels. The fifth **"angel"** spoken of in our text corresponds with the sixth trumpet angel (beginning in 1880).

We previously found that the second, third, fourth, and fifth trumpet angels are spoken of in Revelation, Chapter 9. When the Revelator, who was recording the sounding forth of the seven trumpets, came down to that portion when "the sixth angel sounded" (verse 13), we read in Revelation 9:14, "Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates [Euphrates was the lifeline of ancient Babylon; these angels symbolically depict a ministry that was bound in Babylon]."

These four angels spoken of as being bound in the great river Euphrates are a symbolic description of the ministries that, because of their failures, produced the religious system of spiritual Babylon. The second angel caused a great apostasy. The mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and out of that great sea of apostasy rose the papal beast. That was the result of an uncertain sound being sounded by the ministry during the Smyranean period. After that, God reached down and began to use Martin Luther and other brethren in the sixteenth-century reformation. Revelation 8:10 speaks of a "great star," but that star fell. It failed to continue to occupy that heavenly position in Christ Jesus and fell to the earth. Because that angel, or ministry, failed to stay true, an earthen system, the system of Protestantism, was produced.

The fourth and fifth trumpet angels sounded forth in the Wesleyan era. Then, when the sixth trumpet angel began to sound forth the message of "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4), it began loosing those four angels that were bound in Euphrates, and people came leaping and shouting home to Zion! Our lesson, which corresponds with the sixth trumpet angel, is portraying that which occurred toward the end of the sixth-trumpet period. It also reveals to us why it was necessary to open the seventh seal. Our text tells us that this **"angel came out of the temple which is in heaven."** This is very similar to the sixth-seal ministry at its start. Revelation 14:15, describing one of the two harvests that occur in this evening time, says, "And another angel came out of the temple . . ." Initially this fifth angel seemed very similar to the preceding ministry.

What is **"the temple" verse 17** tells us this **"angel came out of"**? In 2 Corinthians 6:16 the Apostle questioned, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for *ye are the temple of the living God*; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my *people*." This lets us know that "the temple of the living God" is not brick and mortar, not stone buildings; it is a "people." Yet, it is not just any people. Look at whom Paul was addressing: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God" (2 Corinthians 1:1). The temple of God is the Church of God. It is a people that is "builded together" (Ephesians 2:21), or brought together by truth. Their members are set in the body, and they are joined one to another, built together as "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22).

Next, let us put the expression **"which is in heaven"** in perspective. This **"heaven"** spoken of in our text is the "third heaven" Paul spoke of in 2 Corinthians 12:1-2. It is a spiritual or an ecclesiastical heaven where you "come to visions and revelations of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 12:1). It is a spiritual realm where Christ has "raised us up together" (Ephesians 2:6). Ephesians 2:1 portrays the initial experience—"you hath he quickened [or made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins." That is the new birth; that is when you become a member. When He brings you together with all of the rest of the saints, that is when your member is "set . . . in the body" (1 Corinthians 12:18). That is when you

are builded together; that is when you become part of the temple. Once you are "raised . . . together," you will be able to "sit together in heavenly places [the Greek says 'heavenlies'] in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). This is the third heaven.

### **The Sickle Is No Longer in Christ's Hand**

In our lesson text a vivid distinction is made between this portion of the sixth seal and the previous portion. In the earlier portion of this sixth-seal age, when an angel came out of the temple, verse 15 says that he was "crying [or praying; Psalm 61:1] . . . to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle." This angel did not take matters into his own hands. He did not have the sickle in his hand, for he cried, "Thrust in *thy* sickle." Because the sickle was in Christ's hand, or in His control, verse 16 says "the earth was reaped." Honest hearts were successfully reaped out of earthen, manmade, sectarian religion. There was a great harvest of souls early on in that sixth-seal period of time, as long as the sickle was in Christ's hand, as long as He was in control.

But in our text, portraying the latter portion of the sixth-seal age, there is a vivid distinction in what occurred. Notice, the "**sickle**" has moved from Christ's hand to the angel's (the ministry's) hand. Also notice that there is no reaping. The success and the effectiveness have ceased. What a change from the beginning of this sixth-seal age. Revelation 9:17, a portrayal of how the ministry was at the beginning of the sixth trumpet age, speaks of "the heads of the horses." The horses being used here as a symbolic representation reveals that the church was back to the militant phase, the first time since the morning time, for horses denote militancy (Proverbs 21:31; Zechariah 10:3).

Revelation 9:17 also tells us that "the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions." Christ, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Revelation 5:5), was the Head. They were coming out of the dark and cloudy day. The message on the church had been restored, and the message on Christ being "the head of the . . . church" (Colossians 1:18) had been restored. That is how that sixth-seal ministry started out: each one was headed by a lion. Here was a ministry who had Christ for their Head. When the sixth-seal ministry had a fiery message that put judgment on Babylon, it produced a people, and the glory of God was in the midst. Revelation 9:17 tells us that "out of their mouths [their message] issued fire [the Word and the Spirit; Jeremiah 23:29 and Revelation 4:5] and smoke [the glory of God; Revelation 15:8] and brimstone [judgments; Genesis 19:24]." (The Hebrew root from which "brimstone" comes means organic substance. It was a physical representation.) When the sixth-seal ministry preached a fiery message that put the heat on Babylon, when they preached a message that was true to the Word, when every one of them had Christ for their Head, it produced a people that was a physical representation; it produced the glory of God.

This is how the ministry started out in 1880, but it is not how they ended in 1930. Revelation 9:19 says, ". . . for their tails [talking about what was occurring at the end of the sixth-seal period of time] were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt." These symbolic expressions reveal they did not end up the way they started out. They started out with a fiery and effective message that called a people out to be separate and distinct, but they ended up being just like sectism. Today you cannot tell any difference between them and any other sectarian organization. In the end they "were like unto serpents." What do *serpents* represent? In Luke 10:19 Jesus promised to "give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." He was not talking about literal serpents and scorpions, because the next verse tells us that "the *spirits* are subject." Thus, serpents and scorpions represent spirits of the enemy, but what kind of devilish spirits? Jesus called "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (Matthew 23:29) a "generation of vipers" (Matthew 23:33). Serpents represent religious spirits, and that which started out as a great move of God in the sixth seal ended up as nothing more than just another organization being dominated by a religious spirit. No longer do they preach a message of "Come out." The system or movement they have become does not believe in being separate and distinct.

### **The Sixth-Seal Message Changed**

Let us look more closely at this phrase in Revelation 9:19 "tails . . . like unto serpents." This is the same Greek word that is used for *serpent* in Revelation 12:9 and in Revelation 20:2. These Scriptures tell us that "the great dragon" is also called "that old serpent." In previous chapters we have shown that this great dragon represents the pagan Roman Empire, which was dominated and motivated by a spirit of unbelief. So we find that the sixth-seal ministry became, in



their latter days or in their end part, dominated by the religious spirits of sectism. One of the most pronounced spirits was the spirit of unbelief. They no longer believed it was necessary to be a separate people. This move, which began as a reformation movement of the Church of God, ended up being the Anderson Movement.

When Revelation 9:19 says that "their power is in their mouth, and in their tails," it is telling us the power they had over men initially was in their message, but in the end of the sixth-seal period (or in their tails), their message changed. It was not the same message the old reformers started with back in 1880. By the end of this sixth seal (some fifty years later), they were not preaching the same message. (Yet today they do not preach the same message that the old brethren preached.) In the end verse 19 says they became "like unto serpents." They were overcome with the spirit of unbelief. They became dominated by a sectish spirit and began to operate just as Protestantism operated. The paganistic practices of Protestantism and the spirits that motivated Protestantism began motivating the Anderson Movement.

Speaking of the sixth-seal ministry, Revelation 9:19 says that they had "heads." No longer was the "Lion of the Tribe of Juda" (Revelation 5:5) their head. Now they have their own separate heads. In 2 Timothy 3:1 Paul prophesied that "perilous times shall come" (*times* is plural, for the Gospel Day has had many times of peril). In 2 Timothy 3:4 Paul described such people as "Traitors, heady, highminded." Just as Protestantism has many manmade heads, the Anderson Movement formed general offices and a national council, which they termed as a "general ministerial assembly." They became "heady." Just as Protestantism had its heads over their various sectarian organizations, so this movement began to have heads (general offices, state credentials committees, and so on). They became "highminded."

Once the Movement had a mass influence, once it had accumulated a good number of people, once it had finances and facilities, and once the older brethren started stepping off the stage of action, they wanted to be more socially acceptable. They wanted to be more recognized by the public. They wanted a college and an educated clergy. They did not want, as Acts 4:13 describes Peter and John, "unlearned and ignorant men."

In 1956 a brother by the name of Edward Ellis wrote a booklet called *Struggles of the Church of God Reformation*. At the time of that writing Brother Ellis was ninety-one years old. Here is an excerpt of what he said about the beginning of this college and the thought of wanting an educated clergy: "The people and ministry of the Church of God worked together in greater harmony before they began to clamor for an educated ministry with titles. . . . But after they succeeded in organizing the college, they called it the Church of God College, which it never was. As Brother Riggle told a gathering of ministers, 'That is not a Church of God College, it is Anderson College.' If it had been a Church of God College, all of the teachers would have been Church of God people."

Later on in the booklet Brother Ellis wrote: "These college heads may have thought these degrees might meet with some opposition if they tried to bring them into the church, so they chose two well-known ministers and conferred that title on them; and it worked. For the older ministers did not like the idea of these young brethren getting up above them. But the whole thing was out of the order of the Lord, because we see nothing like that in the morning church. So each year some older minister became a DOCTOR. That spirit of setting some men above others caused the apostasy in the morning. Jesus made it plain that such things should not be among us. 'One is your Master, and all ye are brethren.' It was a common brotherhood, watchmen who could see eye to eye and preach the same standard of truth. Think of what has developed among us. The chairman to announce that DOCTOR — will bring the message for the next service; Rev. or Brother — will bring the message. Is that making a difference between ministers? The doctor is in a higher class. Shame? Yes, shame. Why will people drift from the simplicity of the Gospel so soon? I think if we examine every religious college that has been set up, we will find they started out feeling very dependent. But as soon as they gained enough influence, they wanted to mold the church. The one at Anderson is no exception."

### Silence in Heaven

What happened to the great Reformation Movement? What happened to that which began to restore the message concerning the church? The early sixth-seal brethren had a clear message. Because of their complete consecration and the way God honored them, initially the sixth trumpet sounded forth powerfully and was extremely successful. But as the older brethren passed off the stage of action, after they had amassed numerous resources, people, congregations, facilities, and finances, a clamor began for more societal respectability and influence. This is why Revelation 8:1 says that "there was silence in heaven." They began to silence up on what they considered to be the more offensive portions of the message, and when they did this, they "sinned" (Jeremiah 8:14). James 4:17 says, "Therefore to him that knoweth

to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." God gave them a message. He entrusted them with truth, but because it was a sharp message, because it was **"a sharp sickle,"** because it denounced the systems of men, it was not a socially attractive message.

Not only does Revelation 9:19 tell us that "their tails were like unto serpents," but it also says that "with them they do hurt." They became just like Babylon. Revelation 9:10, describing what occurred in the Sardian period (1730-1880), the second segment of the Protestant era, says that "their power was to hurt men." This is exactly the same thing that happened to Anderson. They became just like sectism. Not only did they become like Babylon, they actually became Babylon. Their message drastically changed, and so did the results. (Results are governed by what is preached.) Over time people changed. As our text shows, there was no more reaping of the earth. How could they reap the earth when they became just like it? How could they put judgment on Babylon when they became part of it?

Not many years ago God was opening the eyes of one dear brother as to what was going on in the Anderson Movement. God was calling him out. He was in an Anderson camp meeting, talking with several brethren whom he had known for a number of years, and the brother asked them, "Brethren, do you know what Babylon is?" One of them said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Do you now what Babylon is?" The brother said, "What do you mean?" The brother said, "Well, brethren, we are right in the middle of it!" Thank God, he came out of it!

Let us look at some of the writings of C. W. Naylor to see if they did indeed silence up on the message. In the booklet entitled *The Teachings of D. S. Warner and His Associates, A Survey and Analysis*, C. W. Naylor wrote this: "I knew D. S. Warner personally . . . I knew D. S. Warner and loved him with reverential affection." Naylor went on to say: "He was a poet, a dreamer, an idealist, and a perfectionist. He was not a logical thinker. . . . In hundreds of instances he misinterpreted and misapplied texts . . . . We have been compelled to reject a very large portion of his exegesis [his understanding of a Scripture text] because it has proved to be unsound."

On page 6 Naylor wrote: "Brother Warner had an extreme view of unity. He advocated a type of unity that never existed, and never can exist, in this world. . . . we have seen the necessity of modifying his teachings to make them conform more nearly to the possibility." To take a clear, Biblical message that was given by God, that was preached, practiced, and that produced results and then say "it has never been and never will be" is blasphemous. Naylor continued to assault the truths Brother Warner advocated, writing: ". . . the text 'at evening time it shall be light' [Zechariah 14:7] has no reference whatever to our day. . . . 'Threshing Babylon' never was God's plan. . . . I am glad that most of us have stopped that sort of preaching." It was never God's will, according to Brother Naylor, to thrash Babylon. Yet, Jeremiah 51:33 says, "For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon is like a threshingfloor, it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come." Brother Naylor said, "I am glad that most of us have stopped that sort of preaching." Look at the change from their "heads of lions" (Revelation 9:17)—when Brother Warner and other brethren started preaching in 1880—to "their tails" (Revelation 9:19), what came out at the end.

On page 9 of this same booklet we read: "Revelation 18:4 [which says 'Come out of her, my people'] has no chronological dating in the Scriptures. For all they set forth, the fulfillment of this Scripture may be a thousand years in the future." Here is a man who has lost his vision. This is the same brother who at one time wrote such glorious songs as *Thy Children Are Gathering Home*, *The Church's Jubilee*, and *The Reformation Glory*. Then on page 16 we read this: "I love our movement. . . . But I long to see it freed from the things that have impeded its progress and have caused it to be misunderstood. I am sure that better, richer, more glorious days lie ahead of us for we are making genuine progress and getting rid of many of the things that have stood in our way." The Scripture tells us in Galatians 2:18, "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." That is exactly the spirit that overcame some of these brethren toward the end of this sixth-seal period of time.

Coming back to Brother Ellis's booklet, *Struggles of the Church of God Reformation*, we read: "I had the privilege of being one of the pioneers of this Great Reformation in 1880. . . . For several years in this great work, there were enough of the old ministers left to keep the lead in the hands of faithful men. Many attempts were made by corrupt men who tried to creep in, but until around forty years ago [1916], they were defeated. When some of our leaders began to cry against our preaching so much doctrine, they said, 'Preach Christ.' What a deception that proved to be. We were preaching Christ, but that included His doctrine. They meant don't say so much about Babylon, don't preach so much about the true church, don't preach so much about divine healing. . . . With all of this letting down, failing to keep the

full message that God gave us in the beginning of this work, and all of the unscriptural things that are endorsed . . . it is easy for a Spirit-filled saint to see why we have so much shallow work, so much envy, strife, division, lack of love, and coldness among us. . . . What have we done that the denominations haven't done as far as those things mentioned? We have excelled in some of them along those lines." I would say he named it pretty accurately. Here was a brother who lived right through it. He labored with D. S. Warner in 1880, and he did not die until 1958. He saw the sixth seal in its beginning, and he saw it in its ending.

I trust that you can see what happened toward the end of the sixth-seal period. According to C. E. Brown's book, *When the Trumpet Sounded*, page 381: "The college was incorporated June 24, 1930, under the laws of the state of Indiana as Anderson College and Theological Seminary." This is the same year that Brother Walter S. Goodnight and several other brethren, after having devised a chart such as you see at the front of this book, began to preach the seventh-seal message. God set His hand "the second time to recover the remnant of his people" (Isaiah 11:11). God recovered a remnant in the earlier part of the evening-light message (1880), and then God had to set His hand a second time when He opened the seventh seal (1930). Now He is gathering a second remnant.

As we consider the latter end of this sixth-trumpet ministry, it behooves us to "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1). The truth became something that slipped away from those sixth-seal brethren. There were good, faithful sixth-seal brethren when that period of time commenced. But as two or three generations passed and younger brethren came on, there was a danger. There is always a danger in about the second or third generation, because many times the preciousness of this truth is lost. Some of them had never been in Babylon themselves, and because of that they did not really have true appreciation of truth. In this seventh-seal period of time as we are moving to a different generation, we must be cautious of the same danger today.

Through it all God is faithful. Lamentations 3:23 says, ". . . great is thy faithfulness." Revelation 3:14 lets us know that He is "the faithful and true witness." He will see to it that the truth is heralded. If we will heed it, we do not ever have to succumb to the powers of the enemy. We can be "in all these things . . . more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37). If we stay in the truth, putting it on and living it out, we will truly be conquerors and yea more than conquerors.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART EIGHT

### The Sixth-and-Final Angel in Revelation, Chapter 14

**Revelation 14:18** And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

**19** And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

**20** And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

#### The Message Scorched Men With Fire

In our Scripture text we read of the sixth-and-final "**angel**" that is incorporated in Revelation, Chapter 14. This "**angel**" corresponds with the seventh-and-final trumpet angel. This is no longer the sixth-seal ministry. **Verse 18** tells us, "**And another angel** [succeeding angel or ministry] **came out from the altar, which had power over fire.**" These words identify this ministry. To understand how this "**power over fire**" identifies this ministry, we need to go to Revelation, Chapter 15. In verse 1 we are introduced to the "seven angels [or ministries] having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." This expression "the wrath of God" is made clear in Revelation 15:4, which says, ". . . for thy judgments are made manifest." The vial angels, pouring out their vials, are a picture of the ministry pouring out God's judgment on everything that is contrary to truth, and on everything that is hindering the souls of mankind. Judgments were poured out in the sixth- and seventh-seal periods of time. Three vials were poured out in the sixth seal, and four are being poured out in the seventh. We know that these judgments were poured out in this evening time (the era subsequent to the Protestant era) because the very first angel poured out his vial "upon the earth [Protestant system of religion]" (Revelation 16:1). This vial was poured out "upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image [those indoctrinated with the false teachings of Protestantism and engaged in worshiping in various Protestant bodies]" (Revelation 16:2).

When we look at the very first vial that was poured out in the seventh seal (the fourth vial), we find some similarities to our text. Our text says that "**another angel . . . had power over fire**" (**verse 18**). Revelation 16:8 tells us that "the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire." This is a very similar expression to our text. What is the significance of this vial being poured out "upon the sun"? At the beginning of this series, we found that when the morning-time church came on the stage of action, she was symbolized in Revelation 12:1 as being "clothed with the sun." This sun-clothed woman was representative of the New Testament church.

In Revelation 16:8 when this angel (ministry) "poured out his vial [the judgment of God] upon the sun," it scorched men with fire. Who was scorched with fire? It was "men," or people who professed to be the New Testament church ("the sun"). These were people who "blasphemed the name of God" (Revelation 16:9). They would not give Him the glory: "they repented not to give him glory" (Revelation 16:9). It is a symbolic depiction of judgment being poured out by the seventh-seal ministry on that which had become the Anderson Movement. They blasphemed the name of God by continuing to bear the name Church of God. When they would not repent and took the glory to themselves in that movement, the fire scorched them.

It takes more than professing to be the true Church of God. It takes being able to take the message to be the church. If they were truly the "sun," fire would not have scorched them. If one is truly clothed in the sun, a fire will not be uncomfortable. These were a people who were professing to be the New Testament church, but the sad fact is they were no longer the church. The very message they once stood for put heat on them and burned them up. They could not take the heat; they could not take the very message that they once proclaimed.

Malachi prophesied of this in Malachi 4:1, saying, "For, behold, the day cometh [it was future tense in Malachi's day], that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that

cometh shall burn them up . . . ." When people do not truly want to measure to truth, when they become proud over their education and their organization when they start supporting a system more than being dedicated to Christ, truth is going to burn them up. If they are not sold out and willing to repent, it is going to cause them to blaspheme.

What was it that scorched them? What is this "fire" (Revelation 16:8) that scorches men? Jeremiah 23:29 says, "Is not my word like as a fire?" There is the fire that scorches people. That is what causes people who will not repent to be "scorched with great heat" (Revelation 16:9). This is a portrayal of the fact that the very message the sixth-seal brethren once put on, and were clothed with, the very message that made them the evening-time church now scorched them. This ministry that had "power . . . to scorch men with fire" is the same ministry portrayed in our text as having "**power over fire.**" It is the seventh-seal ministry.

### The "Angel Came Out From the Altar"

The "**angel**" (or ministry) in **verse 18 "came out from the altar."** This is a distinction from prior descriptions, and it is only spoken of in regard to this particular "**angel.**" If you read the preceding accounts, you will find in verses 15 and 17 that the "angel came out of the temple." This seventh seal is very distinct from the sixth seal. The prior ministries were clearly a Church of God people, because they "came out from the temple." But this seventh-seal ministry "**came out from the altar.**" This has special significance. We see a portrayal of when this Gospel Day commenced in Revelation 8:3, which says, "And another angel came and stood at the altar [speaking of the golden altar, an allusion back to the Old Testament tabernacle], having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar." When we read of the "golden censer" and the "golden altar," we realize this was the exclusive role that was performed only by the high priest (Leviticus 16:11-13).

Hebrews 3:1 lets us know in this New Testament dispensation, Jesus Christ is the "High Priest of our profession." Therefore, this role of the High Priest that we see in the Revelation is a portrayal of Christ. Then we read in Hebrews 9:24, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands [in other words, He did not go into the literal Old Testament tabernacle], which are figures of the true [symbols of the reality]; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Christ went, as High Priest of our profession, right into the presence of God, as no other could do. Christ told us in John 16:7, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 14:26 tells us that "the Comforter . . . is the Holy Ghost." Christ went back into Heaven to appear in the presence of God for us. He went back to send the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, unto you and me. That is what John was portraying in Revelation 8:3.

Jesus Christ, performing the role of High Priest, "came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints" (Revelation 8:3). What were the disciples doing as they tarried in that Upper Room? Acts 1:14 tells us, "These all continued with one accord in prayer . . . ." Incense (the prayers of the saints; Psalm 141:2) was ascending from that Upper Room. Once that happened, we read in Revelation 8:5, "And the angel [Christ Jesus] took the censer, and filled it with fire [the Holy Spirit; Acts 2:3-4 and Revelation 4:5] of the altar [Jesus Christ; Hebrews 13:8-10], and cast it into the earth." In other words, the Holy Ghost was given to those "earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7) that were in the Upper Room. Acts 2:4 tells us that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." How does all this tie in with our text? In **Revelation 14:18** we read of the "**altar.**" It was mentioned in Revelation, Chapter 8, referring to the institution of this Gospel Day on the Day of Pentecost. This lets us know we are coming back to the light of the morning. The seventh seal is a move back to "That which was from the beginning" (1 John 1:1). When this seventh-seal ministry came on the stage of action here in our text, we see the second-and-final harvesting of souls.

### Differences Between the Two Harvests

Let us look at some distinctions between the first harvest that began in 1880 and the second harvest that began in 1930. In the first harvest we read that "the harvest of the earth is ripe" (Revelation 14:15). But in the second harvest, we read that "**her grapes are fully ripe**" (**Revelation 14:18**). This word "**fully**" in the Greek is the word *plerophoreo*, which means "completely, entirely accomplished." When this harvest is complete, the Gospel Day will be complete, and

time will be no more. After the seventh trumpet, there are no more trumpets. After the seventh seal, there are no more seals. Revelation 10:7 says, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished [or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says 'completed'] . . ." The only thing that looms in sight after this seventh-seal period of time is eternity.

The second distinction between the two harvests is that the second harvest is much more specific and the message is clearer. Speaking of the first harvest, verse 15 says that "the harvest of the earth is ripe." But our text says to "**gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.**" There is a much more specific and detailed message in this seventh seal than what they had in the sixth seal. The third distinction is that **verse 18** shows a return to a ministry that prays: "**and cried with a loud cry.**" (Crying is a portrayal of prayer; Psalm 61:1.) Then the fourth and last distinction we should note is the mention in **verse 19** of "**the great winepress.**" This is unique. (We will look at this in greater detail in the next section.)

Let us study the thought of the seventh seal being the fullness of the Gospel Day. This seal corresponds with the seventh prophetic parable in Matthew, Chapter 13—the Parable of the Net. We read in Matthew 13:48, "Which, when it was full . . .," letting us know that this seventh-and-final period is the fullness of the Gospel Day. It is the period of time when everything is going to be completed. Just as there are seven days in a complete week, seven periods make a complete Gospel Day. Isaiah prophesied of this in Isaiah 30:26, saying, "Moreover the light of the moon [the Old Testament] shall be as the light of the sun [New Testament], and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."

At the end of this seventh-seal period, not only will the harvest be complete, but Babylon will be completely emptied as well. Jeremiah 51:2 says, "And [I] will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land." What are "fanners"? John the Baptist, speaking of Christ, said in Matthew 3:12, "Whose fan is in his hand . . ." What is in Christ's hand? Revelation 1:16 tells us that "in his right hand [are] seven stars," and Revelation 1:20 identifies the stars as "the angels [messengers or ministers]."

When this seventh seal is complete, when Christ splits the clouds, there will not be an honest heart left in Babylon. Babylon will be emptied. There will be nothing left but unclean and hateful birds. The Revelator caught a glimpse of it, telling us in Revelation 18:22-23: "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee [there will be no saints left to hear His voice]; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." When Christ ends this seventh-and-final period of time, the conditions will be such that "the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in [Babylon]."

### **The Seventh-Trumpet Message Is Much Clearer**

Let us look a little deeper at the second distinction: a more specific message in the second harvest. Many of the sixth-seal brethren were faithful and true, especially earlier in the period; they walked in all the light that was available. However, the seventh seal was not loosed; there were things they could not see. In Daniel 12:4 Daniel penned, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end [Hebrews 9:26 tells us that 'the time of the end' commenced when Christ ushered in this New Testament dispensation, the Gospel Day]: many shall run [the Christian race; Hebrews 12:1] to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." With every one of the seals being loosed, greater understanding was given. Now as this seventh-and-final seal is loosed, now that all the seals are loosed, knowledge is being increased as never before throughout the history of mankind.

At the beginning of the seventh-seal period of time, Brother W. S. Goodnight wrote in the Preface of his book, *The Revelation With Gospel and Prophecy*: "The truths we have endeavored to set forth in this book are in no way intended to cast any reflection of what we have had in former teachings on the Revelation. We appreciate the truth we have already learned from those among us who have labored faithfully and courageously in an effort to get the truth to the church in the past sixth-seal age. And in our study now no spiritual truth is being disregarded. However, we do endeavor, by the help of the Lord, to bring more light and understanding to the church at this time with the opening of

the seventh seal and the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The Biblical place of the church, as we received it through D. S. Warner and other commentators of the Revelation bring into the sixth seal, still stands as truth. However, at this time the Revelation is opening up to us in a more spiritual understanding. Certain things, that were impossible to understand in their fullness in the sixth-seal age, are now coming to light and clearing up."

There were things the sixth-seal brethren could not have seen. The message we have in this seventh-seal period is much clearer. Those sixth-seal brethren divided the Gospel Day into four major epochs: morning time, Dark Ages, cloudy day, and evening time. They did not use a chart such as you see at the front of this book, which shows the Gospel Day divided into seven distinct time periods. They did not understand the truth concerning the seven letters and how each one of those letters corresponds with one of the seven periods of this Gospel Day. They did not understand the truth concerning how the seven seals and the seven trumpets portray occurrences throughout the entirety of the Gospel Day.

The Revelation chart as we now have it was first devised by Brother Walter S. Goodnight and other brethren back in the proximity of 1930. They were the first brethren to portray the Gospel Day in seven distinct time periods. That is seventh-seal light. Those sixth-seal brethren taught the eighth beast was nothing more than what the first beast (Roman Catholicism) was. Also, they relegated Revelation, Chapters 21 and 22, over to the eternal realm. They saw it as being Heaven, but we understand it as being a portrait of the church. That is all seventh-seal light. This message is much clearer, more specific, with greater detail. We live in "the perfect day" that the wise man spoke of (Proverbs 4:18).

As previously mentioned, the third distinction is that this seventh-seal ministry is a praying ministry, not one that rests in a headquarters or earthly organization. At the end of that sixth-seal period of time, they rested in the school that they founded: Anderson College. Many of those old, sixth-seal pioneers were farmers and storekeepers with no formal education. (Certainly, I am not speaking against education, but a call to the ministry does not come through education; it comes through revelation.) The original brethren who stepped out with this truth were unlearned, but as with Peter and John, it was obvious "they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). They had a divine call, and they had power with God. But toward the end of that sixth-seal period, the Movement did not want unlearned and ignorant men. (We might note here that this John who was called "unlearned and ignorant" in Acts 4:13 was the same John who received the Revelation that scholars spend so much energy trying to unravel.) Education was preferred over revelation, and then "offensive" portions of the message began to be silenced. Thus, there was a need to sound the seventh trumpet, and that is when we read of a ministry crying "**to him that had the sharp sickle.**"

Let us look further at **verse 18**. It says, "**And** [a conjunction; thank God the Gospel Day did not end with the sixth-seal period] **another** [or succeeding] **angel** [ministry of the seventh seal] **came out from the altar** [the presence of Christ, taking us right back to the light of the morning], **which had power over fire** [a heated message that put fire on Anderson and all falsity]; **and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle** [back to a position of prayer and dependence, rather than exalted in their organization and education], **saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle . . .**" If there is going to be a harvest, if people are going to be cut loose from Babylon and falsity, it is going to take a sharp, pointed message (Isaiah 41:15). God wants a Gospel that has some "teeth" to it, that will separate people from that which is holding them captive. Just as old Israel was held in Babylonian captivity, many of God's people are being held in spiritual captivity. To be freed from this bondage requires a message that has a sharp edge on it.

What is the purpose of this "threshing instrument" of which Isaiah 41:15 speaks? It separates wheat from chaff. With this instrument this verse says, "thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small." When the saints are brought out of Babylon, it will be smaller than it was before the threshing began. Notice what the cry of our text is, for this is a much more specific prayer than we find recorded anywhere previously. **Verse 18** says to "**gather the clusters of the vine of the earth.**" What is this "**vine of the earth**"? According to John 15:1, Jesus is "the true vine." But in our text this "**vine**" is "**of the earth,**" letting us know it is a false vine. This is a different symbolic expression for what we found in Revelation 13:11. There we read of "another beast coming up out of the earth." The beast and "**the vine**" both came up out "**of the earth.**" So this "**vine**" symbolizes the religious system of Protestantism.

The beast coming up out of the earth had some lamb-like features—two horns like a lamb—it was an imitation. So this "**vine of the earth**" is an imitation of the true Vine. The "**vine**" is the system of Protestantism, and the "**clusters**" are the various denominations that hold people. If the true Vine is Christ, then the false "**vine**" is the false Christ produced by the earthly, manmade, religious system of Protestantism. Every religious denomination that preaches

"another gospel" has "another Christ." That is why you hear people say, "A loving Christ would not send anyone to hell." They have "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4) than the Bible Jesus. They preach "another gospel" than the one set forth in the Scriptures. Every religious denomination has its own gospel. That is why there are so many **"clusters."** They do not agree; so they each have their own gospel, their own teachings, their own doctrines. They all have their own concept of Jesus. They are motivated by another spirit, and that is the spirit that produces Babylon. According to Revelation 18:2 Babylon is motivated by foul spirits that hold people, as it were, in a cage (in bondage, in captivity).

People are being duped into various **"clusters,"** or religious organizations and being held captive by false teachings in the various systems of Protestantism. But the good news is that in this seventh seal there is a ministry that is crying out **"to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle."** In other words, turn the truth (or the Word) loose so that the **"grapes"** can get loose from the **"clusters."** The purpose of a grape is not to occupy a cluster. Its ultimate destiny is not to remain on the vine. To reach its intended purpose, when it is **"fully ripe,"** it must be separated from that which holds it. It must be loosed from the **"clusters."** God never ordained for His people to stay in Babylon. For them to be in the position God intended, they must be separated from the **"clusters";** they must be loosened from the **"vine";** they must be gathered into the **"winepress."**

In our next study we will examine **verses 19 and 20** and see what actually happens when this separation of the **"grapes"** from the **"clusters"** occurs. Thank God, the Lord is still doing a work in our day, and He will continue to do a work until time reels into eternity! There is still a **"sharp sickle,"** a sharp message, that will cut people loose from Babylon. The Lord is still reaping His people from sectarian bondage.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN—PART NINE

### The Great Winepress

**Revelation 14:18** And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

**19** And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

**20** And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

#### This Angel Is Christ Working Through His Ministry

As we again view this text of Scripture, we want to consider what occurred after "**the sharp sickle**" was "**thrust in**" and this harvest began to take place. In our previous consideration of this text, we found that "**another angel**" is the seventh-seal ministry. This began around 1930 with Brother Walter S. Goodnight and several other brethren beginning to herald the seventh-seal message. We found that this ministry "**came out from the altar**" and "**had power over fire.**" One of the many truths that this conveys is that this seventh-seal message is moving us back to the light of the morning.

After Christ's death and resurrection, He had His ultimate ascension "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24). He desired to fulfill the role of the "High Priest of our profession" (Hebrews 3:1). Jesus told the apostles in John 16:7, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [the Holy Ghost; John 14:26] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." We can read of Christ's Ascension in Acts 1:9, which states, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Ephesians 1:20 lets us know, "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand . . . ."

In Revelation, Chapter 8, we see a symbolic portrayal of Christ after He ascended back into Heaven. There He performed the role as the High Priest of our profession in the presence of God. This is denoted by the golden altar and the golden censer (Revelation 8:3), those sacred things that were only used by the high priest. Christ did not just go to a second room in some old earthly tabernacle; He went into the very presence of God Himself. There He took the fire of the altar (the Spirit of Christ) and cast it into those earthen vessels that were in the Upper Room. Thus, He fulfilled His promise of sending the Holy Ghost unto the brethren, and in so doing He instituted the New Testament church and the Gospel Day. The Holy Ghost Dispensation was initiated as well. It is needful to understand this for it plays a vital role in understanding the truths of our text.

Throughout the Revelation the word *angel* means "a messenger." But in Revelation 8:3 it takes on a different connotation because it is associated with a sacerdotal function that could only be fulfilled by the high priest. This "angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense." According to Leviticus 16:11-13, only the high priest could fill that position. Revelation, Chapter 8, is a symbolic portrayal of Christ as the High Priest of our profession. He has taken the "fire [representative of the Holy Ghost; Acts 2:3-4] of the altar [Jesus Christ; Hebrews 13:8 and 10], and cast it into the earth [earthen vessels; 2 Corinthians 4:7]." So "fire of the altar" is the Spirit of Christ, or "the Holy Ghost" (Luke 4:1). Do not allow the enemy and false religious advocates to cause you to believe there is a Spirit of Christ, a Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, and many other divine Spirits. Ephesians 4:4 says that there is "one Spirit." The Spirit of Christ is the Holy Ghost.

#### The "Grapes Are Fully Ripe"

As we begin to study this "**another angel**" (another ministry, a succeeding ministry), we find that this ministry "**came out from the altar**" and "**had power over fire.**" This reference of "**the altar**" that was previously mentioned

in Revelation 8:3 and 5 at the onset of this Gospel Day is showing a return to that which appeared at the dawn of the Gospel Day. When this seventh seal was opened, judgment was put on the Anderson Movement for their silencing on the message. In this period, the very day and time in which we are privileged to live, **verse 18** tells us very explicitly that **"her grapes are fully ripe,"** letting us know that we are in the fullness of time. Contrary to what the enemy would cause you and me to feel, there are people who are **"ripe"** for the truth. **Verse 18** declares, **". . . gather the clusters of the vine of the earth."** What is this **"vine of the earth"**? Deuteronomy 32:32 speaks of "the vine of Sodom," and Psalm 80:8 refers to "a vine out of Egypt." Revelation 11:8, speaking of when the Protestant era commenced, states, "And their dead bodies [the two witnesses—the Word and the Spirit] shall lie in the street of the great city [Babylon; Revelation 14:8], which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt . . ." So "Sodom and Egypt" represent Babylon (the portion of Babylon that came up "out of the earth"; Revelation 13:11), and so this **"vine"** represents Babylon, or more particularly the religious system of Protestantism.

Notice that this **"vine"** has many **"clusters."** The **"clusters"** represent the various sectarian organizations, or denominations, that make up the religious system of Protestantism. The **"clusters"** are the many denominations that hold the people, and **"the grapes"** are the individuals who are held by the **"clusters."** Literally, when a grape is **"fully ripe,"** if it is not separated from the cluster, it is going to rot, spoil, and be of no good use. Since this Gospel Day has fully matured to the point where the **"grapes are fully ripe,"** God wants these **"grapes"** (individual saints) to separate from the **"clusters"** (sectarian organizations). Why? Because if they stay where they are, they are going to spoil, rot, and spiritually ruin. God wants them to break loose, and He gave His ministry a message to enable that to occur.

As we look at **verse 19** and read that **"the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth,"** first we need to consider who did the reaping? In the first harvest (Revelation 14:14-16), we found that Christ was the One who accomplished that first reaping during the sixth-seal period of time. Now in our text the seventh-seal ministry is being portrayed. **Verse 18** tells us that **"another angel [another ministry, a succeeding ministry] came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry [this was a praying ministry, seeking not to take matters in their own hands but that there be divine movement] to him that had the sharp sickle."**

Notice that it was not the angel mentioned in verse 17 that thrust in the **"sickle."** That angel portrayed the Anderson Movement beginning to silence on the message, taking matters into their own hands and compromising on the message of truth. They began to fight against the very truths they had once heralded. So certainly when we look at this in context, we see that it could not be that angel to whom these brethren cried, nor would it be that angel who thrust in the **"sickle."** Certainly, the angel in verse 17 had the **"sharp sickle,"** but he took it into his own hand and there was no reaping in that portion. Who is **"the angel"** that **verse 19** says **"thrust in his sickle"**? According to **verse 18** this ministry **"came out from the altar,"** an allusion back to the morning time. Christ was the "angel" who "stood at the altar" in Revelation 8:3, and He is this **"angel"** who has the **"sickle"** back in His hand and is casting it in for a second harvest in the seventh-seal period of time.

When **verse 19** says, **"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth . . .,"** it is a picture (just as the first harvest of Christ) of Christ working through His ministry, in response to their crying (or praying). He is sending forth the sharp message of separation from Babylon. The message of Revelation 18:4 was again being heralded: "Come out of her, my people." This is why it is so essential that the **"grapes"** be separated from the **"clusters."** Once the **"grapes are fully ripe,"** there is no benefit to them being a part of the **"vine"** or being a part of **"the clusters."** The only thing that is truly beneficial is for the **"grapes"** to be put into the **"winepress."** There God can use them in the position He ordained them to be put in; there they become beneficial to mankind. The rest of Revelation 18:4 warns why the **"grapes"** must not remain attached to the **"clusters"**: ". . . that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Notice what happens when this message is heralded forth by Christ through His ministry. When the cry in **Revelation 14:18** was, **"Thrust in thy sharp sickle,"** we read in **verse 19**, **"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."** In a prior study we found that **"the vine of the earth"** symbolizes Babylon, particularly the system of Protestantism. When the expression **"the wrath of God"** is employed throughout the Scriptures (but especially in the Revelation), it actually represents judgment being poured out.

Revelation, Chapter 15, tells us of a ministry that is entrusted with seven golden vials full of the wrath of God.

What does that mean? The last phrase of Revelation 15:4 says, ". . . for thy judgments are made manifest." Then we read of the charge to the ministry in Revelation 16:1, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple [the church] saying to the seven angels [a ministry], Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." When the vials were poured out, Revelation 16:5 and 7 state: "And I heard the angel [or ministry] of the waters say, Thou are righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. . . . and righteous are thy judgments."

These vials full of the wrath of God represent God's judgments. When our text tells us that they "**gathered the vine of the earth** [the system of Protestantism], **and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God,**" the portion of this phrase that we need to gain understanding of is "**the great winepress.**" When it is talking about "**the wrath of God,**" it is telling us that when the ministry put the judgments of God on "**the vine of the earth,**" the "**sharp sickle**" (the Word of God, or the message) began reaping and loosing the "**grapes**" (individuals) from that system.

### **The Grapes Are Cast Into the Great Winepress**

As we look a little further, it is vital that we understand the portion of **verse 19** that talks about "**the great winepress.**" It is no good to have a vineyard and produce "**grapes**" if you cannot reap those "**grapes,**" put them in a "**winepress,**" and make them beneficial to mankind. No matter how beautifully it may be developed, if a grape stays in the cluster and attached to the vine, it never realizes the full potential for which God created it. In the Scriptures God's work is referred to as a vineyard, and it is portrayed as having a "**winepress**" in it. You can read of this in Isaiah 5:1-7. Verse 7 tells us that "the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel." Notice in verse 2 he referred to them as "the choicest vine" and "also made a winepress therein." Now certainly this has reference to old Israel, but the point that we need to understand is that God in all ages has referred to His work as a vineyard and portrayed it as having a "**winepress.**"

Jesus spoke very similarly when He gave the Parable of the Householder in Matthew, Chapter 21. In verse 33 Jesus said that he "planted a vineyard . . . and digged a winepress." Certainly, the vine and vineyard in these texts represent old Israel, but the point I want to emphasize is that both of these texts mention a "**winepress.**" What does this actually convey to us? We are somewhat removed from the type of culture that has winepresses; so, many times it is a little difficult to relate to what is meant by that expression. Yet, in ancient culture, certainly in the portion of the world that had winepresses, these references were clearly understood. The famous Scotch scholar Dr. William Barclay wrote: "In Palestine the winepress consisted of an upper and a lower trough connected by a channel [this typifies the Old Testament and the New Testament, which is connected by Jesus Christ] . . . The grapes were put into the upper trough which was on a slightly higher level. They were then trampled with the feet, and so the juice was pressed out. The juice then flowed down the connecting channel and was collected in the lower trough. Often in the Old Testament, God's judgment is likened to the trampling of the grapes."

So when we read this expression, "**And the winepress was trodden**" in **verse 20**, we have to first understand the ancient practice of how they took the "**grapes,**" put them into the trough, and then tread upon them. There is a real lesson there. As Dr. Barclay said, "Often in the Old Testament, God's judgment is likened to the trampling of the grapes." Let us look at some Scriptures that substantiate this truth. Lamentations 1:15 states very clearly, "The LORD hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: the LORD hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress." The grapes were severed, or separated, from the clusters and the vine, and they were put in the winepress (trough), and then they were trodden on. This is a picture of judgment.

We read in Isaiah 63:3-4: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Then Revelation 19:15 says, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The winepresses were tramped on; they were trodden upon. This treading of the "**winepress**" represents the judgments being put on those saints in Babylon so that they can get loose and be made part of the body of Christ. The only way they can get loose

is if there is some treading. A foot must be put down. Revelation 19:15 tells us that "he treadeth," speaking in a constant and continual tense. This "**winepress**" is going to continue to be trodden until Jesus comes again. It is part of the ministry of this seventh-seal period of time.

### Christ Uses His Ministry to Tread the Winepress

How does Christ tread? First Timothy 5:17-18 tells us: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that *treadeth* out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward." Who does the treading? Verse 17 says that it is "the elders." Christ accomplishes this treading through His ministry. The seventh prophetic parable in Matthew, Chapter 13, which corresponds with this seventh-seal period of time, is the Parable of the Net. We read of it in Matthew 13:49, which states, "So shall it be at the end of the world [not *in*, but *at* the end of the world]: the angels [the ministry] shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just." The ministry does the severing. Paul, speaking of the ministry, said in Romans 10:15, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written [quoting prophecy from Isaiah 52:7], How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel . . ." Why are their feet beautiful? Because they are the ones doing the treading. They are the ones Christ uses to bring this great work about.

What is the picture being portrayed before us in these symbolic expressions? *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* defines the Greek word *lenos*, which is the Greek word for "**winepress**" in our text, as, "The word is used metaphorically with reference to the execution of divine judgment." In **verse 19** the "**angel**" (Christ through His ministry) "**thrust in his sickle,**" the Word or this message that is entrusted to our day. This was "**thrust . . . into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth,**" and he "**cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.**" In other words, Christ entrusts a ministry with a message so sharp that it will separate people from Babylon. When the "**sickle**" (the Word) is thrust in, people are gathered out of "**the vine of the earth**" (Protestantism). This is a portrayal of the seventh-seal message. There must be saved people down in Babylon or they would not be called "my people" (Revelation 18:4). Second Corinthians 6:17-18 says: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

There are saved people in the realms of sectarian religion. In this day and time of fullness, when those "**grapes are fully ripe,**" we have a message to get them separated. First Corinthians 6:15a says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" That is why we use the expression that says, "Where salvation makes you a member." When you get saved, you are a member of Christ. But for those who are being held by these "**clusters,**" these religious organizations, 1 Corinthians 6:16 begins, "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot . . . ?" Those who are truly born again have become a member of Christ. But when they are attached to a religious organization, they have joined themselves to a harlot body. God wants this "**sharp sickle**" to cut them loose, to separate them from those religious "**clusters,**" or religious denominations. He wants those "**grapes**" (individuals with an experience) separated from "**the clusters**" (the organization that is holding them), and He wants to take their individual experience and set their member in the body (1 Corinthians 12:18). To loose those members from harlot bodies requires them to go through the "**winepress.**" It takes judgment preaching.

In Isaiah, Chapter 1, we find some types employed. Verse 21 says, "How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers." Here in typical language is a portrayal of the Dark Ages setting in. After the subsequent dark and cloudy day, verses 25-26 say: "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city." To be called a "city of righteousness" and a "faithful city," judgment must first be restored. Also, judges must be restored. Then verse 27 reads, "Zion [a figurative expression of the church; Hebrews 12:22-23] shall be redeemed with judgment . . ." When the judges are restored, they are going to bring judgment right down to where the people are.

We read in Isaiah 4:3-4: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit

of judgment . . . ." If they are going to be called "holy," if they are going to be "among the living" ones, it is going to take some judgment.

### The Purpose of the Winepress

Let us consider more closely what a **"winepress"** does. First the **"grapes"** must be separated from the **"vine."** When the **"grapes are fully ripe,"** the only thing worth reaping, or saving, is the **"grapes."** You cannot make grape juice or wine from the **"vine."** The **"vine"** is discarded. Once the **"grapes"** are loosed from the **"clusters,"** the **"clusters"** also are thrown away. Only the **"grapes"** are beneficial. **Verse 19** of our text in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says this: ". . . and gathered the fruit of the vine of the earth and cast it unto the great wine-press of the wrath of God." If you read the King James Version, it would appear He took the **"vine"** and put it in the **"winepress."** However, once the **"grapes are full,"** there is no use for the **"vine."**

As we consider the **"grapes"** spoken of in **verse 18,** notice that it is in the plural. Yet, each grape is an individual, separate grape with its own identity. Think of it in the natural. You may have a whole cluster of grapes, but every one of them is separate and individual. This is what Babylon promotes: individuality, selfishness, self-will, self-reliance, connection to an organization. Their message is "Stay connected to the cluster." All of the **"clusters"** are part of one **"vine,"** but it is an earthly **"vine."** This **"vine"** is a manmade system, and staying connected to these **"clusters"** and hooked to this **"vine"** will be the ultimate ruination of every grape that stays.

Truth will sever one from earthly groups. When judgment is brought, when the message comes forth, it casts one into the **"great winepress,"** and the individual grape loses its identity, its individuality, and now is a part of every other grape and becomes members one of another. This is a picture of how God produces the church in this evening time. Truth does not emphasize individuality, individual rights, self-will, and self-reliance. Truth will put ones into the **"winepress."** Every one of those **"grapes"** may go in as an individual, distinct grape, but once the treading is done, you cannot tell one grape from another. There is no more "I" or "me" or "my." It is now "us," "our," and "we." You become "members one of another" (Ephesians 4:25). We are part of the body of Christ. When one member suffers, we all suffer. When one member rejoices, we all rejoice (1 Corinthians 12:26). If the physical body is working as it ought and something is dropped on the toe, the knee will move and the hands will go down to help; all of the members will work together. So it is in the body of Christ. If you had a glass of literal wine or grape juice, could you separate one grape from another in that glass? You could not do it. All are part of a whole, and there is a picture of how God produces the body of Christ in this evening time.

After people go through this **"winepress,"** Isaiah, envisioning our day, said in Isaiah 2:2, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains [an expression denoting the New Testament church], and shall be exalted above the hills [above the mingled hills of Babylon]; and all nations shall *flow* unto it." You have never seen anything flow uphill, but it does here. It flows up to the top of the mountain. How can they flow up to the top of the mountain? It is because they go through the **"winepress."** The judgment of God will cause honest hearts to flow from those mingled hills of Babylon right up to the top of the mountain to the Lord's house, to the Church of the Living God. That only happens after ones have gone through the **"winepress,"** heard judgment put on Babylon, and then let the judgment message loose them from Babylon and make them one with the body of Christ, the Church of the Living God.

**Verse 20** tells us that **"the winepress was trodden without the city."** If you read Hebrews 13:11, you will find that the Hebrew writer was likening Christ to those Old Testament sacrifices. They were the type; He is the antitype, or the reality. He said, "For the bodies of those beasts [speaking of those Old Testament sacrifices], whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp." In the Old Testament the sacrifices were burned "without the camp." Then verse 12 reads, "Wherefore [or in like manner] Jesus also [bringing it up to our New Testament sacrifice], that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." The Old Testament sacrifices were "burned without the camp," and when Christ died for us, it was "without the gate." The **"winepress was trodden without the city"** so we can get in. To truly become one with the body of Christ, before we can get in the city (the church), we must die out, just as our Sacrifice did, to self and sectism. We must be "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20). We must be willing to die out, just as our Sacrifice, our example in all things, was. You are not going to get in the city any other way.

## The Blood of the Grapes Came Out

When individuals take the truth and get loose from Babylon and are set in the body, notice what happens next. **Verse 20** says that "**blood came out of the winepress** [the word '*blood*' is actually referring to the blood of the grape, or the juice (Genesis 49:11; Deuteronomy 32:14)], **even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.**" Look at the length of the "**blood,**" or the juice, that came out: "**a thousand and six hundred furlongs.**" "*Furlongs*" denote a length. For 1610 years (A.D. 270 to A.D. 1880), this "**winepress**" was not functioning. God's people were separated through the Dark Ages and the dark and cloudy day of Protestantism. It was not until this evening time that people were able to take their individual experience and come out of Babylon and have their member of Christ set into the body of Christ. The length of time when the effect of this "**winepress**" was not realized was around 1600 years, but glory be to God, in the time in which we live this "**winepress**" is operating! The "**blood**" did not flow for around 1600 years, but now it can flow as one body of Christ.

What were these horses spoken of in our text? The King James Version says "**horse**" (singular), but the Greek says "horses" (plural). This is speaking of the black horse and the pale horse, the spirits that produced those systems which were holding the saints of God, the spirits of apostasy and compromise. (Read Revelation 6:5-8.) Each of these spirits gave rise to a flesh-and-blood representation, the systems of papalism and Protestantism, and the saints needed to hear the judgment message to come out of them. Notice that **verse 20** speaks of the "**bridles**" in the plural. These are the many sectarian organizations that were promoted and conveyed by these spirits. When this seventh-seal ministry "**cried**" (or prayed) for the "**sharp sickle**" (the Word, the message) to be thrust in, people who had been bound in the systems that had arisen down throughout the Gospel Day were able to come out, or as **verse 20** describes it, "**blood came out.**"

This seventh-seal period of time is a glorious period of time, a time when the Lord is doing a great work and desires to do an even greater one. The end is not yet. There is much, much more that the Lord desires to accomplish in our day. As in the days of yore, the cry still is as it was in Isaiah 6:8: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The Lord is still looking for ones to step up to the call. And as they do, He will reveal greater depths of truth and take the church to higher heights. Thus, the glory of God will be more manifest, and many yet will come to its light. This is a brilliant day. We need not be the least bit disheartened or discouraged. We have the greatest message that has been heralded down throughout human history. And as the songwriter penned, "*Brighter days are sweetly dawning, Purer light is coming fast.*"

John 4:35 says, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Jesus said in Matthew 9:37-38: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." There is a great harvest taking place, and God wants to do an even greater work. Let us not grow weary in well doing, and do not allow the enemy to work discouragement. We have a glorious message and live in a brilliant day! God still has great things on the horizon for His church!

## O' Seventh Seal

by  
Earl R. Borders

*The seventh seal a day so glorious and bright  
A time of purity and light  
A day we stand against compromise and night  
The day the Lord is showing His power and might*

*The trumpet so loudly now is sounding  
It heralds God's message so abounding  
It calls His sheep to the one true fold  
Its messengers are sounding loud and bold  
From Babel God is calling all His sheep  
To bring them to the place where He can keep*

*'Tis the church of the Firstborn  
From sectish ranks we are borne  
To walk forever in glorious truth  
And from sin Babel to e'er stand aloof  
This is the way so shining and clear  
We'll cherish these truths so precious and dear*

*O seventh seal in thy truth I'll ever stand  
The bright path of this Gospel Day so grand  
A message for the end of time  
Our voices raised, its truth we'll ever chime*

## Epilogue

Series number five that we have been studying does not conclude until the end of Chapter 19 of the Revelation. It continues on to include Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. However, beginning with Chapter 15, the character of the series changes. This change of character actually somewhat begins with Chapter 14. When we look at Chapters 14-19, in reality each chapter deals exclusively with the evening portion of the Gospel Day. They deal with only those periods of the sixth and seventh seals, making them very unique. Chapter 14 was included in this volume to bring us through the entirety of the Gospel Day. It is distinct from Chapters 15-19 because it follows Chapters 12 and 13 in sequence, bringing us consecutively through the Gospel Day. Series five started in Chapter 12 with a woman, clothed with the sun, appearing on the stage of action (a symbolic representation of the institution of the morning-time church). Then Chapters 12 and 13 brought us sequentially down through the various segments of this Christian Dispensation.

Chapter 14 is a natural conclusion to our study in this volume, because in this chapter the sixth and seventh seals are portrayed. Beginning with Chapter 15, the character somewhat changes, because Chapters 15-19 deal only with the sixth and seventh periods of time. In our next volume, Volume Five, we will consider the balance of series number five (Revelation, Chapters 15-19). As we conclude this volume, we trust that the Holy Spirit will use the truths contained within this volume to enable "The eyes of your understanding [to be] enlightened" (Ephesians 1:18).