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Edwin R. Thiele

Corrections

Outline Studies
in
REVELATION

by Edwin R. Thiele



Corrections

ii, iii - Preface missing

OUTLINE STUDIES IN REVELATION

by

Edwin R. Thiele

219 - end material sent me 20 977

240 9 instead of "glorious"
242 ~~seventh~~ ²⁷¹ ~~seventh~~
252 seventh vocal - not sixth

277 6 instead of 16

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Acts of the Apostles
AmTr	American Translation
CE	Colporteur Evangelist
CH	Counsels on Health
COL	Christ's Object Lessons
CSW	Counsels on Sabbath School Work
CT	Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students
CW	Counsels to Writers and Editors
DA	Desire of Ages
Ed	Education
EGW	Ellen G. White
Ev	Evangelism
EW	Early Writings
FE	Fundamentals of Christian Education
GC	Great Controversy
GCB	General Conference Bulletin
GW	Gospel Workers
JB	Jerusalem Bible
LS	Life Sketches
M	Ministry Magazine
MB	Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing
MH	Ministry of Healing
MS	Manuscripts
MYP	Messages to Young People
NAB	New American Bible
NEB	New English Bible
PK	Prophets and Kings
PP	Patriarchs and Prophets
RH	Review and Herald
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SC	Steps to Christ
SG	Spiritual Gifts
SP	Spirit of Prophecy
SpT	Special Testimonies
SpTm	Special Testimonies to Ministers
SR	Story of Redemption
ST	Signs of the Times
SSW	Sabbath School Work
T	Testimonies
TM	Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers

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GENERAL SURVEY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I. INTRODUCTORY

Chapter 1. The revelation given to John; Christ in the midst of the seven candlesticks

II. LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

Chapter 2. Letters to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira

Chapter 3. Letters to Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea

III. THE SEVEN SEALS

Chapter 4. The throne room of heaven

Chapter 5. The Lamb worthy to open the seals

Chapter 6. The first six seals opened

Chapter 7. The holding of the winds and the sealing work

Chapter 8:1 The opening of the seventh seal

IV. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

Chapter 8. The first four trumpets

Chapter 9. The fifth and sixth trumpets

Chapter 10:7; 11:15-19. The seventh trumpet

V. THE APPROACH OF THE END

Chapter 10. The mighty angel with the open book

Chapter 11. The temple and the two witnesses

VI. POWERS ARRAYED AGAINST HEAVEN

Chapter 12. The great red dragon

Chapter 13. The leopard beast; the two-horned beast

VII. GOD'S FINAL MESSAGES AND THE HARVEST

Chapter 14. The three angel's messages; the coming of Christ and the harvest

VIII. THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

Chapter 15. The seven angels with the seven last plagues

Chapter 16. The pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God

IX. DOOM FOR THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

Chapter 17. The woman and the scarlet-colored beast

Chapter 18. Babylon's final fall

Chapter 19. The victory of the armies of heaven over the beast

Chapter 20. Satan bound in the bottomless pit and cast into the lake of fire

X. THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Chapter 21. The New Jerusalem

Chapter 22. The river and tree of life; the final rewards

THE STUDY OF REVELATION

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

A. A blessing on those who read

"The Lord will bless all who will seek humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing to those 'that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.'" TM 114

"Says the prophet: 'Blessed is he that readeth'--there are those who will not read; the blessing is not for them. 'And they that hear'--there are some, also, who refuse to hear anything concerning the prophecies; the blessing is not for this class. 'And keep those things which are written therein'--many refuse to heed the warnings and instructions contained in the Revelation; none of these can claim the blessing promised. All who ridicule the subjects of the prophecy, and mock at the symbols here solemnly given, all who refuse to reform their lives, and prepare for the coming of the Son of man, will be unbleded." GC 341

B. Understanding will bring a revival

"When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. . .When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart. . .If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message." TM 113,114,118

C. Testimony of the True Witness will bring about a shaking

"I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." EW 270

D. Efforts of the enemy to blind men to the messages of Revelation

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the

New Testament Scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study." COL 133

"Why, then, this widespread ignorance concerning an important part of Holy Writ? Why this general reluctance to investigate its teachings? It is the result of a studied effort of the prince of darkness to conceal from men that which reveals his deceptions. For this reason, Christ the Revelator, foreseeing the warfare that would be waged against the study of the Revelation, pronounced a blessing upon all who should read, hear, and observe the words of the prophecy." GC 342

E. For the guidance of the church throughout the Christian dispensation

"In figures and symbols, subjects of vast importance were presented to John, which he was to record, that the people of God living in his age and in future ages might have an intelligent understanding of the perils and conflicts before them.

"This revelation was given for the guidance and comfort of the church throughout the Christian dispensation." AA 583

F. Particularly for the last days

"Preachers and people have looked upon the book of Revelation as mysterious and of less importance than other portions of the Sacred Scriptures. But I saw that this book is indeed a revelation given for the especial benefit of those who should live in the last days, to guide them in ascertaining their true position and their duty. God directed the mind of William Miller to the prophecies and gave him great light upon the book of Revelation." EW 231

"To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of destruction. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them. None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth." GC 341,342

"To John the Lord opened the subjects that He saw would be needed by His people in the last days. The instruction that He gave is found in the book of Revelation. Those who would be co-workers with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in this book. With pen and voice they will strive to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal. . . .

"The solemn messages that have been given in their order in the Revelation are to occupy the first place in the minds of God's people. Nothing else is to be allowed to engross our attention.

"Precious time is rapidly passing, and there is danger that many will be robbed of the time which should be given to the proclamation of the messages that God has sent to a fallen world. Satan is pleased to see the diversion of minds that should be engaged in a study of the truths which have to do with eternal realities.

"The testimony of Christ, a testimony of the most solemn character, is to be borne to the world. All through the book of Revelation there are the most precious, elevating promises, and there are also warnings of the most fearfully solemn import. Will not those who profess to have a knowledge of the truth read the testimony given to John by Christ? Here is no guesswork, no scientific deception. Here are the truths that concern our present and future welfare." 8T 301,302

G. To be prized by educators

"Those who accept positions as educators should prize more and more the revealed will of God so plainly and strikingly presented in Daniel and the Revelation." 6T 131

"In the book of Revelation we read of a special work that God desires to have His people do in these last days. . . .

"Time is short. The perils of the last days are upon us, and we should watch and pray, and study and heed the lessons that are given us in the books of Daniel and the Revelation. . . .

"This is the education that is to be patiently given. Let our lessons be appropriate for the day in which we live, and let our religious instruction be given in accordance with the messages God sends." 6T 127,128

H. Message to be proclaimed to all the world

"I have been instructed that the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be printed in small books, with the necessary explanations, and should be sent all over the world. Our own people need to have the light placed before them in clearer lines.

"The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues. The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. To John this persecuting power is represented as having horns like a lamb, but as speaking like a dragon. . . .

"As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves before the cities of the world; and this delineation has already begun to be fulfilled. By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked char-

acter and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God's people. All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this earth's history. . . In the very time in which we live, the Lord has called His people and has given them a message to bear. . . .

"The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed be left untouched. . . . Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth." TM 117,118

II. DANIEL AND REVELATION COMPLEMENTARY BOOKS

"In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days." AA 585

"The things revealed to Daniel were afterward complemented by the revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. These two books should be carefully studied. . . .

"The book of Daniel is unsealed in the revelation to John, and carries us forward to the last scenes of this earth's history. . . .

"Study Revelation in connection with Daniel, for history will be repeated. .

"It was my idea to have the two books bound together, Revelation following Daniel, as giving fuller light on the subjects dealt with in Daniel. The object is to bring these books together, showing that they both relate to the same subjects." TM 114-117

"God directed the mind of William Miller to the prophecies and gave him great light upon the book of Revelation.

"If Daniel's visions had been understood, the people could better have understood the visions of John. But at the right time, God moved upon His chosen servant, who, with clearness and in the power of the Holy Spirit, opened the prophecies and showed the harmony of the visions of Daniel and John." EW 231

III. REVELATION A BOOK OF CONTRASTS

The work of Christ and His church	The work of Satan and his cohorts
The fruit of the tree of life	The wine of the wrath of God
Glorious victory for the righteous	Complete defeat for the wicked
Joys of the redeemed	Terrors of the doomed
The sea of glass	The lake of fire
The resurrection of life	The resurrection of death
Promises to the overcomer	Woes to the impenitent
Christ on His throne forever	The devil cast into the lake of fire
God shall wipe away all tears	The seven last plagues
Jesus and the armies of heaven	The beast and the armies of earth

The New Jerusalem coming in glory	Babylon fallen in shame
Singing the song of Moses and the Lamb	Crying to the rocks and mountains
The white horse of victory	The pale horse of death
Saved by the Lamb that was slain	Destroyed by the Lion of Judah
The marriage supper of the Lamb	The fowls' supper on the captains of earth
The seven churches	The seven heads of the dragon
They that do His commandments	The sorcerers, murderers, and idolaters
The faithful and true Witness	The serpent which deceiveth the world
The seal of God	The mark of the beast
Clothed in white for they are worthy	Purple and scarlet, full of abominations
The virgin without fault	The harlot full of blasphemy
Even so, come, Lord Jesus	Hide us from the wrath of the Lamb

"The word of God abounds in sharp and striking contrasts. Sin and holiness are placed side by side, that beholding, we may shun the one and accept the other. . . . We are left free to copy either, as we choose. The fearful results of transgressing God's commands are placed over against the blessings resulting from obedience. We ourselves must decide whether we will suffer the one or enjoy the other." PK 676

IV. SYMBOLISM

A. The use of symbolism

1. In the nations of the Ancient East

2. In the Bible

a. The Old Testament

The sanctuary system

Prophecy

Divine instruction and reproof

b. The New Testament

The parables of Jesus

3. In the modern world

Coats of Arms, flags, advertising

B. Reasons for the use of symbolism

These are the same reasons used in teaching by parables.

1. Effective presentation of truth

"Men could learn of the unknown through the known; heavenly things were revealed through the earthly; God was made manifest in the likeness of men. So it was in Christ's teaching: the unknown was illustrated by the known; divine truths by earthly things with which the people were most familiar.

"Parable-teaching was popular, and commanded the respect and attention, not only of the Jews, but of the people of other nations. No more effective method of instruction could He have employed. . . .

"Jesus sought an avenue to every heart. By using a variety of illustrations, He not only presented truth in its different phases, but appealed to the different hearers. Their interest was aroused by figures drawn from the surroundings of their daily life. None who listened to the Saviour could feel that they were neglected or forgotten." COL 17,21,22

2. Impressive presentation of truth

"Jesus desired to awaken inquiry. He sought to arouse the careless, and impress truth upon the heart. . . .

"Christ had truths to present which the people were unprepared to accept, or even to understand. For this reason also He taught them in parables. By connecting His teaching with the scenes of life, experience, or nature, He secured their attention and impressed their hearts. Afterward, as they looked upon the objects that illustrated His lessons, they recalled the words of the divine Teacher. To minds that were open to the Holy Spirit, the significance of the Saviour's teaching unfolded more and more. Mysteries grew clear, and that which had been hard to grasp became evident." COL 21,22

3. Selective presentation of truth

- a. Revelation of certain aspects of truth
- b. All truth not to be understood at all times
- c. All truth not to be understood by all people

4. Provision of safeguards

- a. For the messenger of truth

"He had another reason for teaching in parables. Among the multitudes that gathered about Him, there were priests and rabbis, scribes and elders, Herodians and rulers, world-loving, bigoted, ambitious men, who desired above all things to find some accusation against Him. Their spies followed His steps day after day, to catch from His lips something that would cause His condemnation, and forever silence the One who seemed to draw the world after Him. The Saviour understood the character of these men, and He presented truth in such a way that they could find nothing by which to bring His case before the Sanhedrin. In

parables he rebuked the hypocrisy and wicked works of those who occupied high positions, and in figurative language clothed truth of so cutting character that had it been spoken in direct denunciation, they would not have listened to His words, and would speedily have put an end to His ministry. But while He evaded the spies, He made truth so clear that error was manifested, and the honest in heart were profited by His lessons." COL 22

b. For the people of God

c. For the Word of God

If plain language had been employed the powers of darkness would have tried to silence God's messages.

d. For the economy of God

The freeplay of historical actors would have been interfered with if their actions had been clearly foretold.

5. To encourage study and thought

C. The understanding of Biblical symbols

1. Important truths which may be understood revealed to John

"In figures and symbols, subjects of vast importance were presented to John, which he was to record, that the people of God living in his age and in future ages might have an intelligent understanding of the perils and conflicts before them." AA 583

2. Not to be discouraged by difficulties

"None should become discouraged in the study of the Revelation because of its apparently mystical symbols. 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not.'" Ed 191

3. Not to be interpreted according to own individual fancies

"The discord and division which exists among the churches of Christendom is in great measure due to the prevailing custom of wresting the Scriptures to support a favorite theory. Instead of carefully studying God's word with humility of heart to obtain a knowledge of His will, many seek only to discover something odd or original. . . .

"Others, who have an active imagination, seize upon the figures and symbols of Holy Writ, interpret to suit their fancy, with little regard to the testimony of Scripture as its own interpreter, and then they present their vagaries as the teachings of God's word."
4SP 343,344

4. Comparison of Scripture with Scripture
5. The symbols of the ancient East
6. Customs and practices of the ancient East

V. CLEARER AND FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF TRUTH

A. All truth not yet revealed

"New light will ever be revealed on the Word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that no more truth is to be revealed. The diligent prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the Word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God." CSW 34

"Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole. . . . The Lord wants to impart to us increased light." EGW Ms 18, 1880

"Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.

"The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what. . . .

"Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study, clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others.

"When God's people are at ease, and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that he will not favor them. It is His will that they should be ever moving forward, to receive the increased and ever-increasing light which is shining for them. The present attitude of the church is not pleasing to God. There has come in a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for more truth and greater light. . . . God wills that a voice shall be heard arousing his people to action." 5T 706-709

B. Possibility of error in past presentations

"There is no excuse for any one in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation." EGW, RH Dec 20, 1892

"In some of our important books that have been in print for years, and which have brought many to a knowledge of the truth, there may be found matters of minor importance that call for careful study and correction. Let such matters be considered by those regularly appointed to have the oversight of our publications. Let not these brethren, nor our canvassers, nor our ministers magnify these matters in such a way as to lessen the influence of these good soul-saving books." EGW Ms 11, 1910

"Long-cherished opinions must not be regarded as infallible. It was the unwillingness of the Jews to give up their long-established traditions that proved their ruin. They were determined not to see any flaw in their own opinions or in their expositions of the Scriptures; but however long men may have entertained certain views, if they are not clearly sustained by the written word, they should be discarded.....

"We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed." EGW, RH July 26, 1892

"Cherished opinions, long-practiced customs and habits, are to be brought to the test of the Scriptures; and if the word of God opposes your views, then, for your soul's sake, do not wrest the Scriptures, as many do in their soul's destruction in order to make them seem to bear a testimony in favor of their errors. Let your inquiry be, What is truth? not, What have I hitherto believed to be truth? Do not interpret the Scriptures in the light of your former belief, and assert that some doctrine of finite man is truth. Let your inquiry be, What saith the Scriptures?" EGW, RH Mar 25, 1902

"We must not think, 'Well, we have all the truth, we understand the main pillars of our faith, and we may rest on this knowledge.' The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light. . . .

"We do not claim that in the doctrines sought out by those who have studied the word of truth, there may not be some error, for no man that lives is infallible." EGW, RH Mar 25, 1890

"Some have feared that if in even a single point they acknowledge themselves in error, other minds would be led to doubt the whole theory of truth. Therefore they have felt that investigation should not be permitted, that it would tend to dissension and disunion. But if such is to be the result of investigation, the sooner it comes the better. If there are those whose faith in God's word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We cannot hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but One who is infallible--He who is the way, the truth, and the life." TM 105

C. The Bible to be studied with a teachable spirit

"In searching the Scriptures you are not to endeavour to interpret their utterances so as to agree with your preconceived ideas, but come as a learner to understand the foundation principles of the faith of Christ." SSW 62,63

"We should come to the investigation of God's word with a contrite heart, a teachable and prayerful spirit. We are not to think, as did the Jews, that our own ideas and opinions are infallible; not with the papists, that certain individuals are the sole guardians of truth and knowledge, that men have no right to search the Scriptures for themselves, but must accept the explanations given by the fathers of the church. We should not study the Bible for the purpose of sustaining our preconceived opinions, but with the single object of learning what God has said." TM 105

"We are not safe when we take a position that we will not accept anything else than that upon which we have settled as truth. We should take the Bible, and investigate it closely for ourselves. We should dig deep in the mine of God's word for truth." EGW, RH June 18, 1889

D. Diligent, careful research to bring clearer understanding of truth

"The more closely and studiously we search for the truth as for hidden treasure,--for there are bright and important truths of which we now only discern the shadows,--the more surely shall we advance in the light as He is in the light. We shall discern the brightness and value of truth to be as precious jewels. . . . There is a brightening glory for us as we advance, but which we shall never see unless we do advance." EGW Letter 147, 1897

"This book (Revelation) demands close, prayerful study, lest it be interpreted according to the ideas of men, and false construction be given to the sacred word of the Lord. . . .

"In the Revelation the deep things of God are portrayed. Those whose hearts are wholly sanctified to God will be brought nigh to see priceless gems through the telescope of faith. And as they apply the truth

to practice, the still deeper mysteries are stamped on the soul. Those thus honored are to communicate to others that which they have received. . . .

"Let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol in the Revelation, that it is of no use for them to search this book with deep earnest longing and intense desire to know the meaning of the truths it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John can and will give the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things, hereafter to be realized." EGW Let 16, 1900

E. The times before us to demand a clear understanding of truth

"Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice, but a change will come. The movements are now being made. The Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring the commandment-keeping people of God to notice. . . .

"Every position of our faith will be searched into and if we are not thorough Bible students, established, strengthened, settled, the wisdom of the world's great men will be too much for us." EGW Let 65, 1886

"We do not go deep enough in our search for truth. Every soul who believes present truth will be brought where he will be required to give a reason of the hope that is in him. The people of God will be called upon to stand before kings, princes, rulers, and great men of the earth, and they must know that they do know what is truth." EGW, RH Feb 18, 1890; TM 119

"When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe, but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith, and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth. . . .

"God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear. . . .

"It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny." 5T 707,708

F. Satan determined to keep light from shining

"There is yet much precious truth to be revealed to the people in this time of peril and darkness, but it is Satan's determined purpose to prevent the light of truth from shining into the hearts of men. If we would have the light that has been provided for us, we should show our desire for it by diligently searching the Word of God. Precious truths that have long been in obscurity are to be revealed in a light that will make manifest their sacred worth; for God will glorify His Word, that it may appear in a light in which we have never before beheld it. But those who profess to love the truth must put to the stretch their powers, that they may comprehend the deep things of the Word, that God may be glorified and His people may be blessed and enlightened." SSW 62

III

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Rev 1

II. INTRODUCTION Rev 1:1-3

A. Title Rev 1:1

1. Apokalupsis Iesou Christou

Moffatt: "A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God granted him for his servants, to show them what must come to pass very soon; he disclosed it by sending it through his angel to his servant John."

Am Tr: "A revelation made by Jesus Christ which God gave him to disclose to his slaves of what must very soon happen. He sent and communicated it by his angel to his slave John."

NEB: "This is the revelation given by God to Jesus Christ. It was given to him so that he might show his servants what must shortly happen. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John..."

Knox "This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God has allowed him to make known to his servants, of things which must soon find their due accomplishment. And he has sent his angel to disclose the pattern of it to his servant John."

a. Meaning: An uncovering, a revelation, a disclosure of truth.

b. Usages of "apokalupsis" in the New Testament.

The term "apokalupsis" is used eighteen times and is translated as follows:

revelation	14 times	Rom 2:5; 16:25; 1 Cor 14:6,26 2 Cor 12:1,7; Gal 1:12; 2:2; Eph 1:17; 3:3; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Pet 1:13; 4:13; Rev 1:1.
lighten	1 time	Luke 2:32
manifestation	1 "	Rom 8:19
coming	1 "	1 Cor 1:7
appearing	1 "	1 Pet 1:7

B. Purpose of the book Rev 1:1

C. God's angel Rev 1:1; DA 98,99

D. The writer

1. His identity

a. Testimony of Revelation--John Rev 1:1,4,9; 21:2; 22:8

The book of Revelation proclaims itself to be the product of John. There is no statement as to who this John is, no claim that it is John the apostle, but it can be none other than he. No one else would have signed himself so simply without further explanation. John was at this time the only surviving apostle of Jesus, and the simple signature "John" attached to the book would indicate immediately, unless a gross fraud were involved, that John the apostle was the writer. It is hardly likely that so important a revelation as is contained in this book would have been intrusted to some insignificant and unknown individual also bearing the name of "John".

b. Testimony of the church fathers

Papias c 120 A.D.

Andreas of Cappadocia (6th century) in a Commentary on the Apocalypse declared that Papias, Irenaeus, Methodius, and Hippolytus had borne witness to its credibility, and cited a comment by him on Rev 12: 7-9. Irenaeus (c 180 A.D.) declared Papias to have been a hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp (Adv. Haer. V. 33). It is hardly likely that we would have such testimony regarding Papias unless it had been quite generally understood that he regarded Revelation as the production of John the apostle.

Justin Martyr c 140 A.D.

Spoke of Revelation as the work of "John, one of the apostles of Christ." (Dialogue 81:4)

Irenaeus c 180 A.C.

Repeatedly and positively declared that Revelation was written by John a disciple of Christ. (Adv. Haer. II 22.5; III 3.4; IV 20.11; 30.4; V 26.1; 35.2; Euseb Histo III 23.3; IV 14.6; V 8.4; V 25.16)

Clement c 200 A.D.

Clement of Alexandria, many of whose writings are extant, several times quotes the book of Revelation, and in a reference to Rev 21: 21, ~~speak~~ speaks of these words as those of the apostle. (Paed B II)

Tertullian c 200 A.C.

Tertullian, one of the most learned of the Latin fathers, bears ample testimony to the Apocalypse, and expressly speaks of it as the work of the apostle John. (Adv Mar, III 14.24)

Hippolytus c 220 A.D.

Wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse, a work of such weight and

authority that it is regarded by some as having been largely responsible for the general acceptance from thence onward of the Apocalypse in the Christian Church. On a marble statue of Hippolytus, dug up near Rome in 1551 and now in the Vatican, is a list of his writings, one of them being recorded as "On St. John's Gospel and Apocalypse."

Origen c 230 A.D.

Included the Apocalypse in his canon of inspired Scripture. Concerning John he wrote as one "who leaned on the breast of Jesus," who "left us a Gospel," and who "wrote likewise the Revelation, though ordered to seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered." Quoted by Eusebius, HE VI 25.

While the attitude of the early church was almost universally in favor of the authorship of the Apocalypse by John the apostle, dissentient views began to be introduced toward the close of the second century. From the third century on the rejection of the apostolic authorship of Revelation grew increasingly frequent in the East. While accepted almost unanimously from the first in the church of the West, it was regarded with considerable skepticism for a period among the Greek and Syrian churches. Thus the Apocalypse is not found in the Syriac Bible nor in the earliest forms of the Egyptian and Armenian versions of the New Testament. Cyril of Jerusalem (c 380 A.D.) does not include it in his list, while it is omitted by such writers of Antioch as Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret.

It will thus be seen that the early, reliable testimony of the church fathers in favor of the Johannine authorship of Revelation is very strong indeed. As the church began to enter a period of decline, however, doubts were introduced concerning its reliability and canonicity.

- c. Testimony of language and style
- d. Testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy

"John lived to be very old. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and the ruin of the stately temple. The last survivor of the disciples who had been intimately connected with the Saviour, his message had great influence in setting forth the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. . .

"John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned 'for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.' . . .

"Here, shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from the active labors of former years, he had the companionship of God,

Christ and the heavenly angels, and from them he received instruction for the church for all future time. The events that would take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history were outlined before him; and there he wrote out the visions he received from God." AA 569-571

2. The witness of John Rev 1:2; AA 539-592

Knox: "One who bore witness for God's Word, and for the truth concerning Jesus Christ, as his own eyes had seen it."

"John could talk of the Father's love as no other of the disciples could. He revealed to his fellow-men that which he felt in his own soul, representing in his character the attributes of God. The glory of the Lord was expressed in his face. The beauty of holiness which had transformed him shone with a Christlike radiance from his countenance. In adoration and love he beheld the Saviour until likeness to Christ and fellowship with Him became his one desire, and in his character was reflected the character of his Master. . .

"He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest. In beautiful language and with a musical voice he told of the words and works of Christ, speaking in a way that impressed the hearts of those who heard him. . .

"As a witness for Christ, John entered into no controversy, no wearisome contention. He declared what he knew, what he had seen and heard. He had been intimately associated with Christ, had listened to His teachings, had witnessed His mighty miracles. Few could see the beauties of Christ's character as John saw them. For him the darkness had passed away; on him the true light was shining. His testimony in regard to the Saviour's life and death was clear and forcible. Out of the abundance of a heart overflowing with love for the Saviour he spoke; and no power could stay his words." AA 545,546,555

E. The time of writing

1. Emperors of Rome during the New Testament period

Augustus	d. Aug 19, 14 A.D.
Tiberius	d. Mar 16, 37
Caligula	Mar 16, 37 to Jan 24, 41
Claudius	Jan 24, 41 to Oct 13, 54
Nero	Oct 13, 54 to Apr 30, 68
Galba	d. Jan 15, 69
Otho	d. Apr 16, 69
Vitellius	d. Dec 21, 69
Vespasian	proclaimed emperor in Alexandria, July 1, 69
Titus	June 23, 79 to Sep 13, 81
Domitian	Sept 13, 81 to Sept 18, 96

2. Conflicting theories as to the time of the Apocalypse

a. During the reign of Claudius

- b. During the reign of Nero
 - c. During the reign of Domitian
 - d. Composite hypotheses
3. Evidence for the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.)

a. The church fathers

The early church fathers definitely believed that the book of Revelation was written during the reign of the emperor Domitian. Eusebius summed up the tradition of the early church on this subject and assigned the exile of John to Patmos during the latter part of Domitian's reign. Among the church fathers who may be cited on this point are the following:

Irenaeus (c 180 A.D.) "At the end of the reign of Domitian."

Clement of Alexandria (c 200 A.C.)

Origen (c 230 A.D.)

Victorinus (c 290)

Jerome (c 380) In the fourteenth year of the reign of Domitian

b. Spirit of Prophecy

"John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. . . .

"The emperor Domitian was filled with rage. He could neither dispute the reasoning of Christ's faithful advocate, nor match the power that attended his utterance of truth; yet he determined that he would silence his voice. . . .

"By the emperor's decree John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned 'for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.'" AA 569,570

c. Opinions of modern authorities

"The varied historical evidence that has been inquired into all concurs to confirm the date originally and expressly assigned by Irenaeus to the Apocalypse, as seen and written at the close of the reign of Domitian; that is, near the end of the year 95, or beginning of 96. Accordingly, the great majority hitherto of the most approved ecclesiastical historians and biblical critics, alike Roman Catholic and Protestant, French, German, and English,--writers who have had no bias on the point in question, one way or the other, from any particular cherished theory of Apocalyptic interpretation,--for example, Tillemont, Dupin, Boussuet, Le Clerc,--Turretin, Spanheim, Basnage, Lampe, Mosheim,--Mill, Whitby, Lardner, etc.,--have all alike adopted it. . . . We may, I am persuaded, depend on its correctness, with as unhesitating and implicit confidence, as on the truth of almost any of the lesser facts recorded in history."

E. B. Elliott, Horae Apocalypticae, 5th ed., I, 47,48

4. The reign of Domitian

Domitian was the second son of the emperor Vespasian (69-79 A.D.) and the brother of Titus (79-81 A.D.). He was of a sour and taciturn disposition, self-assertive, and ambitious for power. He had been jealous of his brother, and when the throne suddenly was thrust upon him became a frank despot, taking the titles of dominus and deus. In spite of his industry, administrative and military ability, and sound judgment, he was hated for his despotic spirit and went down into history as a cruel tyrant. He deliberately snubbed the senate, and rarely summoned it except to declare his own decisions. Vast sums of money were required for the wars in Britain, Germany, and on the Danube and these were squeezed out of the pockets of the Roman nobility, thus incurring their intense displeasure.

Domitian was very active in fostering the interests of the national religion. He opposed the spread of Oriental cults, but built a temple to the Egyptian gods Isis and Sarapis. The Jews were permitted to worship in their own synagogues but were required to pay tribute for the temple of Jupiter. A Jewish uprising took place in 85-86 A.D., and a persecution of the Christians occurred in 95 A.D. From Domitian's reign onward emperor worship was more actively imposed on Christians as a test of loyalty.

The last years of the emperor were embittered with plots and suspicions. Executions resulted only in new plots and still more tyrannical reprisals. Domitian finally met his death at the hands of a slave of his wife. The nobility hailed his death with open delight while the senate responded by condemning his memory and ordering the erasure of his name from all monuments.

5. The age in which the Apocalypse was written

a. The Jews

- (1) Jerusalem fallen
- (2) The temple destroyed
- (3) The nation desolate

b. The Church

- (1) Rapid spread of Christianity
- (2) Persecution
- (3) Apostasy and spiritual decline

c. The Empire

- (1) Offense and defense
- (2) Intolerance and persecution

F. God's blessing on the reader Rev 1:3

RSV: "Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near."

Moffatt: "Blessed is he who reads aloud and blessed they who hear the words of this prophecy and who lay to heart what is written in it; for the time is near."

III. SALUTATION Rev 1:4-8

A. To the seven churches

1. Biblical use of the number seven

Gen 2:2	Seven day week
Gen 7:2	Clean animals taken into the ark by sevens
Ex 25:37	Seven lamps for the candlestick
Lev 4:6	Blood sprinkled seven times
Lev 14:16	Oil sprinkled seven times
Lev 23:15	Seven sabbaths
Lev 23:39	Feast of seven days
Num 12:15	Miriam shut from camp seven days
Deut 15:1	Release by creditors after seven years
Josh 6:4	Seven priests before the ark
Josh 6:15	Jericho compassed seven times
Ruth 4:15	Seven sons
Job 42:8	Seven bullocks and seven rams
Ps 119:164	Praise to God seven times a day
Acts 6:3	Seven deacons

2. The number seven in the Apocalypse

Rev 1:4	Seven churches
Rev 1:4	Seven spirits
Rev 1:12	Seven candlesticks
Rev 1:16	Seven stars
Rev 5:1	Seven seals
Rev 5:6	Seven horns and seven eyes
Rev 8:2	Seven angels with seven trumpets
Rev 10:3	Seven thunders
Rev 12:3	Seven heads with seven crowns
Rev 15:1	Seven angels with seven last plagues
Rev 17:9	Seven mountains
Rev 17:10	Seven kings

3. The significance of the number seven

"The number seven indicates completeness." AA 585

4. The significance of the seven churches

- a. Seven local churches in Asia Minor
- b. Seven ages of the church

"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian era." AA 585
- c. Seven conditions of the church
- d. The church universal

B. The Christian salutation

1. Biblical usage

- a. Jesus John 20:19,21,26; 14:27; 16:33
 - b. Peter 1 Pet 1:1,2; 5:14; 2 Pet 1:2
 - c. John 2 John 3; 3 John 14
 - d. Jude Jude 2
 - e. Paul Rom 1:7; 16:20; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; 13:11;
Gal 1:3; 6:16,18; Eph 1:2; 6:23,24; Phil 1:2;
Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; 3:16,18;
1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3
2. The spirit of peace is the spirit of God and the atmosphere of heaven 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20; 2 Cor 13:11; Rom 14:17; 15:33
 3. The source of peace Gal 5:22; Isa 26:3; 32:17,18; 57:19; Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14
 4. No peace to the wicked Isa 57:20,21; Gal 5:19-21

C. The trinity

1. God the Father V 4

- a. The eternal, self-existent One Isa 44:6; 57:15; Jer 10:10; Ps 90:2; Deut 33:27; John 5:26; 1 Tim 1:17; Rev 4:8

2. The Holy Spirit V 4

- a. The seven Spirits of God Rev 3:1; 4:5; 5:6 Thus is pictured the fulness and perfection of the Holy Spirit in all His attributes.
- b. The eyes of God Rev 5:6; Zech 3:9; 4:10; Prov 15:3; Heb 4:13; 2 Chr 16:9; Ps 139:1-10

"The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.' Among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, He sees men and women who are praying for light and knowledge. . .

"The Holy Spirit is implanting the grace of Christ in the heart of many a noble seeker after truth, quickening his sympathies contrary to his nature, contrary to his former education. The 'Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' is shining in his soul; and this Light, if heeded, will guide his feet to the kingdom of God." PK 376,377

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all." DA 669

3. Jesus Christ Rev 1:5-8

a. The faithful witness Rev 1:5; 3:14; John 18:37;
Isa 55:4

b. The first begotten of the dead Rev 1:5; Col 1:15-18;
Ps 89:27; 1 Cor 15:20; Rom 8:29

NEB: "The first-born of the dead."

Knox: "First-born of the risen dead."

c. Prince of the kings of the earth Rev 1:5; Ps 89:27;
Isa 55:4; Eph 1:20-22; Phil 2:7-11

d. Him that loved us Rev 1:5; John 10:11; 13:34; 15:13,14;
Gal 2:20

e. Washed us from our sins in His blood Rev 1:5;
1 Pet 1:18,19; 1 John 1:7,9

f. Made us kings and priests unto God Rev 1:6; 5:10;
2 Tim 2:12; 1 Pet 2:5

NEB: "Who made of us a royal house, to serve as priests of his God and Father."

g. Glory and dominion forever Rev 1:6; Heb 1:8,9;
1 Tim 6:14-16; Isa 9:6,7

h. His second coming Rev 1:7

(1) With clouds Matt 26:64; 24:30,31; Acts 1:9-11
Luke 21:27; John 1:51

(2) Every eye shall see Him Matt 24:30

(3) They also which pierced Him Zech 12:9,10; Matt 23:39;
GC 642,643; DA 580; EW 53

(4) All kindreds shall wail because of Him Zech 12:11;
Rev 6:15-17; Isa 2:19-21.

All who reject Christ, of whatever age or race, shall wail as they realize, too late, their awful mistake

i. The Alpha and Omega Rev 1:8; Mic 5:2; Prov 8:22-30;
John 1:1; Col 1:16,17

IV. JOHN'S OPENING VISION Rev 1:9-20

A. The circumstances of the vision Vss 9,10

1. The prophet--John V 9

- a. His situation--in tribulation and exile for his witness for Christ

"The rulers of the Jews were filled with bitter hatred against John for his unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. . . . In order that the miracles and teachings of Jesus might be forgotten, the voice of the bold witness must be silenced.

"John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. . . .

"The emperor Domitian was filled with rage. He could neither dispute the reasoning of Christ's faithful advocate, nor match the power that attended his utterance of truth; yet he determined that he would silence his voice.

"John was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil; but the Lord preserved the life of His faithful servant, even as He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace." AA 569,570

2. The locality--the isle of Patmos V 9

Patmos is a small, rocky island in the Greek Archipelago, known today as Patino. It lies off the southwest coast of Asia Minor, about forty miles from Miletus. The island is about ten miles long and six miles wide. It is nearly treeless. There is one mountain with a height of eight hundred feet. The present population is about three thousand. Patmos was used by the Romans as a place of exile for the lower classes of criminals. There are many ruins of great antiquity.

"By the emperor's decree John was banished to the isle of Patmos. . .

"Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals; but to the servant of God this gloomy abode became the gate of heaven. . .

"He was now surrounded by scenes that to many would appear gloomy and uninteresting; but to John it was otherwise. While his surroundings might be desolate and barren, the blue heavens that bent above him were as bright and beautiful as the skies above his loved Jerusalem. In the wild, rugged rocks, in the mysteries of the deep, in the glories of the firmament, he read important lessons. All bore the message of God's power and glory.

"All around him the apostle beheld witnesses to the flood that had deluged the earth because the inhabitants ventured to transgress

the law of God. The rocks thrown up from the great deep and from the earth, by the breaking forth of the waters, brought vividly to his mind the terrors of that awful out-pouring of God's wrath. In the voice of many waters--deep calling unto deep--the prophet heard the voice of the Creator. The sea, lashed to fury by the merciless winds, represented to him the wrath of an offended God. The mighty waves, in their terrible commotion, restrained within limits appointed by an invisible hand, spoke of the control of an infinite Power. And in contrast he realized the weakness and folly of mortals, who, though but worms of the dust, glory in their supposed wisdom and strength, and set their hearts against the Ruler of the universe, as if God were altogether such a one as themselves. By the rocks he was reminded of Christ, the Rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without fear. . .

"Though banished from the scenes of his former labor, he did not cease to bear witness to the truth. Even in Patmos he made friends and converts." AA 570-573

3. The time--on the Lord's day V 10; Ex 20:8-11; Isa 58:13; Matt 12:8; Mark 2:27,28

The word translated "Lord's" in this passage is not a noun, but an adjective, "kuriakee," in the dative case. Since there is no suitable adjectival form of the noun "Lord" in English, the possessive form "Lord's" is used. It means "pertaining to the Lord." In New Testament times the Roman emperor began to be called "Lord" and "Son of God." The term "kuriakos" was common in Egypt and Asia Minor during the period of the Empire, and meant "Imperial." Thus there was an imperial treasury, and an imperial service. Inscriptions show certain days of the month with special names, given them in honor of the emperor. The meaning in all probability was something like "Emperor Day." John's use of the distinctive title "Lord's Day" for the Sabbath of God was no doubt in conscious protest against the growing imperial cult with its "Emperor Day."

"It was on the Sabbath that the Lord of glory appeared to the exiled apostle. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John on Patmos as when he was preaching to the people in the towns and cities of Judea." AA 581

4. The voice--like a trumpet V 10
5. The Speaker--the Alpha and Omega, Christ Vss 8,11

B. Instruction to John V 11

1. To write his vision in a book
2. To send it to the seven churches in Asia

"It was Christ who bade the apostle record that which was to be opened before him. 'What thou seest, write in a book,' He

commanded, 'and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.' . . .

"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian era. The number seven indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world." AA 585

C. The vision

1. Seven golden candlesticks Rev 1:12
2. The One in the midst of the candlesticks
 - a. Like unto the Son of man V 13
 - b. His appearance Vss 13-16
 - (1) Clothed with a garment down to the foot - His covering of righteousness
 - (2) A golden girdle - denoting royalty
 - (3) Head and hair white like wool and snow - portraying His eternal being.
 - (4) Eyes as a flame of fire - symbolic of His penetrating insight
 - (5) Feet like fine brass - a refining fire
 - (6) Voice as a sound of many waters - a voice of majestic power
 - (7) Seven stars in His right hand - His care for His people
 - (8) A sharp two-edged sword going from His mouth - His power to execute judgment
 - (9) His countenance shining as the sun - expressive of celestial glory
 - c. Effect upon John V 17
 - d. Jesus' response to John Vss 17-19
 - (1) Placed His right hand upon John
 - (2) His words to John
 - (a) Fear not
 - (b) I am the first and the last
 - (c) I am he that liveth, and was dead
 - (d) I am alive for evermore
 - (e) I have the keys of hell and of death
 - (f) Write the things which thou hast seen
 - 1) The things which are - current issues
 - 2) The things which shall be hereafter
 - e. Striking similarities with other appearances of Jesus

- (1) To Daniel Dan 10:5-12; GC 470,471

Daniel

John

A certain man	One like the Son of man
Clothed in linen	Garment down to the foot
Loins girded with fine gold	A golden girdle
Face as lightning	Countenance as the sun
Eyes as lamps of fire	Eyes as a flame of fire
Feet like polished brass	Feet like fine brass
Voice like of a multitude	Voice as sound of many waters
No strength, face to ground	Fell at His feet as dead
Hand touched him	Laid His right hand on him
Fear not	Fear not

- (2) To Paul Acts 9:3-7; 26:12-16

- (3) To the disciples, Jesus transfigured Matt 17:2;
Mark 9:3

- (4) To Ellen G. White EW 15,16,51

Ellen G. White

John

Hair white and curly	Hair white like wool and snow
Feet like fire	Feet like brass burned in furnace
Eyes as flame of fire	Eyes as flame of fire
Robe whiter than whitest white	Garment down to the foot
Countenance brighter than sun at noonday	Countenance as sun shining in his strength

- f. The appearance of God the Father Dan 7:9; Heb 1:3

D. The meaning of the vision Rev 1:20

1. Seven candlesticks--the seven churches V 20

- a. Jesus the source of light John 1:4,5,9; 8:12

- b. The church the light of the world Matt 5:14-16;
Isa 60: 1-3; Zec 4:2-6

2. Seven stars--the angels of the seven churches V 20
Mal 2:7; Hag 1:13; 2 Cor 8:23; Gal 4:14; Heb 1:7,14

- a. Meaning of the Greek word "angel," angelos, according to
Liddell and Scott: A messenger, envoy, one that announces or
tells, an angel

"God's ministers are symbolized by the seven stars, which He who is the first and the last has under His special care and protection. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with these ministers of God, who are to represent the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are under God's

control. He fills them with light. He guides and directs their movements. If He did not, they would become fallen stars. So with His ministers. They are but instruments in His hands, and all the good they accomplish is done through His power." GW 13,14

3. Jesus in the midst of the candlesticks--His presence with His people Matt 28:20

"Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolized His relation to the churches. He is in constant communication with His people. He knows their true state. He observes their order, their piety, their devotion. Although He is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth. With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true watchman in the Lord's house, the true warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light." AA 586

4. The garment of Jesus--His robe of righteousness Rev 3:4,5,18

"It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.

"The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their Heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God, it would ever have continued to enshroud them. . .

"Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul." COL 310,311

5. The sword from Jesus' mouth--His word Heb 4:12; Eph 6:17; John 12:48

"Out of His mouth issues a sharp two-edged sword, an emblem of the power of His word." AA 582

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, pierces the heart of the sinner, and cuts it in pieces. When the theory of the truth is repeated without its sacred influence being felt upon the soul of the speaker, it has no force upon the hearers, but is rejected as error, the speaker making himself responsible for the loss of souls." 4T 441

6. Eyes as a flame of fire--His penetrating gaze 2 Chr 16:9;
Heb 4:13; Eze 7:4,9; Amos 9:8; Rev 5:6

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through." EW 16

"It is not possible for the least item of our conduct to escape the observation of the One who says, 'I know thy works.' The depths of every heart are open to the inspection of God. Every action, every purpose, every word, is as distinctly marked as though there were only one individual in the whole universe, and all the watchfulness and scrutiny of God were employed on his deportment." 5T 627

7. Feet like unto fine brass--cleansing and purifying by fire
Mic 1:3-5; Hab 3:5; Job 40:12; Isa 63:1-4

Knox: "His feet like orichalc melted in the crucible."

Weymouth: "His feet were like silver-bronze when it is white-hot in a furnace."

Syriac: "His feet were like fine brass, flaming in a furnace."

"His feet had the appearance of fire; in his right hand was a sharp sickle, in his left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire which searched his children through and through." 1T 60

"There appears in the east a small black cloud, . . . its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. . . Before His presence, 'all faces are turned into paleness.' Upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair." GC 640,641

"Jesus does not smite them with the whip of cords, but in His hand that simple scourge seems terrible as a flaming sword. . . In cleansing the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin. . . 'Who may abide in the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.'" DA 160,161

"The wicked saw what they had lost; and fire was breathed from God upon them, and consumed them. . . The same fire from God that consumed the wicked, purified the earth." EW 54

E. The significance of the symbolism presented to John

1. John often saw symbols rather than realities
2. The greatness and glory of the realities represented by the symbols

"The heavenly temple, the abiding-place of the King of kings, where 'thousand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him,' that temple filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration,--no earthly structure could represent its vastness and its glory." PP 357

"On each end of the mercy seat was fixed a cherub of pure, solid gold. Their faces were turned toward each other, and were looking reverentially downward toward the mercy seat which represents all the heavenly angels looking with interest and reverence to the law of God." 1SP 272

IV

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 2 and 3
- II. THE PATTERN OF THE LETTERS
- A. The one addressed
1. Always to the "angel" or leader of the church
 - angelos--one sent, a messenger, an angel
 - angelo--to tell, to announce
 - angalia--a message, doctrine, or precept
 2. God speaks to His people through His messengers

Moses	Ex 4:12-16
Isaiah	Isa 6:8,9
Jeremiah	Jer 1:7-9
Ezekiel	Eze 1:3; 2:1-7
Haggai	Hag 1:1
- B. The divine Author
1. Some appropriate characteristic
 2. The dual work of Christ and the high priest
 - a. To represent the people before God
 - b. To represent God before the people
 3. The continuous service of Christ
- C. Message of praise and commendation
1. God's knowledge and consideration of the merits of His people
Ps 1:6; 37:18; Acts 13:22

"Nothing in this world is so dear to the heart of God as His church." PK 590

"Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts." AA 12

"The church is very precious in God's sight. He values it, not for its external advantages, but for the sincere piety which distinguishes it from the world. He estimates it according to the growth of the members in the knowledge of Christ, according to their progress in spiritual experience." COL 298

D. Message of reproof and condemnation

1. God's complete and sympathetic knowledge of the weaknesses of His people Ps 103:8-14

"It is not possible for the least item of our conduct to escape the observation of the One who says, 'I know thy works.' The depths of every heart are open to the inspection of God. Every action, every purpose, every word, is as distinctly marked as though there were only one individual in the whole universe, and all the watchfulness and scrutiny of God were employed on his department."
5T 627

2. The reason for God's correction and reproofs Prov 3:11,12

"With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true watchman in the Lord's house; the true warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light." AA 586

3. God's messages of reproof always accompanied by messages of love

"At the time when John was given this revelation, many had lost their first love of gospel truth. But in His mercy God did not leave the church to continue in a backslidden state. In a message of infinite tenderness He revealed His love for them. . .

"The church was defective, and in need of stern reproof and chastisement; and John was inspired to record messages of warning and reproof and entreaty to those who, losing sight of the fundamental principles of the gospel, should imperil their hope of salvation. But always the words of rebuke that God finds it necessary to send are spoken in tender love, and with the promise of peace to every penitent believer." AA 587

E. Message of counsel and exhortation

1. The supreme value of counsel from God Prov 3:1,2;
4:10-13, 20-22
2. The blessings to man from abiding in the promises of God
3. The promises restricted to the overcomer

III. THE NEED OF THE CHURCH FOR THE SEVEN LETTERS

- A. Spiritual life and vigor
- B. Spiritual decline
- C. Period of missionary activity

- D. Coldness and self-satisfaction
- E. Rising tide of apostasy
- F. Bewilderment and discouragement

"And for those who in the midst of conflict should maintain their faith in God, the prophet was given the words of commendation and promise:
'I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.'" AA 587,588

IV. THE APPLICATION OF THE SEVEN MESSAGES

"The nature of the vision in which John received these epistles, assumes that not these seven Churches alone, but in them the entire Church, is to be contemplated. . . .

"These seven Churches, then, besides being literal historical Churches, stand for the entire Christian body, in all periods of its history. . . .

"In the first place, the seven Churches represent seven phases or periods in the Church's history, stretching from the time of the apostles to the coming again of Christ, the characteristics of which are set forth partly in the names of these Churches, but more fully in the epistles addressed to them. There has been an Ephesian period--a period of warmth and love and labor for Christ, dating directly from the apostles, in which defection began by the gradual cooling of the love of some, the false professions of others, and the incoming of undue exaltations of the clergy and Church offices. Then came the Smyrna period--the era of martyrdom, and of the sweet savor unto God of faithfulness unto death, but marked with further developments of defection in the establishment of castes and orders, the license of Judaizing propensities, and consequent departures from the true simplicities of the Gospel. Then followed the Pergamite period, in which true faith more and more disappeared from view, and clericalism gradually formed itself into a system, and the Church united with the world, and Babylon began to rear itself aloft. Then came the Thyatiran period--the age of purple and glory for the corrupt priesthood, and of darkness for the truth; the age of effeminacy and clerical domination, when the Church usurped the place of Christ, and the witnesses of Jesus were given to dungeons, stakes and inquisitions; the age of the enthronement of the false prophetess, reaching to the days of Luther and the Reformation. Then came the Sardian period--the age of separation and return to the rule of Christ; the age of comparative freedom from Baalam and his doctrines, from the Nicolaitans and their tenets, from Jezebel and her fornications; an age of many worthy names, but marked with deadness withal, and having much of which to repent; an age covering the spiritual lethargy of the Protestant centuries before the great evangelical movements of the last hundred years, which brought us the Philadelphian era, marked by a closer adherence to the written word, and more fraternity among Christians, but now rapidly giving place to Laodicean lukewarmness, self-sufficiency, empty profession, and false peace, in which the day of judgment is to find the unthinking multitude who suppose they are Christians and are not. . . .

"Everything which marks one of these periods pertains also, in a lower degree, to every period. It is simply the predominance, and greater or less vigor, of one element at one time, which distinguishes the seven eras from each other. The seven periods, in other words, coexist in every period, as well as in succession. . .

"In the next place, the seven Churches represent seven varieties of Christians, both true and false. Every professor of Christianity is either an Ephesian in his religious qualities, a Smyrnaote, a Pergamite, a Thyatiran, a Sardian, a Philadelphian, or a Laodicean.

"Nor are we to look for one sort in one period, or in one denomination, only. Every age, every denomination, and nearly every congregation, contains specimens of each. . .

"I thus find the seven Churches in every Church, giving to these Epistles a directness of application to ourselves, and to professing Christians of every age, of the utmost solemnity and importance." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, 1, 142-145

V. THE SEVEN LETTERS

A. The first letter Rev 2:1-7

1. To Ephesus--The church of the apostles, active and pure

a. Meaning--Desirable

b. Period--31-100

c. The city

(1) Location

In Lydia, on west coast of Asia Minor
At mouth of Cayster River, on hills overlooking the sea
Excellent harbor, but today completely silted
Main gateway to Roman province of Asia

(2) Climate

(3) Religion

(4) History

The city was founded by the Ionian Greeks, and in the 6th century B.C. fell into the hands of Croesus, King of Lydia. It experienced Persian rule until liberated by Alexander the Great. The Seleucid kings then ruled over it for a time. It was given to the Kingdom of Pergamum by the Romans after the Battle of Magnesia in 190 B.C., and returned to the Romans in 133 B.C., when the Kingdom of Pergamum became the Province of Asia. Rebuilt by Tiberius after a severe earthquake in 29 A.D., it enjoyed a dominant position in Asia Minor for several centuries, and became the seat of a Christian bishop.

Paul preached the gospel in Ephesus between 56 and 58 A.D., encountering much opposition (Acts 19:1-21). As the result of his ministry, a prosperous Christian church was established there. To this church, then, John was ordered to write the first of the seven letters.

From Paul's letter to the Ephesians, little can be learned of specific conditions in the church, since that epistle was apparently written for the benefit of all churches in the province. In it Paul stresses what the Church means to Christ and the total plan of salvation

"Ephesus is a mere desolation now, altogether waste, without an inhabitant. The great market-place, where the exchanges of a renowned metropolis were once conducted, I saw planted with tobacco, unenclosed, unattended, weedy, and forsaken. The great lizards, as we rode along, darted about in amazement at the sight of man, over fallen columns of porphyry and marble, and splendid cornices and capitals, which were once the admiration of the world. And silence, malaria and death brooded upon what was proudly styled 'the first of cities'. . . Remnants of cyclopean walls, causeways, temples, streets, and houses line the plains and hills and mountain-sides of a vast area which once was filled with their glory; but the whole place is a complete desolation, enveloped in a poisonous atmosphere, and tenanted only by things unclean and vile."
J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, 1, 121,122

(5) Archaeological disclosures

d. The church

- (1) The ministry of Paul Acts 19:1-20:1, 16-38;
1 Cor 16:8; Ephesians
- (2) Later history

2. The Writer--the One holding the seven stars and walking among the seven churches Rev 2:1

3. Commendation for Ephesus

- a. Their works and labor Rev 2:2; Acts 19:18-26; Col 1:23

"At the first the experience of the church of Ephesus was marked with childlike simplicity and fervor. . .

"Filled with love for their Redeemer, they sought as their highest aim to win souls to Him. . .

"The members of the church were united in sentiment and action. Love for Christ was the golden chain that bound them together. They followed on to know the Lord more and still more perfectly, and brightness and comfort and peace were revealed in their

lives. They visited the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and kept themselves unspotted from the world. . .

"In every city the work was carried forward. Souls were converted, and in their turn felt that they must tell of the inestimable treasure. They could not rest till the beams of light which had illumined their minds were shining upon others. Multitudes of unbelievers were made acquainted with the reason of the Christian's hope." 6T 421,422

- b. Their patient endurance Rev 2:3; Acts 4; 5:17-42; 6:7-12; 7:55-60; 8:1-4; 2 Cor 11:24-30

Moffatt: "I know that you are enduring patiently and have borne up for my sake and have not wearied." Rev 2:3

Knox: "Yes, thou endurest, and all thou hast borne for the love of my name has not made thee despair."

JB: "I know all about you; how hard you work and how much you put up with."

- c. Hating the deeds of the Nicolaitanes Rev 2:6

The Nicolaitanes were an early Gnostic sect who mistakenly traced their origin back to Nicolas, one of the seven deacons (Acts 6:5). They held certain impure doctrines and lived impure lives. According to Clement of Alexandria they held to the pernicious principle that the lower passions were to be subdued by indulgence. They appear to have taught that deeds of the flesh do not affect the purity of the soul.

4. The weakness of Ephesus--a period of waning love Rev 2:4

"In a single generation the gospel was carried to every nation under heaven. But little by little a change came. The church lost her first love. She became selfish and ease-loving. The spirit of worldliness was cherished. The enemy cast his spell upon those to whom God had given light for a world in darkness." 8T 26

"After a time the zeal of the believers began to wane, and their love for God and for one another grew less. Coldness crept into the church. . .

"Piety was rapidly waning, and Satan seemed about to gain the ascendancy over those who claimed to be followers of Christ.

"It was at this critical time in the history of the church that John was sentenced to banishment. Never had his voice been needed by the church as now." AA 580,581

5. The counsel and warning to Ephesus Rev 2:5

6. The promise to Ephesus

7. The Ephesus message for Christians today

"The call to the gospel feast is first to be given in the highways. It must be given to those who claim to be in the highways of Christian experience,--to the members of the different churches. 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.' Rev 2:7. In these churches there are true worshipers and there are false worshipers. A work must be done for those who have fallen from their first love, who have lost their first zeal and interest in spiritual things." 6T 76

"I am instructed to say that these words (Rev 2:4,5) are applicable to Seventh-day Adventist churches in their present condition. The love of God has been lost, and this means the absence of love for one another. Self, self, self is cherished, and is striving for the supremacy. . .

"A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. . .

"God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love revives in their hearts, His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them, and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. Then a multitude not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people will unite with them in serving the Redeemer." EGW RH Feb 25, 1902

B. The second letter Rev 2:8-11

1. To Smyrna--The church persecuted but steadfast

a. Meaning--Traditionally explained as meaning "myrrh," but it is much more likely that the city was named after an Anatolian goddess.

b. Period--100-313

c. The city

(1) Location

35 miles north of Ephesus

At the head of a beautiful bay with a splendid harbor
Mount Pagos with fortified acropolis, behind the city
A street called "the street of gold," circling the hill

"Smyrna, the recipient of the most laudatory of all the Seven Letters, is the greatest of all the cities of Anatolia. At the head of its gulf, which stretches far up into the land, it is at present the one important seaport, and will remain always the greatest seaport, of the

whole country. . . No city of the East Mediterranean lands gives the same impression of brightness and life, as one looks at it from the water, and beholds it spread out on the gently sloping ground between the sea and the hill. . .

"Strength surpassing appearance, brightness, life: those are the characteristics of the letter and of the city."
W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia,
279,280

(2) History

- (a) Early history--founded as Greek colony c 1000 B.C.
(b) Tragedy and recovery

600 B.C.	Destroyed by Alyattes of Lydia No city for several centuries
330	New Smyrna founded after Alexander's conquest
300	Lysimachus plans to make Smyrna a great trading center
195	Begins worship of the power of Rome
178 A.D.	Destroyed by a terrible earthquake Restored by Marcus Aurelius Frequently devastated by earthquakes but always rebuilt
1402	Taken by Tamerlane--inhabitants massacred
1424	Captured by Turks--most of Christian population slain
1688	Terrible earthquake--earth opens and swallows 5000 people
1758	City depopulated by a plague
1923	Captured by Turks--a terrible massacre of inhabitants

(c) Present prosperity

The outstanding city of Asia Minor. Population in 1929, 375,000. A great seaport and railroad terminal. The only one of the seven cities to retain anything of its ancient standing.

d. The Christian church at Smyrna

It is possible that the church at Smyrna was founded by Paul. Certainly it must have had visits from him during his long service in Asia Minor. The church at Smyrna was poor but active in service. It suffered much persecution, from Jews, Romans, and Turks. Polycarp was martyred here in 156 A.D. Even though it was the Sabbath day, the Jews were so anxious for his death that they came in large numbers to the stadium, bringing faggots for the fire in which Polycarp died. Fifteen hundred Christians were slain on another occasion, and eight hundred on still another.

In spite of its many persecutions, Christianity is still alive and active at Smyrna today. About half of the present population is Christian. It is the headquarters of several denominational mission enterprises. A number of Christian schools are located there.

2. The Writer of the Smyrna Letter--The first and the last, the One Who was dead and is alive Rev 2:8
3. Commendation for Smyrna
 - a. Their works V 9
 - b. Their tribulation V 9

The Smyrna period of the church was a period of persecution and martyrdom. The growing church was hated and its members were hunted down and put to death. Christians were accused of every conceivable crime and were blamed for every calamity--fire and famine, pestilence and earthquake. Rome came to regard Christians who acknowledged their first allegiance to God, as enemies of the empire and instituted terrible persecutions against them. It was the age of the arena and the amphitheatre, when Christians were thrown before wild beasts to make sport for the populace, when they were burned and crucified, slain with the sword, or thrust into caldrons of boiling oil. Few were the rulers of Rome who did not engage in persecution of Christians during the Smyrna period.

Trajan 98-117

Frequent popular tumults against Christians
 Issued an edict making perseverance in Christianity a capital offense
 Many martyrs, including Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, and Ignatius, bishop of Antioch

Hadrian 117-138

Populace at games and shows clamored for the destruction of Christians
 Decreed that Christians not be put death without trial and conviction

Antoninus Pius 138-161

Magistrates accuse Christians of impiety
 Justin Martyr sent his Apology to the emperor
 Christians held responsible for earthquakes in Asia Minor, rushed on by the populace with every type of violence
 Polycarp martyred

Marcus Aurelius 161-180

Philosophers accuse Christians of horrible crimes, such as incest and feasting on the flesh of murdered children
 Great outbursts against Christians
 One of the most terrible periods of persecution
 Many martyrs, including Justin Martyr
 Christian churches destroyed at Lyons, Vienne
 Many Apologies for Christians, including Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatian

Commodus 180-192

Usual suffering of Christians for renunciation of paganism

Septimus Severus 193-211

Many Christians slain in the provinces
 Presidents might persecute Christians whenever they pleased
 Law against the propagation of Christianity

Alexander Severus 222-235

Instances of Christians suffering
 Thinks Christianity deserves toleration

Maximun 235-238

Many atrocities against Christians
 Incited populace and magistrates to assail Christians

Decius Trajan 249-251

Terrible edicts against Christians
 Governors commanded utterly to exterminate Christianity
 Many Christians slain
 The worst persecution up to this time

Gallus 251-253

Christians blamed for calamities and pestilence
 Continued persecution

Valerian 253-260

Christians forbidden to hold meetings
 Many Christians put to death

Aurelian 270-275

Edicts against Christians

Diocletian 284-305

Terrible persecution of Christians
 See S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7, 746,747 for a discussion of the imperial persecution of Christians.

c. Poor but truly rich Rev 2:9; James 2:5; Luke 12:15-34;
Rom 8:32

4. The synagogue of Satan Rev 2:9

Moffatt: "I know how you are being slandered by those who style themselves Jews (no Jews are they, but a mere synagogue of Satan!)."

Twentieth Cen NT: "I know, too, the slanders proceeding from those who declare that they are Jews, when they are not, but are a Congregation ruled by Satan."

a. The true Jew Rom 2:28,29; Gal 3:7,29

b. The organized party of Satan

c. The blasphemous claims of false professors of religion

5. Counsel and admonition Rev 2:10

Knox: "Do not be afraid of the suffering thou art to undergo. Before long, the devil will throw some of you into prison, to have your faith tested there, and for ten days you shall be in sore distress. Keep faith with me to the point of death, and I will crown thee with life."

a. Trial and suffering the lot of the church Matt 10:22;
Luke 21:16,17; Acts 9:16

b. Smyrna's exceptional period of tribulation

(1) The edicts of Diocletian 303 A.D.

(2) Constantine's Edict of Milan 313 A.D. This edict is known as the edict of toleration

c. God's purpose in trial and affliction

"He suffers no affliction to come upon the church but such as is essential for her purification, her present and eternal good. He will purify His church even as He purified the temple at the beginning and close of His ministry on earth. All that He brings upon the church in test and trial comes that His people may gain deeper piety and more strength to carry the triumphs of the cross to all parts of the world." 9T 228

d. The ineffectiveness of Satan's efforts to stop God's work by persecution

"In vain were Satan's efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. The great controversy in which the disciples of Jesus yielded up their lives, did not cease when these faithful standard-bearers fell at their post. By defeat they conquered. God's workmen were slain, but His work went steadily forward.

The gospel continued to spread, and the number of its adherents to increase. It penetrated into regions that were inaccessible, even to the eagles of Rome. . .

"Thousands were imprisoned and slain; but others sprung up to fill their places. . . Their living example and dying testimony were a constant witness for the truth; and where least expected, the subjects of Satan were leaving his service, and enlisting under the banner of Christ." GC 41,42

- e. The proper attitude of the child of God toward persecution and trial Matt 10:23-26,39; Luke 12:32; Heb 12:3
- f. The steadfastness of God's children under persecution Heb 11:33-40

Polycarp's reply before his martyrdom at Smyrna to the judge who asked him to renounce Christ and save his life: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King, who hath saved me?"

- g. The reward promised those faithful to death Rev 2:10

C. The third letter Rev 2:12-17

- 1. To Pergamos (Pergamum) -- The church popular and prosperous

- a. Period--313-538
- b. The city

(1) Location

Forty miles north of Smyrna, fifteen miles from the sea
Built on a high rocky mass rising a thousand feet above
the valley

Position of splendid natural defense

Gives impression of permanence, impregnable strength,
and authority

"Beyond all other sites in Asia Minor it gives the traveller the impression of a royal city, the home of authority: the rocky hill on which it stands is so huge, and dominates the broad plain of the Caicus so proudly and boldly. . .

"History marked it out as the royal city, and not less clearly has nature done so. No city of the whole of Asia Minor--so far as I have seen, and there are few of any importance which I have not seen--possesses the same imposing and dominating aspect. It is the one city of the land which forced from me the exclamation 'A royal city!' I came to it after seeing the others, and that was the impression which it produced. There is something unique and over-

powering in its effect, planted as it is on its magnificent hill, standing out boldly in the level plain, and dominating the valley and the mountains on the south. Other cities of the land have splendid hills which made them into powerful fortresses in ancient time; but in them the hill is as a rule the acropolis, and the city lies beneath and around or before it. But here the hill was the city proper, and the great buildings chiefly Roman, which lie below the city, were external ornaments, lending additional beauty and stateliness to it." W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, 281,295

(2) History

Settled by the Aeolian Greeks soon after the fall of Troy

Homer and later Herodotus did some of their writing here

Regarded by Lysimachus as the safest place in his kingdom

282 B.C. Philetaerus threw off his allegiance to Lysimachus and founded the kingdom of Pergamum

241 B.C. Attalus I was the first of a line of kings by this name

Defeated the invading Gauls and settled them in a district henceforth known as Galatia

197 B.C. Eumenes took the throne and founded a famous library at Pergamum which was soon to rival that of Alexandria

133 B.C. Death of Attalus III who bequeathed his kingdom to Rome

Pergamum now became the capital of the Roman province of Asia, and was so for two and a half centuries

The city later declined, and the modern Pergama is a mere shadow of the former city

(3) Religion

An outstanding center of pagan religions

Immense altar to Zeus erected to commemorate the victory over the Gauls

An elegant temple to Athena

Center of the worship of Dionysos, the bull god

Famous shrine to Asklepios, the god of medicine

Temples to the Roman emperors Augustus, Trajan, and Severus

Many devotees to Bacchus, the god of wine, and Venus, the goddess of love

"B.C. 487 the defeated Chaldaeans fled to Asia Minor, and fixed their central college at Pergamos, and took the palladium of Babylon, the cubic stone, with them. Here, independent of state control, they carried on the rites

of their religion, and plotted against the peace of the Persian empire, caballing with the Greeks for that purpose." W. B. Barker, Lares and Penates, 232,233

It should be noted that the kings of Pergamos were also the chief pontiffs of their religion, following the ancient Babylonian custom. Attalus III, the last of these priest-kings, bequeathed to Rome with his nation his royal and priestly offices. The emperors of Rome, beginning with Julius and Augustus, took to themselves divine as well as royal titles and honors, and in this they were followed later by the popes of Rome.

2. The divine Author--Who has the sharp sword with two edges
Rev 2:12

- a. Rome and the power of her two-edged sword
- b. God and the power of His word Heb 4:12; Isa 55:11

3. Commendation for Pergamos Rev 2:13

- a. The works of Pergamos
- b. Located where Satan's seat is
 - (1) God takes into consideration the local circumstances of His people Ps 87:4-6
 - (2) The significance of "Satan's seat"

RSV: "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is."

Knox: "I know well in what a place thou dwellest, a place where Satan sits enthroned."

Weymouth: "I know where you dwell. Satan's throne is there."

NEB: "I know where you live; it is the place where Satan has his throne."

- (a) Satan's part in this world's affairs John 12:31; 14:30; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 6:12; Luke 4:5,6

"After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world. Christ had come to disprove Satan's claim." DA 114,115

"A demon became the central power in the world. Where God's throne should have been, Satan had placed his throne. The world laid its homage, as a willing offering, at the feet of the enemy." 6T 236

(b) Satan's seat or headquarters

- (1) Pergamos the capital of the region to which the seven letters were addressed
- (2) Pergamos a center of pagan cults
- (3) Rome the capital of the empire of Rome
- (4) Rome became the papal capital during the Pergamos period. Additional emphasis was provided when Constantine transferred the capital from Rome to Constantinople in 330 A.D.

c. Holding fast God's name

Knox: "And yet thou art true to my name."

NEB: "And yet you are holding fast to my cause."

d. Faithful in the days of the martyrdom of Antipas

4. Reproof for Pergamos Rev 2:14,15

a. Had those who held the doctrine of Balaam

Knox: "Thou has followers there of the school of Balaam. It was Balaam who taught Balac how to lay a trap for the people of Israel, when they ate what was sacrificed to idols and fell into fornication."

- (1) Balaam Nu 22-24; PP 438-461

Knew the message of truth
 Had been a prophet of God
 Acquainted with the pathway of duty
 Flirted with the world
 Desired honor, gain, applause
 Willing to be used as a tool to bring low the
 people of God
 Gave counsel for leading Israel astray by guile
 Brought Israel into adulterous and idolatrous
 alliances with the world
 The people of God entered into an unlawful
 union with the enemies of God as a result of
 his counsel
 The disastrous results to Israel of their debauchery

- (2) The Balaamite church of the Pergamos period

Christianity and heathenism joining hand in hand
 An unholy alliance between the church and the state

The resultant debauchment and disfiguration of the
 church
 A monstrous thing with pagan blood flowing through
 Christian veins
 Heathen pomp and ceremony commingled with Christian
 rites

"Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. . .

"This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the 'man of sin' foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will. . .

"To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth; and having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance to the representative of Satan,--the bishop of Rome." GC 49,50

b. Had those which held the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes

- (1) Doctrines which God hates
- (2) Doctrines which the early church once hated Rev 2:6
- (3) Doctrines which the church now accepted

"The Christian bishops introduced, with but slight alterations, into the Christian worship, those rites and institutions by which, formerly, the Greeks and Romans and others had manifested their piety and reverence towards their imaginary deities; supposing that the people would more readily embrace Christianity, if they perceived the rites handed down to them from their fathers, still existing unchanged among the Christians, and saw, that Christ and the martyrs were worshipped in the same manner as formerly their gods were. There was, of course, little difference in these times between the public worship of the Christians and that of the Greeks and Romans. In both there were splendid robes, mitres, tiaras, wax-tapers, crosiers, professions, lustrations, images, golden and

silver vases, and innumerable other things alike.

"No sooner had Constantine renounced the religion of his ancestors, than magnificent temples were every where erected, which were adorned with pictures and images, and which both in their external and internal form, were very similar to the fanes and the temples of the gods."

J. L. von Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, I, 369
(MacLaine's Trans 194)

5. Counsel and warning to Pergamos Rev 2:16; Num 22:22,23;
Isa 11:4

NEB: "So repent! If you do not, I shall come to you soon and make war upon them with the sword that comes out of My mouth."

6. The promise to Pergamos v 17

- a. The hidden manna Ex 16:32-34; John 6:27-63; Ps 119:11

- b. The white stone

Inscribed tesserae given to successful gladiators
Stones used as voting ballots by jurors - white for
acquittal and black for conviction
Tesserae serving as entrance tickets at public occasions
The Urim and Thummim on the breastplate of the high priest

"The truth is that the white pebble with the New Name was not an exact reproduction of any custom or thing in the social usage of the time. It was a new conception, devised for this new purpose; but it was only a working up into a new form of familiar things and customs, and it was therefore completely intelligible to every reader in the Asian Churches. It had analogies with many things, though it was not an exact reproduction of any of them." W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, 304

- c. The new name Isa 62:2; Rev 3:12; 19:12; 22:4; 1 John 3:2

The white stone with the new name might indicate their title of citizenship in the heavenly kingdom

- D. The fourth letter Rev 2:18-29

1. To Thyatira--The church of the Papal period, powerful and corrupt

- a. Period--538-1517

- b. The city

(1) Location

In Lydia, near the boundary of Mysia
 Twenty-five miles southeast of Pergamos
 Several famous ancient highways passed through
 this site
 On a very slight rise of ground--no natural benefits
 of strength
 General impression of weakness, dependence, subjection
 Natural weakness imposes on citizens the necessity of
 vigilance

(2) History

Early city here known as Pelopia and Euhippia
 Colonized with Greeks by Seleucus Nicator (301
 and 281 B.C.)
 Given the name Thyatira by Seleucus who established
 a garrison here
 190 B.C. surrendered to the Romans
 Became an important communication center
 An outstanding manufacturing city
 More trade guilds known here than in any other
 city in Asia
 Inhabitants famed for their skill in dyeing purple
 (Acts 16:14)
 City of about twenty thousand inhabitants today

2. The Author Rev 2:18

- a. The Son of God
- b. Eyes like a flame of fire
 One who searches the heart V 23; Jer 11:20
- c. Feet like fine brass
 Crushing and burning the wicked in His wrath Rev 1:15;
 2:27; Mic 1:3-5; Hab 3:5; Job 40:12

3. Commendation for Thyatira Rev 2:19

NEB: "I know all your ways, your love and faithfulness, your
 good service and your fortitude; and of late you have done
 even better than at first."

RSV: "I know your works, your love and faith and service and
 patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first."

Though the period of Thyatira was to experience much of darkness,
 it was also to see much of light. Though we have here some of the
 most infamous deeds ever performed in the name of religion, we have
 also some of the grandest achievements of men filled with love and
 the Spirit of God. These were the days of the Knights Templars and
 the mendicant friars, and of Hildebrand (later Gregory VII), but
 they were also the days of the Waldenses and the Albigensians, of
 Wycliffe and Huss, of Jerome and Luther. Never was there so much to

praise, never so much to condemn. In these days of the interdict and the Inquisition, God saw the service of love and the patient endurance of His children and spoke to Thyatira His words of commendation and praise.

4. Condemnation and reproof Rev 2:20-23

a. Sufferance of the woman Jezebel V 20

Am Tr: "But I hold it against you that you tolerate that Jezebel of a woman who claims to be inspired."

(1) The woman Jezebel I Ki 16:31; 19:1-8; 21:5-15, 23-25; 2 Ki 9:22-37

- (a) A prophetess of Baal
- (b) Her efforts to seduce the people of God
- (c) Apostasy in Israel
- (d) Persecution of the faithful children of God
- (e) Three years and a half of famine
- (f) Elijah and his message of reform
- (g) The doom of Jezebel

(2) The anti-typical Jezebel--the harlot of papal Rome Rev 17:1-6

- (a) Identified with Babylon, the enemy of God

"The arch-deceiver had not completed his work. He was resolved to gather the Christian world under his banner, and to exercise his power through his vicegerent, the proud pontiff who claimed to be the representative of Christ. Through half-converted pagans, ambitious prelates, and world-loving churchmen, he accomplished his purpose. . .

"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.'" GC 53,54

- (b) Her unholy alliance with the throne
- (c) Her efforts to seduce the people of God
- (d) Her war against the Word of God
- (e) Her endeavors to crush the people of God
- (f) The period of eclipse for the powers of life and light Rev 11:3-6; 12:6

"And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Christians were forced to choose either to yield their

integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman's axe . . . For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: '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 accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages." GC 54,55

b. God's dealings with Jezebel Rev 2:21-23

(1) Given time to repent but refuses

Knox: "I have given her time for repentance, but she will not mend her harlot's ways."

(2) Retribution upon her, her paramours, and her children

NEB: "So I will throw her on a bed of pain, and plunge her lovers into terrible suffering, unless they forswear what she is doing; and her children I will strike dead. This will teach all the churches that I am the searcher of men's hearts and thoughts, and that I will reward each one of you according to his deeds."

c. The appropriateness of the Jezebel symbol

Few symbols have ever been any more appropriate than that of Jezebel to the church of Thyatira. Jezebel came from the house of Baal to the house of God. Pagan at heart, she became the queen of Israel. From her place of influence upon the throne she put forth every effort to seduce the worshipers of God and to establish the worship of Baal. Every effort was made to crush the servants of God and to honor the priests of Baal. The prophets of God were put to the sword or driven to the wilderness. For three and a half years there was famine in the land. Then came the challenges of Elijah on Carmel and the slow and difficult reform. So was it with the church during the period of Thyatira. The woman Jezebel had come within the church and terrible darkness ensued. The harlot sat upon the throne while the virgin fled into the wilderness. For three and a half prophetic years, the 1260-year period foretold by the prophets, truth was eclipsed while there was a spiritual famine in the land. Then at length came prophets of light and a work of reform.

"And in all history there is not another character which so completely represents the Papal system--its character, works and worship--as the unclean wife of Ahab, the Jezebel of these Epistles. She was a heathen, married to a Jew; and such is the

character of the Papal system in its main elements--Paganism joined to an obsolete Judaism. She is described as calling herself a prophetess, and as undertaking to be the teacher of God's servants; and Popery claims and professes to be heaven's only infallible teacher of God's truth. She is described as having a set of 'works,' emphatically 'her works,' as distinguished from others which are called Christ's 'works;' and Popery is a system of works--a religion of ceremonies, penances, fasts, masses, prayers, vigils, abnegations, bodily macerations, purgatory, and supererogatory and meritorious holiness of saints, by which it proposes to save its devotees. She was an adulteress; and Popery, above all, has been characterized by her unclean dealings with the kings and powers of the earth, lending herself to serve their pleasure, to bring them under her sway, and teaching God's people to accept worldly conformity as a means of Christian victory. She was a persecutor and murderess of God's prophets and witnesses; and the Papacy is marked by nothing more than its severity toward such as stood out against its impious pretences, and its public and secret tortures and butcheries of the saints."
J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 194,195

5. Words of comfort and counsel Rev 2:24,25

NEB: "And now I speak to you others in Thyatira, who do not accept this teaching and have had no experience of what they like to call the deep secrets of Satan; on you I will impose no further burden. Only hold fast to what you have, until I come."

6. Words of promise Rev 2:26-28

Knox: "Who wins the victory? Who will do my bidding to the last? I will give him authority over the nations to herd them like sheep with a crook of iron, breaking them in pieces like earthenware; the same authority which I myself hold from my Father. And the Star of morning shall be his."

a. Power over the nations Ps 2:8,9; Dan 2:44; 7:14,18, 25-27

Not the proud of the earth but the meek will inherit the earth. Not to those who grasp for power will power finally be given, but to the humble, oft-downtrodden children of God will authority at length be given to rule the earth.

b. The morning star

Christ Himself was the morning star (Rev 22:16). His light was to shine into the hearts of His people (2 Pet 1:19)

"The world had passed its midnight. The hours of darkness were wearing away, and in many lands appeared tokens of the coming dawn.

"In the fourteenth century arose in England the 'morning star

of the Reformation.' John Wycliffe was the herald of reform, not for England alone, but for all Christendom." GC 80

"So perished God's faithful light-bearers. But the light of the truths which they proclaimed,--the light of their heroic example,--could not be extinguished. As well might men attempt to turn back the sun in its course as to prevent the dawning of that day which was even then breaking upon the world." GC 115

"Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. . . Luther was the man for his time; through him, God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world." GC 120

7. The call to hear Rev 2:29

It should be noticed that the call to hear for the church of Thyatira is the last item to come to this church, following the promise. For the first three churches the call to hear had preceded the promise. For the last four churches the call to hear follows the promise.

"In the first three instances, it would seem to be the address of the Spirit from within the professing body, calling to the world without; but in the last four, it would seem that the Spirit itself is without, and that the call is considered now as having the same relation to the body of the professed Church as to the world. It is thus intensely significant of prevailing apostasy, which has so Paganized the professing Church as to make true Christians as exceptional in the Church as in the world. As the pillar of cloud went up from before the camp of Israel, and took its place behind it, to sever the Lord's people from the Egyptians, so this change intimates that the Church, as a body, has become so blended with the world, that a separation needs to be drawn between Christ's true people and it, the same as its calling was meant to sever it from the world. Hence, in all the Epistles in which the Spirit's warning takes its place after the promise, the great body of the professed Church, as such, is treated as apostate and hopelessly corrupt." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 187

E. The fifth letter Rev 3:1-6

1. To Sardis--The church of the post-reformation period, weak, worldly, and degenerate
 - a. Period--1517-1792
 - b. The city
 - (1) Location

Fifty miles east of Smyrna

At the foot of Mount Timolus
 On the east bank of the river Pactolus, the river
 serving as a moat
 Situation of great beauty, in midst of a fertile
 region
 Acropolis on a hill 950 feet high, a spur of the
 mountain
 An almost impregnable fortress
 Inaccessible, except in one point at the south
 Other sides of smooth, nearly perpendicular rock
 walls
 Marked out by nature for headship of the Hermos valley

(2) History

Beginnings coeval with the beginnings of Lydia,
 twelfth century B.C.
 Capital of Croesus, the wealthy Lydian king
 546 B.C. Taken by Cyrus from the overconfident Croesus
 Becomes the seat of a Persian satrap
 499 B.C. Burned by Athenians, bringing war with Persia
 334 B.C. Surrendered to Alexander
 214 B.C. Taken by Antiochus the Great through strategem
 190 B.C. Fell into Roman hands after the battle of
 Magnesia
 Becomes part of the kingdom of Pergamos
 129 B.C. Province of Asia organized, Sardis falling
 within its bounds
 17 A.D. Nearly destroyed by an earthquake, but was
 rebuilt by Tiberius
 295 A.D. After breakup of Roman province of Asia, becomes
 capital of the kingdom of Lydia under Byzantine hier-
 archy
 1402 A.D. Completely destroyed by Tamerlane and never
 rebuilt
 Today a wilderness of thorns, wild flowers, and
 imposing ruins
 A few huts of Yuruk nomads occur among the ancient ruins

Emerson's impressions after a visit to Sardis:
 "There were more varied and vivid remembrances associated
 with the sight of Sardis, than could possibly be attached
 to any other spot on earth; but all were mingled with a
 feeling of disgust at the littleness of human glory; all--
 all had passed away! There were before me the fanes of a
 dead religion, the tombs of forgotten monarchs, and the
 palm-tree that waved in the banquet hall of kings; while
 the feeling of desolation was doubly heightened by the calm,
 sweet sky above me, which in its unfading brightness, shone
 as purely now as when it beamed upon the golden dreams of
 Croesus."

(3) Religion

Cybele, an Anatolian goddess, was the patron deity
of the city
Her worship was similar to that of Diana of Ephesus
Coins show a religious alliance with Ephesus
Cybele is pictured as a strange uncouth figure with
many breasts
She was worshiped at a magnificent temple, the ruins
of which still exist
A temple of Zeus was also located there

(4) The church

A Christian community early grew up at Sardis
It became the seat of a bishop of the church
The walls of a church erected before the fourth
century A.D. are still standing
The marble throne of the bishop of Sardis has been
discovered

2. The Author Rev 3:1

He that had the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars of
Rev 2:1

The Church, having fallen into a state of spiritual torpor, needed
the quickening of the Spirit of God

3. Message of condemnation Rev 3:1

Weymouth: "I know your doings--you are supposed to be alive,
but in reality you are dead."

The Sardis church is the church of the reformation period. In such
a period the one thing one would expect is life and vitality.
After the darkness and infamy of the period of Thyatira, it would
be only natural to suppose that the new church founded by the re-
formers would be a church alive with zeal and vigor, pure in faith,
and fully devoted to the service of God. But instead of the usual
commendation, the opening message to this church is one of condem-
nation--the church is supposed to be alive, but it is dead. The
Sardian period was one of cold formalities in religion, having the
appearance of life, but a church which was in reality dead.

"But with all, the boasted new life was in many things but name,
and not reality. These Sardians had heard and received that which
was right and good; but they did not properly hold or improve what
had been given them, and became dead in the very forms and attire-
ments of the new life. Having defied and escaped the sorceress,
they suffered their garments to drag in other defilements. . . In a
large part, the Church of Sardis was but a drooping plant and a
dead carcass. It started fresh and new; it had heard and received
that to which it is the true life of saints to hold; but it soon
had more profession than vitality, and more boastfulness than purity
or fruit." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 162

"In some respects the eighteenth century is the most illused period in English history. It is the Cinderella of the centuries. Nobody has a good word to say about it. Carlyle sums it up in a bitter phrase: 'Soul extinct; stomach well alive.' . . .

"The real scandal of England in the eighteenth century, the leprosy that poisoned its blood, the black spot on the shining disc of its history, is the general decay of religion which marked its first fifty years. At the point of its faith England was dying. Its spiritual skies were black as with the gloom of an Arctic midnight, and chilly as with Arctic frosts. . . .

"Only by an effort of the historic imagination can we realize the condition of England in 1703. . . . Montesquieu, who studied the England of that age through keen French eyes, says bluntly: 'There is no such thing as religion in England.' . . . Christianity under English skies was never, before or since, so near the death point. Who does not remember the sentences which Bishop Butler, that gloomy, subtle, powerful intellect, prefixed to his 'Analogy'? 'It has somehow come to be taken for granted,' he wrote, 'that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. . . . Men treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point amongst all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject to mirth and ridicule.' Betwixt Montesquieu and Butler, the great Frenchman and the still greater Englishman, what a procession of witnesses might be quoted in proof of the decay of faith in Great Britain at the beginning of the eighteenth century! And when faith flies, what else can live? . . .

"Christianity cannot perish; but it came near its death-swoon in that sad age. 'There was,' says Green, the historian, 'open revolt against religion and against Churches in both extremes of English society. The poor were ignorant and brutal to a degree impossible now to realize; the rich, to an almost utter disbelief of religion, linked a foulness of life now happily almost inconceivable.' . . .

"The true awakening of the religious life of the English-speaking race dates from Wesley. To say that he re-shaped the conscience of England is true, but it is only half the truth. He re-created it! It was dead--twice dead; and through his lips God breathed into it the breath of life again. . . .

"The fatal thing in the religion of that age was that it had ceased to be a life, or to touch life. It was exhausted of its dynamic elements--the vision of a Redeeming Christ; the message of a present and personal forgiveness. It was frozen into a theology; it was spun out into ecclesiastical forms; it was crystallised into a system of external ethics; it had become a mere adjunct to politics. No one imagined it, or thought of it, or tried to realise it, as a spiritual deliverance; a deliverance at the very touch of the fingers; a deliverance to be realised in the personal consciousness. Religion translated into terms of living human experience, and dwelling as a divine energy in the soul, was a forgotten thing.

An electric lamp without the electric current is a mere loop of calcined fibres black and dead. And Christianity itself, in England, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was exactly such a circle of dead fibres." W. H. Fitchett, Wesley and His Century, 11-15

Conditions in Germany were much the same prior to the awakening caused by the Pietist movement.

4. Counsel and admonition Rev 3:2,3

The work of reformation had not been carried to completion. The trouble with the reformed churches was that, after having started well, they soon allowed themselves to fall into a state of coldness and satisfaction with past accomplishments, becoming indifferent to further light and advancement

5. Commendation Rev 3:4

a. A few names even in Sardis

Pietists: Spener, Francke
 Moravians: Count Zinzendorf
 Quakers: George Fox
 Methodism: Wesley, Whitefield

b. To walk with Him in white

6. Promise to the overcomer V 5

a. To be clothed in white raiment

b. His name not to be blotted out of the Book of Life

"As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the book of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance." GC 483

"The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. If any of these depart from him and by stubborn persistence in sin become finally hardened against the influences of his Holy Spirit, their names will in the Judgment be blotted from the book of life, and they themselves will be devoted to destruction." PP 326

c. Jesus to confess his name

7. Analogies between the letters to Ephesus and Sardis

"The analogy between the Ephesian and Sardian letters is close, and the two have to be studied together. History had moved on similar lines with the two Churches. Both had begun enthusiastically and cooled down. Degeneration was the fact in both; but in Ephesus the degeneration had not yet become so serious as in Sardis. Hence in the Ephesian letters the keynote is merely change, instability and uncertainty; in the Sardian letter the keynote is degradation, false pretension and death." W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, 369

"The messages to the church of Ephesus and to the church in Sardis have been often repeated to me by the One who gives me instruction for His people. . . He who was cast out of heaven has come down with great power. . . Unless we are constantly on guard, we shall fall an easy prey to his unnumbered deceptions. . . Let us read and study those portions of God's word that have special reference to these last days, pointing out the dangers that will threaten God's people." 8T 98-100

E. The sixth letter Rev 3:7-13

1. To Philadelphia--The church of missions and the Bible activity

a. Meaning--Brotherly love

b. Period--1792-1844

c. The city

(1) Location

In Lydia, twenty-eight miles southeast of Sardis
 The key and gateway to the eastern highlands
 Guards an important pass between the Hermus and
 Meander valleys
 On a Roman post road, later the greatest trade route
 of the country
 A railway passes through Philadelphia to Smyrna
 City built on a broad hill
 The surrounding regions are very fertile
 Located in volcanic region subject to frequent
 earthquakes

(2) History

189 B.C. Came into the possession of King Eumenes
 of Pergamum
 Named "Philadelphia" after Attalus Philadelphus,
 brother of Eumenes
 Became an outstanding center for the spread of
 Hellenism
 Called "Little Athens" because of its many temples

17 A.D. Suffered from a severe earthquake, the same that devastated Sardis
 Twice changed its name, in 17 A.D. to Neocaesarea in gratitude for an imperial gift, and later to Flavia in honor of Vespasian (70-79 A.D.)
 Held out for a long time against the Turks after all the rest of Asia Minor had surrendered
 1390 Succumbed to a combined Turkish and Byzantine army after a siege of eight years
 A prosperous modern city today of fifteen thousand inhabitants
 Today known as "Allah shair," "City of God"

(3) Religion

The religion of Philadelphia was Anatolian rather than Greek
 Dionyses, the god of wine, was the outstanding deity
 Coins with two identical brothers, symbolical of their unity and mutual affection, commemorate a religious alliance with Ephesus
 Founded a cult of Germanicus, the heir of Tiberius
 Received the title Neokoros or Temple-Warden from Caracalla (211-217)

(4) Christianity

Philadelphia early became the center of a Christian community
 The prophetess Ammia flourished there between 100 and 160 A.D.
 After the Turkish invasion, long held up the banner of Christianity
 Today Philadelphia has a resident bishop and five Christian churches

2. The Author Rev 3:7

- a. He that is holy Acts 3:14; Lev 11:44
- b. He that is true 1 John 5:20; John 14:6
- c. He that hath the key of David Isa 22:22; Eze 21:26,27; Luke 1:32,33; John 10:9; 14:6; 11:25

The "Key of David" is a symbol of authority

- d. He that opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man opens

Christ has authority over His own house, the Church (Heb 3:6)

3. An open door set before Philadelphia Rev 3:8

- a. The door into the most holy place

"The end of the 2300 days in 1844 marked an important crisis. But while it was true that that door of hope and mercy by which men had for eighteen hundred years found access to God, was closed, another door was opened, and forgiveness of sins was offered to men through the intercession of Christ in the most holy. One part of His ministration had closed, only to give place to another. There was still an 'Open door' to the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ was ministering in the sinner's behalf.

"Now was seen the application of those words of Christ in the Revelation, addressed to the church at this very time." GC 429,430

"An acceptance of the truth concerning the heavenly sanctuary involved an acknowledgment of the claims of God's law, and the obligation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Here was the secret of the bitter and determined opposition to the harmonious exposition of the Scriptures that revealed the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Men sought to close the door which God had opened, and to open the door which He had closed. . . Christ had opened the door, or ministration, of the most holy place, light was shining from that open door of the sanctuary in heaven, and the fourth commandment was shown to be included in the law which is there enshrined; what God had established, no man could overthrow." GC 435

"I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come until the mediation of Jesus in the holy place was finished, and He had passed within the second veil; therefore Christians who fell asleep before the door was opened into the most holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month, 1844, and who had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not light and the test on the Sabbath which we now have since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about its being a test for us now.

"The enemies of the present truth have been trying to open the door of the holy place, that Jesus has shut, and to close the door of the most holy place, which He opened in 1844."

EW 42,43

b. The door of access to the Father

"Our Redeemer has opened the way so that the most sinful, the most needy, the most oppressed and despised, may find access to the Father. All may have a home in the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare. 'These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;. . . behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.'" DA 113

"The simple prayers indited by the Holy Spirit will ascend

through the gates ajar, and the open door which Christ has declared, I have opened, and no man can shut. These prayers, mingled with the incense of the perfection of Christ, will ascend as fragrance to the Father, and answers will come." 6T 467

c. The door to light and truth

"The treasury of the jewels of truth is open to all. 'Behold, I have set before thee an open door,' the Lord declares 'and no man can shut it.' No sword guards the way through this door." COL 117

"No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God's people. The Lord will not tolerate this. He has said, 'I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time." TM 107

"Jesus says, 'Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' Rev 3:8. Light is shining from that door, and it is our privilege to receive it if we will. Let us direct our eyes within that open door, and try to receive all that Christ is willing to bestow." 9T 182

d. The door to missionary opportunity 2 Cor 2:12; 1 Cor 16:9; Acts 14:27

The close of the eighteenth century was to witness the inauguration of one of the mightiest movements this world has ever seen, the effort by the forces of Christendom to send out messengers for the evangelization of the world and to give the word of God to all peoples sitting in darkness. It was a sermon preached by William Carey at Nottingham, England, on May 31, 1792, which sent forth the spark that was destined to set on fire the hearts of Christians in all churches and lands.

"Judged by its momentous and far-reaching results his sermon must be considered one of the very chiefest in Christian history, perhaps second only to the Sermon on the Mount. With Isa 54:2,3 for a text, he proceeded to unfold the two matchless and immortal subdivisions, 'Expect great things from God,' and--eminently Carey-like from first to last--joining untiring works to stalwart faith, 'Attempt great things for God.' In that never-to-be-forgotten hour the conclusions, the convictions, the longings of years first found full expression. . .

"In January, 1797, it could be affirmed concerning the religious fervor resulting far and wide: 'Christians in every corner of the land are meeting in a regular manner, and pouring out their souls for God's blessing on the world.' And again: 'The efforts most successfully made to introduce the Gospel to the South Seas have had a most powerful tendency to unite the devoted servants of Christ of every denomination in the bonds of

brotherly love.'" Delavan L. Leonard, A Hundred Years of Missions, 75,89

"Christians began to see and feel that the Gospel is more than orthodoxy, and that living aggressiveness is one of its fundamental features. The era of revivals, and missions, and united efforts for the general conversion of mankind ensued, such as had not been since the primitive ages. . . There was great revival of life and fraternity among Christians. All this we find depicted in the Sixth Epistle, and verified in the history of the last hundred years." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 197,198

4. Commendation and reward Rev 3:8-10

a. Its works

In 1784 there were only twenty Protestant mission stations in the world, half of them in the hands of the Moravians. The Christian church simply was not interested in missions. When William Carey at a ministers' convention in 1786 propounded the question as to the obligation of ministers to take the message of Christ to all nations, he was rebuked and asked to take his seat. A brief survey of the activities launched by the forces of Christendom following Carey's momentous sermon of 1792 will help to give some idea of the surge of activity in the stirring years covered by the Philadelphia period.

- 1792 Pamphlet by Carey on Christian obligations in missions
- 1792 Organization of Baptist Missionary Society
- 1793 William Carey sailed for India
- 1793 Tract and Colportage Society of Scotland founded
- 1794 The Evangelical Magazine, a missionary publication, first issued
- 1795 London Missionary Society organized
- 1796 New York Missionary Society established
- 1796 Sailing of the Duff, a missionary ship, with twenty-nine missionaries for the South Seas
- 1797 Netherlands Missionary Society organized
- 1798 Sailing of the Duff with forty-six missionaries
- 1799 The Church Missionary Society founded
- 1799 The English Religious Tract Society established
- 1800 Jannicke's Missionary School established in Berlin
- 1802 Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society founded
- 1804 British and Foreign Bible Society organized
- 1806 "Haystack Group" began its activities at Williams College
- 1807 Robert Morrison sailed for China
- 1810 American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions organized
- 1812 Henry Martyn sailed for Persia and Arabia
- 1812 Adoniram Judson began work in Burma
- 1814 Baptist Missionary Union organized in America
- 1815 Missionary Institute founded at Basel

- 1816 John Williams sailed for the Society Islands
- 1816 American Bible Society organized
- 1816 Wesleyan Society established
- 1817 Robert Moffatt sailed for Africa
- 1818 British and Foreign Sailor' Society founded
- 1820 Hiram Bingham sailed for Hawaii
- 1824 Berlin Missionary Society established
- 1825 American Tract Society founded
- 1828 American Seamen's Friend Society organized
- 1829 Alexander Duff sailed for India
- 1834 First women's foreign missionary society formed in
London
- 1836 Marcus Whitman left as a missionary to the Oregon
Indians
- 1840 David Livingstone began work in Africa
- 1844 John Ludgig Krapf left for East Africa

b. Its "little strength" and yet its fidelity to God Rev 3:8

JB: "I know that though you are not very strong, you have kept my commandments and not disowned my name."

Not only was the Philadelphia period a time of outstanding activity in the work of Christian missions and the distribution of the Bible, but it was also one of great interest in the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy and of looking for the early advent of Christ. The fulfillment of the signs given by Jesus, the darkening of the sun, May 19, 1780, and of the falling of the stars, November 13, 1833, served to draw the minds of many to the nearness of the end. In widely scattered parts of the world men began searching God's word, and independently of each other came to the conclusion that the end was drawing near.

- 1800 George Richards delivered the Bampton Lectures, "The
Divine Origin of Prophecy Illustrated and Defended"
- 1806 Publication of Faber's, Dissertations on the Pro-
phecies
- 1812 Publication of Lacunza's, The Second Coming of the
Messiah in Glory and Majesty
- 1813 Publication of Cunninghame's, Dissertation on the
Seals and Trumpets
- 1814 Publication of Hatley Frere's, Combined View of the
Christian Prophecies
- 1821 Doctrine of the Lord's coming taught by a priest of
Tartary
- 1821 Joseph Wolff began his proclamation of the Lord's
soon coming in nations around the world
- 1823 Publication of Edward Irving's, For Judgment to Come
- 1824 Publication of Leonard Heinrich Kelber's, The End
Near
- 1826 Annual meetings begun at Albury Park, Surrey, of those
interested in the near advent of Christ
- 1826 Johann George Lutz preached in Bavaria on the Coming
of Christ

- 1828 Publication of Alexander Keith's, Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion, Derived from the Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy
- 1829 Publication of Archibald Mason's, Two Essays on Daniel's Prophetic Numbers of 2300 Days, and a Christian's Duty to Inquire into the Church's Deliverance
- 1829 Publication begun of the prophetic quarterly, Morning Watch
- 1830 Ablest minister of Holland, Mr. Hentzepeter, published a pamphlet on the end of the world
- 1831 Publication of Irving's, Exposition of the Book of Revelation
- 1831 W. E. Davis of South Carolina began to proclaim the second advent
- 1831 William Miller began to preach
- 1836 Publication of William Miller's lectures in book form
- 1838 Publication of Josiah Litch's, The Midnight Cry
- 1840 Publication of The Signs of the Times
- 1840 First general conference of Adventist believers in Boston
- 1842 Publication of Joshua Himes', The Midnight Cry
- 1843 Preaching by the children of Sweden on Christs' soon coming

c. The synagogue of Satan to know that God loves them Rev 3:9

"Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. . . When God spake the time, he poured upon us the Holy Spirit, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai. . .

"At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us." I T 59

"You think, that those who worship before the saint's feet, (Rev 3:9), will at last be saved. Here I must differ with you; for God shew me that this class were professed Adventists, who had fallen away, and 'crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.' And in the 'hour of temptation,' which is yet to come, to show out every one's true character, they will know that they are forever lost; and overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, they will bow at the saint's feet." EGW, A Word to the "Little Flock" 12

d. To be kept from the hour of temptation Rev 3:10;
Mal 3:2,3; Ps 91:14; 5T 297

"Just before us is the 'hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' All whose faith is not firmly established upon the word of God will be deceived and overcome. . . Those who are earnestly

seeking a knowledge of the truth, and are striving to purify their souls through obedience, thus doing what they can to prepare for the conflict, will find, in the God of truth, a sure defense. 'Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee,' is the Saviour's promise. He would sooner send every angel out of heaven to protect His people, than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan." GC 560

"Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfilment of the Saviour's promise, 'I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.'" GC 619

5. Counsel to Philadelphia Rev 3:11; Heb 10:35-37

"The crown and the throne are the tokens of a condition attained; they are the tokens of self-conquest through our Lord Jesus Christ." DA 549

6. Reward to the overcomer Rev 3:12

a. To be a pillar in the temple of God Gal 2:9; Eph 4:14; Heb 10:23

"In the loss of Ephesus, the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick, of the Revelations; the desolation is complete; and the temple of Diana, or the church of Mary, will equally elude the search of the curious traveller, The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the God of Mahomet, without a rival or a son, is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamus; and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy, or courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years; and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect; a column in a scene of ruins; a pleasing example, that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes by the same." Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, VI, Ch LXIV, 229

b. A new name

- (1) God's name Rev 14:1; 22:4; 1 John 3:1,2
- (2) The name of the city of God Rev 21:2; Isa 54:5; 4:2,3; Heb 12:22,23

"The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages.

"These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. . .

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. 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." 5T 475,476

F. The seventh letter Rev 3:14-22

1. To Laodicea--The church of the end, wealthy and satisfied

a. Meaning

The Greek word Laodicea is made up of two Greek words:

Laos--people

dikaio--righteous, right, lawful

The verbal form of the latter root would mean "to set right," "to deem right," "to judge," "to pronounce just or righteous"

The word Laodicea thus would mean something like, the "righteous people," or the "judged" or "justified people"

b. Location

In the fertile and picturesque Lycos valley of ancient Phrygia

One hundred miles east of Ephesus, fifty miles southeast of Philadelphia

On an important road junction, one road going west to Ephesus, and another northwest to Philadelphia, Sardis, Thyatira, and Pergamos

The great road from the west entered Laodicea by the "Ephesian Gates," and went out on the east by the "Syrian Gates"

Laodicea was regarded as a keeper-of-the-gate, and became the site of a strong fortress

Its great weakness was its dependence on water supplied by an aqueduct from a site six miles to the south

Colossae and Hierapolis were nearby cities

c. Characteristics

A great commercial, financial, and manufacturing center
 Its banking activities embraced a large part of the East
 Many of its citizens were very wealthy, independent, and
 proud

Hiero left his fortune of two thousand talents to the city
 A soft, glossy black wool produced in the valley was made
 into black seamless garments and rugs which were widely
 sold

It possessed remarkable hot springs, and mud baths
 The mineral waters possessed medicinal properties,
 attracting thousands of sick to this fashionable
 watering-place

These waters suitable for bathing were nauseous for
 drinking

Hot springs at Hierapolis discharged themselves at a cliff
 opposite Laodicea, the water becoming lukewarm on the way
 The locality was subject to many earthquakes

"There is no city whose spirit and nature are more difficult
 to describe than Laodicea. There are no extremes, and hardly
 any very strongly marked features. But in this even balance
 lies its peculiar character. Those were the qualities that
 contributed to make it essentially the successful trading
 city, the city of bankers and finance, which could adapt itself
 to the needs and wishes of others, ever pliable and accommo-
 dating, full of the spirit of compromise." W. M. Ramsay,
The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia 422,423

d. History

Rebuilt by Antiochus II (261-246 B.C.) and named Laodicea
 after his wife

A large number of Jews were settled there by Antiochus III
 (223-187 B.C.)

190 B.C. Fell into the hands of the Romans and was given
 by them to Eumenes, King of Pergamum

133 B.C. Annexed to Rome

The city now began to flourish

Cicero held court and wrote many of his letters at Laodicea

60 A.D. Destroyed by an earthquake, but the city was so
 wealthy that the citizens rebuilt it at their own
 expense without the usual Imperial subsidy

1071 Taken by the Seljuks

1119 Recovered by Christians under John Comnenus

Finally again fell into the hands of the Turks

The city has fallen into ruins and is today without
 inhabitant

e. Religion

The Phrygian god Men Karou was the original god of the
 region

A market was held under his protection bringing many people
 for purposes of trade

Laodicea's school of medicine was operated in connection with the god's temple
 A Hellenized form of the old native god was worshipped here as Zeus
 In Roman times Laodicea became a center of the Imperial religion
 It received the Temple-Wardenship under Commodus (180-192 A.D.)
 Many "alliance-coins" are found, showing religious connections with most of the neighboring cities

f. Christianity

The church at Laodicea was probably founded by someone associated with Paul while the apostle was laboring at Ephesus
 Paul in his letter to the nearby Colossae expresses great concern and interest in the church at Laodicea and also in Hierapolis Col 2:1; 4:13,15
 A letter was addressed by Paul to Laodicea Col 4:16
 He asked that his letter to Colossae be read at Laodicea Col 4:16
 The early church at Laodicea was one of prominence and importance
 Sagaris, its bishop, suffered martyrdom in 166 A.D.
 A number of church councils were held there, among them the important council of 364 A.D. at which thirty-two bishops were present
 The church ultimately completely disappeared

2. The Author of the Laodicean letter Rev 3:14

a. The Amen 2 Cor 1:20

"Amen" is a Hebrew word meaning, "firm," "faithful," "true." It is used as a particle of affirmation, meaning, "verily," "of a truth," "so be it." This is its only instance in the Bible as a proper name. Usually it would come after an affirmation or a prayer as a sort of confirmative, "so may it be," or "thus in truth." Applied here as a title of Jesus it would be used in a sense of finality or conclusion, "The True One." The Laodicean message is God's final message, the last message of Jesus to the last church, and He is here given the fitting title of the "Amen."

b. The faithful and true witness Rev 1:5; 19:11; 22:6; John 3:11

c. The beginning of the creation of God

NEB: "The prime source of all God's creation."

JB: "The ultimate source of God's creation."

Knox: "The source from which God's creation began."

Am Tr: "The origin of God's creation."

3. Those to whom the Laodicean message is addressed

"The call to the gospel feast is first to be given in the highways. It must be given to those who claim to be in the highways of Christian experience,--to the members of the different churches. 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.' Rev 2:7 In these churches there are true worshipers and there are false worshipers. . .

"The warning for the last church also must be proclaimed to all who claim to be Christians. The Laodicean message, like a sharp, two-edged sword, must go to all the churches." 6T 76,77

"I was shown that the testimony to the Laodiceans applies to God's people at the present time." 1T 186 (Written 1856)

"If ever there was a people that needed to heed the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodicean church to be zealous and repent before God, it is the people who have had opened up before them the stupendous truths for this time, and who have not lived up to their high privileges and responsibilities." EGW RH June 4, 1889

"Can any man scrutinize narrowly the professed Church of our day, and say that we have not reached the Laodicean age? Is it not the voice of this Christendom of ours which says: 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing?' And is it not equally the fact that this selfsame Christendom of ours is 'the wretched, and the pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked?' Did the 'Mene, mene, tekel upharsin' of Belshazzar's palace better fit the ancient heathen than this modern Christian Babylon?"
J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse I, 200,201

4. Weaknesses of Laodicea

a. Neither cold nor hot Rev 3:15,16

JB: "I know all about you:, how you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were one or the other, but since you are neither, but only lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth."

(1) A church of form and pretence but lacking fervor and zeal

"The Laodicean message applies to the people of God who profess to believe present truth. The greater part are lukewarm professors, having a name but no zeal. . . They profess to love the truth, yet are deficient in Christian fervor and devotion. They dare not give up wholly and run the risk of the unbeliever, yet they are unwilling to die to self and follow out closely the principles of their faith. . .

"They are neither unconcerned nor selfishly stubborn.

They do not engage thoroughly and heartily in the work of God, identifying themselves with its interests; but they hold aloof, and are ready to leave their posts when their worldly personal interests demand it. The internal work of grace is wanting in their hearts." 4T 87,88

"The church in its lukewarm state is divided between Christ and the world. It is too religious to entirely cast off the name of Christ, and too worldly to take a firm and united stand for Him. There is much pretension but little genuine Christianity. Works are plentiful, but faith is scarce; profession is abundant, but there is but little spiritual life to correspond. Worldly pleasure and riotous living are closely associated with the Lord's supper and so-called Christian benevolence." Taylor G. Bunch, The Seven Epistles of Christ 222

(2) The offensiveness of the church's lukewarm condition

"It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named his name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling-block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him." 1T 188

"Were you cold, there would be some hope that you would be converted; but where self-righteousness girds one about, instead of the righteousness of Christ, the deception is so difficult to be seen, and the self-righteousness so hard to be put away, that the case is the most difficult to reach. An unconverted, godless sinner stands in a more favorable condition than such." 2T 176

"The coldness the Master prefers to lukewarmness is that of the unregenerate heathen who have never been touched by spiritual life. It does not mean negatively cold, but icy cold, having never been heated or mixed with the hot. Christ prefers that Laodiceans be either Christians or pagans rather than a compromise between the two." Taylor G. Bunch, The Seven Epistles of Christ, 221

(3) Rejection and acceptance--The Shaking-Time experience

"I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. . . Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." EW 270

"God leads his people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the

heart. Some endure at one point but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel, 'God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people.' Some are willing to receive one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol . . . Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge, 'They are joined to their idols, let them alone,' and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation."
IT 187,188

(4) The only hope for the Laodiceans

"The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease. They are neither cold nor hot; they occupy a neutral position, and at the same time flatter themselves that they are in need of nothing. The True Witness hates this lukewarmness." 4T 87

b. Rich and increased with goods Rev 3:17

Moffatt: "You declare, 'I am rich, I am well off, I lack nothing!'--not knowing you are a miserable creature, pitiful, poor, blind, naked."

NEB: "You say, 'How rich I am! And how well I have done! I have everything I want.' In fact, though you do not know it, you are the most pitiful wretch, poor, blind, and naked."

(1) Laodicea's self-satisfied conceit

Believe they have exalted spiritual attainments

"The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans as in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves to be in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments." 3T 252

(2) Laodicea's deplorable spiritual shortcomings

Wanting in graces of patience, faith, love, sacrifice

"As a people, we are triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain Scriptural testimony. But we are very much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and the spirit of sacrifice. . . Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received. . . They lack almost every qualification necessary to perfect Christian character." 3T 253,254

Conformed to the world

"Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean Church describe their present condition perfectly. . .

"Many of these professed Christians dress, talk, and act like the world, and the only thing by which they may be known, is their profession. Though they profess to be looking for Christ, their conversation is not in heaven, but on worldly things. . . It is evident that many who bear the name of Adventist study more to decorate their bodies and to appear well in the eyes of the world than they do to learn from the Word of God how they may be approved of Him." EW 107-108

Leaning on experiences of years ago

"Some lean upon an old experience which they had years ago; but when brought down to this heart-searching time, when all should have a daily experience, they have nothing to relate. They seem to think that a profession of truth will save them." IT 188

Feeling of satisfaction with light already given

"We must not for a moment think that there is no more light and truth to be given us. . . We are not to fold our hands in complacency, and say, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.'

"It is a fact that we have the truth, and we must hold with tenacity to the positions that cannot be shaken; but we must not look with suspicion upon any new light which God may send, and say, Really, we cannot see that we need any more light than the old truth which we have hitherto received, and in which we are settled. While we hold this position, the testimony of the True Witness applies

to our case its rebuke." EGW RH Aug 7, 1894 Cf GW 310

Worldliness but no living experience in the things of God

"Your pride, your love to follow the fashions of the world, your vain and empty conversation, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and the weight of evil is fearfully against you. You are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. . . Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. They know not what it is to be renewed by the grace of God. They have no living experience for themselves in the things of God." IT 189,190

Covetousness the greatest sin

"The greatest sin which now exists in the church is covetousness. God frowns upon his professed people for their selfishness." IT 194

"Worldly-mindedness, selfishness, and covetousness have been eating out the spirituality and life of God's people.

"The danger of God's people for a few years past has been the love of the world. Out of this have sprung the sins of selfishness and covetousness. The more they get of this world, the more they set their affections on it; and still they reach out for more... .

"I saw that the brethren who have possessions have a work to do to tear away from these earthly treasures, and to overcome their love of the world. Many of them love this world, love their treasure, but are not willing to see it. They must be zealous and repent of their selfish covetousness, that the love of truth may swallow up everything else. I saw that many of those who have riches will fail to buy the gold, white raiment, and eye-salve." IT 141-143

(3) The dangers of pride and self-sufficiency

"There is nothing so offensive to God, or so dangerous to the human soul, as pride and self-sufficiency. Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable." COL 154

c. Blinded regarding her deplorable condition

"What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretched-

ness. . .

"In my last vision, I was shown that even this decided message of the True Witness had not accomplished the design of God. The people slumber on in their sins. They continue to declare themselves rich, and having need of nothing. Many inquire, Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the Testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and with grievous sins? We love the truth; we are prospering; we are in no need of these testimonies of warning and reproof." 3T 252-254

"Intellect and earthly riches were powerless to remove the defects of the Laodicean church, or to remedy their deplorable condition. They were blind, yet felt that they were well off. The Spirit of God did not illumine their minds, and they did not perceive their sinfulness; therefore they did not feel the necessity of help.

"To be without the graces of the Spirit of God is sad indeed; but it is a more terrible condition to be thus destitute of spirituality and of Christ, and yet try to justify ourselves by telling those who are alarmed for us that we need not their fears and pity. Fearful is the power of self-deception on the human mind! What blindness! setting light for darkness and darkness for light!" 4T 88

"No stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes them believe that they are right, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against him. They mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof. They suppose that they are rich, and have need of nothing, when they are poor, wretched, blind, and naked, and need all things." IT 406,407

d. Mistaking activity for piety

"Is Laodicea then a victim of spiritual hallucinations? We think not. . . What, then, is the reason that God, contemplating the condition of the church of Laodicea, sees one thing, while Laodicea, considering her own status, beholds an entirely different condition? The reason lies in the fact that God and Laodicea are really looking at two different things. Laodicea gazes upon material things. She tends to observe her achievements, which are not inconsiderable. She thinks of her missionaries at the ends of the earth. She recalls the hospitals and dispensaries which her wealth has erected and which her generosity maintains. She surveys the schools, academies, and colleges in which she purposes to lead her young people in the way that is right. She counts her printing presses and publishing houses, established to enlighten the world. She remembers her stately houses of worship, erected in many cities of many lands. She counts her membership and analyzes her offerings. Her mind goes back to her humble beginnings, and traverses with a subtle and unconscious pride the years of growth, of progress, of attainment. It is a splendid showing. Laodicea is

happy, is complacent. She has a flawless doctrine, a competent organization, a triumphant message." Gwynne Dalrymple, "The Church of Laodicea," ST Nov 14, 1933

"In the estimation of the rabbis it was the sum of religion to be always in a bustle of activity. They depended upon some outward performance to show their superior piety. Thus they separated their souls from God, and built themselves up in self-sufficiency. The same dangers still exist. As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity." DA 362

5. God's counsel to Laodicea

a. To buy true riches from God Rev 3:18

- (1) Gold tried in the fire James 2:5; Gal 5:6; TM 149;
5T 168

"The gold tried in the fire is faith that works by love. Only this can bring us into harmony with God." COL 158

"Faith and love are golden treasures, elements that are greatly wanting among God's people. I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof, is shutting away the light from God's people. Unbelief is closing their eyes, so that they are ignorant of their true condition. 3T 255

"The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire, is faith and love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested and the more brilliant is its luster." 4T 88

- (2) White raiment Rev 19:7,8; Isa 64:6; 52:1; 61:10

"The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience." 4T 88

"By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. To the church it is given 'that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,' 'not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' The fine linen, says the Scripture, 'is the righteousness of saints.' It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour. . .

"When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah." COL 310,312

- (3) Eyesalve to see Ps 119:18;105, 11; Tit 2:11,12;
1 John 2:20,27

"Let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer; and eyesalve, which is the grace of God, and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things, and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir."
3T 254

"The Laodiceans boasted of a deep knowledge of Bible truth, a deep insight into the Scriptures. They were not entirely blind, else the eye-salve would have done nothing to restore their sight, and enable them to discern the true attributes of Christ." "The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. . . The 'eye salve,' the Word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow." EGW RH Nov 23, 1897

"The eye-salve is that wisdom and grace which enable us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise." 4T 88

6. Laodicea's message of rebuke a message of love Rev 3:19

a. Laodicea's need to realize her true condition and repent

"The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease. . . They were blind, yet felt that they were well off. The Spirit of God did not illumine their minds, and they did not perceive their sinfulness; therefore they did not feel the necessity of help." 4T 87,88

"The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They knew not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. . .

"They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God, before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit."
3T 253

b. The purpose of the Laodicean message--to bring repentance

The purpose of the Laodicean message is not to condemn but to save. It is a message of rebuke, but the object of that rebuke is to bring the church to the place where it will repent and be saved.

"It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel." 1T 186

c. The Laodicean rebuke prompted by the spirit of love
Heb 12:5,6; Isa 26:9

"The Laodicean message presents a very dark picture of the present-day church, and it would be hopelessly discouraging if it were not for the fact that the rebuke is the rebuke of love. The Laodicean message is a love message from the great lover of mankind. It makes a vast difference whether a rebuke is spoken in anger or love, whether the motive is to wound and destroy, or heal and restore. Those who use the Laodicean message to denounce and discourage are using it wrongfully. Jesus reproves and chastens the Laodiceans only because they are very dear to Him." Taylor G. Bunch, The Seven Epistles of Christ, 242,243

d. Ministers moved by the spirit of love will proclaim this message

"Ministers who are preaching present truth should not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans. . .

"This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. . .

"The people of God must see their wrongs, and arouse to zealous repentance. . . The pointed testimony must live in the church. This alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans."
3T 257,259,260

e. Individuals moved by the spirit of love will accept this message

"It is easy to accept reproof and even severe discipline when the one who administers them is controlled not by envy or anger but by a love that always acts for the best interests of the reprovved. The rebuke of genuine love awakens a response of love in the heart of the offender, for love always begets love."
Taylor G. Bunch, The Seven Epistles of Christ, 243

"This fearful message will do its work. . . As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God." 1T 186

7. Christ standing at the door of the heart Rev 3:20

a. The graciousness of Christ's invitation

"Oh, how precious was this promise, as it was shown to me in vision! 'I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' Oh, the love, the wondrous love of God. After all our lukewarmness and sins he says, 'Return unto me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings.' This was repeated by the angel a number of times." 1T 143

b. Every warning, reproof or entreaty a knock at the door

"Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance." DA 489, 490

c. Christ will not force entrance

"Christ never forces His company upon anyone. He interests Himself in those who need Him. Gladly will He enter the humblest home, and cheer the lowliest heart. But if men are too indifferent to think of the heavenly Guest, or ask Him to abide with them, He passes on." DA 800

d. Obstacles to be cleared

"Many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the door. Others have rolled the world before the door of their heart, which bars the door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in." 1T 143

e. The power of a heart surrendered to Christ

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan." DA 324

f. The joy and peace of fellowship with Christ John 14:27;
Isa 26:3, Matt 11:28; Rom 14:17

8. The promise to the overcomer Rev 3:21; Eze 21:27; Isa 9:7;
Matt 25:31; Luke 1:32,33; Isa 52:1,2; 2 Tim 4:8

V

THE SEALS AND THE SEALING WORK

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Rev 4:1 to 8:1
- II. THEME--THE WORK OF SALVATION COMPLETED IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY, THE RIGHTEOUS TRIUMPHANT, THE WICKED LOST
- III. THE SCENES UNFOLDED
- A. God the Father upon His throne Rev 4--A Judgment Scene
1. A door opened into the throne room of heaven V 1; Eze 1:1
 - a. God seated upon His throne Rev 4:2; Dan 7:9; Isa 6:1
 - (1) Like a jasper and a sardine stone. Rev 4:3; Ex 28:17,20
Cf Isa 63:2-4; Rev 19:12-15
 - RSV: "Like jasper and carnelian"
 - Jasper--red in color; last stone on the breastplate
of the high priest
 - Sardius--a reddish gem; first stone on the breast-
plate of the high priest
 - b. A rainbow about the throne Rev 4:3; Eze 1:28

"As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. . . It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation full and complete."
EGW Sp Tm 1, 44,45

"As the bow in the cloud results from the union of sunshine and shower, so the bow above God's throne represents the union of His mercy and his justice." **Ed** 115

"In heaven the semblance of a rainbow encircles the throne, and overarches the head of Christ. . . When man by his great wickedness invites the divine judgments, the Saviour, interceding with the Father in his behalf, points to the bow in the clouds, to the rainbow around the throne and above his own head, as a token of the mercy of God toward the repentant sinner." PP 107
 - c. Twenty-four elders Rev 4:4,10,11
 - (1) Twenty-four courses of priests 1 Chr 24:1-18;
Heb 8:2,5; 9:23,24
 - (2) Redeemed from this earth Rev 5:9; Matt 27:52; Eph 4:8
 - (3) Seated on thrones Rev 4:4; 20:4-6 Dan 7:22;
1 Cor 6:2,3

RSV: "Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders."

- (4) Clad in white Rev 19:8
- (5) Gold crowns 2 Tim 4:8
- (6) Worship God Rev 4:10,11
- (7) Their functions

"I find, then, in these enthroned Elders, the highest manifested glory of the risen and glorified saints. They are in heaven. They are around the throne of Deity. They are pure and holy, wearing white, 'which is the righteousness of the saints.' They are partakers of celestial dominion. They are kings of glory, with golden crowns. They are settled, and at home in their exalted dignities; not standing and waiting as servants, but seated as royal counsellors of the Almighty. They are assessors of the great Judge of quick and dead, the spectators of all that transpires in heaven and earth, and participants in the judgment of the world for its sins." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 253

- d. Lightnings, thunderings, voices Rev 4:5; Ex 19:16; Rev 11:19; 16:17-19; 1 Sam 2:10; 7:10; 2 Sam 22:14,15

"The terrors of Sinai were to represent to the people the scenes of the judgment. The sound of a trumpet summoned Israel to meet with God. The voice of the arch-angel and the trump of God shall summon, from the whole earth, both the living and the dead to the presence of their Judge. . . . At the great judgment day, Christ will come 'in the glory of His Father with His angels.' He shall then sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations." PP 339

- e. Seven lamps of fire Rev 4:5; 1:4; 5:6; Zech 4:10; Prov 15:3; Heb 4:13

"As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there 'seven lamps of fire burning before the throne.' . . . Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw the 'seven lamps of fire.'" PP 356

- f. Sea of glass Rev 4:6; 15:2; Eze 1:22; 28:14; Ex 24:10
- g. Four living creatures Rev 4:6-9

The translation "four beasts," which appears in the King James version is not correct, and is one of the most unfortunate translations in the entire Bible. The Greek term

"zoa" means "living ones," It actually has reference to four of the leading angels of heaven.

RSV: "Round the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind."

NEB: "Round the throne itself, were four living creatures, covered with eyes, in front and behind."

Knox: "And in the midst, where the throne was, round the throne itself, were four living figures, that had eyes everywhere to see before them and behind them.

(1) Their number--four

Four is the universal, all-inclusive number. In Rev 7:1 John saw "four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth," thus representing the work of the angelic forces throughout the world, holding in check the various forces of strife and disruption until the work of God should be finished. The prediction in Eze 7:2 that an end had come upon the four corners of the land, means that the destruction ahead would involve the entire land. Christ's prediction in Matt 24:31 that the angels "shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," means the gathering of God's elect from all the earth.

(2) Their location--on the four sides of the throne

(3) Their appearance

- (a) Eyes everywhere
- (b) Fourfold nature

- 1) First like a lion
- 2) Second like a calf
- 3) Third like a man
- 4) Fourth like an eagle

The description here given of the appearance of the four living creatures is highly symbolic, with the symbols portraying the four types of missions heavenly angels are called upon to perform on the earth. Similar symbolism is in chapter five applied to Christ, where in v 5 He is pictured as a lion, but in v 6 as a lamb. It is to the wicked that Jesus is as a lion, while to the righteous He is a lamb. "The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejecters of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful." AA 589

Since Bible translators did not always understand

the meaning of the symbols employed, they at times made erroneous translations, as was done in the King James Version where the Greek term "zoa" was translated as "beasts" instead of "living creatures." A similar mistake was made in Rev 8:13 in the King James Version, where the Greek term "aetos"--eagle, is incorrectly translated "angel." In the NEB the translation is correct: "Then I looked, and I heard an eagle calling with a loud cry as it flew in mid-heaven" "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth when the trumpets sound which the three last angels must now blow!" The fact that the angel who pronounced the woe messages in Rev 8:13 is pictured as an eagle, is proof of the fact that the heavenly messengers were at times called upon to perform missions comparable to those of eagles.

- (c) Six wings
- (4) Their worship of God
 - (a) Cry, "Holy, holy, holy"
 - (b) Give glory and honour and thanks to God
- (5) Their relationship to other Biblical characters
 - (a) Seraphim
 - 1) About God seated on His throne Isa 6:1,2
 - 2) Have six wings Isa 6:2
 - 3) Cry, "Holy, holy, holy" Isa 6:3
 - (b) Cherubim
 - 1) Four in number Eze 10:9,10
 - 2) In the presence of the throne Eze 10:1;
1 Sam 4:4
 - 3) Have four wings Eze 10:5,12,21
 - 4) Eyes everywhere Eze 10:12
 - 5) Had four faces Eze 10:14,21,22
 - a) First like a cherub
 - b) Second like a man
 - c) Third like a lion
 - d) Fourth like an eagle
 - (c) Living creatures of Ezekiel 1
 - 1) Four in number Eze 1:5
 - 2) In the presence of the throne Eze 1:22,26-28
 - 3) Had four wings Eze 1:6
 - 4) Had four faces Eze 1:6,10
 - a) Like a man
 - b) Like a lion on the right side

- c) Like an ox on the left side
- d) Like an eagle

(d) Chariots of Zechariah

- 1) Four in number Zech 6:1
- 2) Spirits of the heavens Zech 6:5
- 3) Stand in the presence of God Zech 6:5
- 4) Horses of four colors

- a) Red Zech 6:2
- b) Black Zech 6:2
- c) White Zech 6:3
- d) Grisled Zech 6:3

- 5) Chariots of God are angels Ps 68:17

"Jesus then clothes Himself with precious garments. . . When fully attired, He was surrounded by angels, and in a flaming chariot he passed within the second veil." EW 251

(e) Horsemen of Zechariah

- 1) Rider on a red horse Zech 1:8
- 2) Other riders

Moffatt: "And behind him riders on horses that were chestnut, black, sorrel, and white."

JB: "Behind him were horses, red and sorrel and black and white."

NEB: "Behind him were other horses, black, dapple, and white."

NAB: "Behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses."

- 3) The ones whom God hath sent into the earth Zech 1:10

(f) Figures on tribal standards

According to Jewish tradition the tribes of Israel encamped in the wilderness about the tabernacle were under the standards of certain tribes--to the east under the standard of Judah, a lion; to the south, Reuben, a man; to the west, Ephraim, an ox; and to the north, Dan, an eagle.

The brief picture given of the four living creatures in the fourth chapter of Revelation reveals

little concerning their exact nature and responsibilities. But by putting all the available information together some idea may be secured of their functions. Their closeness to the throne would indicate that they are personages of great importance. They stand and minister in the very presence of God. They are closer to the throne than the four and twenty elders. They are on the four sides of the throne. All that the throne stands for, they stand for. They have eyes everywhere, so they see everything and are able to report and direct with perfect knowledge and wisdom. It is they who lead in the worship before God's throne, for it is when they have raised their voices in glory and praise that the four and twenty elders fall down in adoration before the Creator of heaven and earth. They are four-fold in character, combining the wisdom and insight of all the orders of creation,--the reason, intelligence, devotion, and spiritual ardour of man; the majesty, courage, and boldness of the lion; the submissiveness, patience, and strength of the ox; and the vision, keenness of sight, swiftness of action, and striking power of the eagle.

Being connected with the sanctuary of God in heaven, the living creatures must have some important responsibilities in connection with the sanctuary services and God's work of salvation and judgment of men. Their service must perforce be of a different nature than that of the twenty-four elders who in the earthly sanctuary are represented by the twenty-four orders of priests. The living creatures about God's throne are in the earthly sanctuary represented by the cherubim above the mercy seat, these in turn being representative of the angelic hosts. "On each end of the mercy-seat was fixed a cherub of pure, solid gold. Their faces were turned toward each other, and were looking reverentially downward toward the mercy-seat, which represents all the heavenly angels looking with interest and reverence to the law of god." I SP 272

While the elders are representatives of men to God, the living creatures are representatives of God to man. While the elders are counsellors with God, the living creatures are observers for God and executors of the divine decrees. While the service of the elders is with God in heaven, the service of the living creatures is both in the great sanctuary of heaven and among the sinners and the righteous of earth. "Of the

angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Heb 1:7. While the living creatures may be regarded as of the angels, they may more properly be regarded as above the angels, the living ones at the side of God and at the command of God, ready to be instantly dispatched to any part of this world or God's great universe. They are at all four points of the compass, in command of all God's activities silently and unseen, directing the affairs of earth according to the plans of heaven.

A fuller knowledge of the living creatures may be secured from a more detailed study of these beings and their activities.

(a) Cherubim

- 1) Identical with the living creatures
Eze 10:15,20; 1:5,10
- 2) God dwells between the cherubim 1 Sam 4:4;
2 Sam 6:2; Ps 99:1; Num 7:89
- 3) Lucifer once the anointed cherub Eze 28:14,
16
- 4) Gabriel now occupies Lucifer's former
position DA 693,99,234
 - a) Stands in the presence of God Luke 1:19
 - b) Sent to God's servants Dan 8:16; 9:21;
Luke 1:19,26
 - c) Sent to combat the efforts of Satan
PK 571,572
- 5) Keep the way to the tree of life Gen 3:24
- 6) God's glory leaves the cherub as final
judgments fall Eze 9:3; 10:4
- 7) Coals of fire taken from between the cherubim
and scattered at time of judgment Eze 10:
2,6,7
- 8) Sound of cherubims' wings as the voice of God
Eze 10:5
- 9) Form of a man's hand under the wings of the
cherubim Eze 10:8
- 10) Four wheels, one by each cherub Eze 10:9
 - a) Wheels the color of beryl Eze 10:9
 - b) A wheel in the midst of a wheel Eze 10:10
 - c) Turn not as they go Eze 10:11
 - d) Wheels are full of eyes Eze 10:12
 - e) A voice calls out to the wheels
Eze 10:13
 - f) Wheels move with the cherubs Eze 10:16,19
 - g) Spirit of the living creatures is in the
wheels Eze 10:17

- 11) Glory of God departs from the threshold and again stands over the cherubs Eze 10:18
- 12) Cherubs mount from the earth and stand at the door of east side of God's house Eze 10:19

(b) Living creatures of Ezekiel

- 1) Four living creatures come out of a cloud, fire, and whirlwind from the north Eze 1:4,5
- 2) Hand of a man under their wings Eze 1:8
- 3) Go wherever the Spirit goes Eze 1:12
- 4) Turn not as they go Eze 1:17
- 5) Appearance like burning coals of fire, lightning going forth from the fire Eze 1:13
- 6) Run and return like flashes of lightning Eze 1:14
- 7) Wheels upon the earth by the living creatures Eze 1:15
- 8) Noise of their wings heard as they go Eze 1:24
- 9) The likeness of a throne above them Eze 1:26
 - a) One seated on the throne Eze 1:26
 - 1) Has the appearance of amber or fire Eze 1:27
 - b) A bow as in the rain, about the throne Eze 1:28

(c) Chariots of Zechariah

- 1) Four chariots Zech 6:1
- 2) Horses of four colors Zech 6:2,3
 - a) Red
 - b) Black
 - c) White
 - d) Dappled or grisled
- 3) Are the four spirits of the heavens Zech 6:5
- 4) Go from standing before the Lord of all the earth Zech 6:5; Cf Luke 1:19
- 5) Their work is in the various parts of the earth Zech 6:6-8

NEB: "They were eager to go and range over the whole earth; so he said, go and range over the earth,' and the chariots did so."

Moffatt: "They were eager to be off and patrol the earth; so he said, 'Off with you,

patrol the earth.'"

- 6) They quiet God's spirit Zech 6:8 Cf
Zech 8:2; 9:3,4,13,14; 12:8,9

Moffatt: "'Look, those who go to the north country will satisfy my anger against the north country.'"

(d) Riders on horses of Zechariah

- 1) Horses of varied hues Zech 1:8

NEB: "Black, dappled, and white."

To understand the missions of these horses of various colors, it is necessary to understand the period with which Zechariah deals. The prophet did his work at the close of the seventy years of Babylonian captivity, when the Jews had returned from Babylon and were rebuilding their temple. At the beginning of the seventy years we are told, "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers" (Zech 1:2). Black would be a fitting symbol for the horses of that period, when God was angry with His people for their flagrant transgressions and permitted them to go into Babylonian captivity. In Babylon they had mixed experiences, some severe, some pleasant. The speckled or dappled horses would provide a fitting emblem for that time. At the end of the seventy years God said, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it. . . The Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (vss 16, 17). What more fitting color would there be for these messengers of mercy than white?

- 2) God's messengers to walk to and fro in the earth Zech 1:10

Moffatt: "'These are the couriers whom the Eternal has sent to patrol the earth.'"

NEB: "These are they whom the Lord has sent to range through the world."

- 3) Their mission performed Zech 1:11; Cf
vss 14-16,21; 2:8

If the missions of the cherubim and the intersecting wheels of Eze 1 and 10 appear to be highly complicated and difficult to understand; if the work of the horses and chariots of

Zech 1 and 6 is not always immediately clear; and if the meaning of the living creatures and the four horses and horsemen of Rev 4-6 does not always immediately come to mind, it is because the many diverse missions of heavenly angels on earth are extremely varied and complicated, and often beyond the comprehension of human beings. Angels may be messengers of hope, mercy, and salvation; they are often messengers of correction and reprimand; they at times bear tidings of final warning and stern reproof; or they may at last be sent as messengers of final judgment and doom.

(e) Heavenly agencies directing human affairs

"In the annals of human history the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through all the play and counter-play of human interests and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. . . .

"While the nations rejected God's principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine overruling purpose was working through all their movements.

"This lesson is taught in a wonderful symbolic representation given to the prophet Ezekiel. . . . The symbols presented to him revealed a power above that of earthly rulers. . . .

"A number of wheels, intersecting one another, were moved by four living beings. . . . The wheels were so complicated in arrangement that at first sight they appeared to be in confusion; but they moved in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings, sustained and guided by the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, were impelling these wheels; above them, upon the sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; and round about the throne a rainbow, the emblem of divine mercy.

"As the wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the

cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth."
Ed 173,177,178

"In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely Heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth, and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to him. The world is not without a ruler. The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of his church, in his own charge. . .

"The tireless vigilance of the heavenly messengers, and their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God's hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel. . .

"In Ezekiel's vision, God had his hand beneath the wings of the cherubim. . .

"That which appears to finite minds entangled and complicated, the Lord's hand can keep in perfect order. He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked men; and he will bring to confusion the counsels of them that plot mischief against his people." ST 753,754

(f) Pouring out of divine judgments

- a) Give vials of wrath to the plague angels
Rev 15:7
- b) Give coals of fire to judgment angel
Eze 10:2,6,7
- c) Fire and vials poured on the earth Eze 10:2;
Rev 8:5; 16:1
- d) God's judgments on man Eze 9:2,5,6;
Rev 8:5; 11:18,19; 16:18,19
- e) Messages of woe Rev 8:13

h. The service of glory and praise Rev 4:8-11

(1) The living creatures Vss 8,9

(a) A never-ending glorification of God EW 116

(b) The God they worship

- 1) Holy CT 402
- 2) Almighty
- 3) Eternal

(2) The four and twenty elders Vss 10,11

- (a) Fall down before God
- (b) Cast their crowns before the throne
- (c) God worthy of their worship

1) By virtue of His creative power

"The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. . . The holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things.'" GC 436,437

This oratorio of creation is the grandest, the most joyous song of all time. It is the anointed cherub, the leader of the heavenly choir, who first leads out in the service of praise. He is joined by the heavenly cherubim, and they in turn are joined by the twenty-four elders, who, overcome by the glorious scene, cast down their crowns before the heavenly throne. In this song all heaven unites in a spirit of thanksgiving and praise. All the righteous will have a part in this song, in person in the days of glory to come, and now in spirit as they contemplate all that God has meant to them. Only Satan and those who join with him in refusing to acknowledge the glory due to the great Creator of all, do not join in the joy of this glorious song.

B. The book sealed with seven seals Rev 5--Book of Judgment in the hand of God

1. The book Rev 5:1

- a. In the right hand of the Father upon the throne
- b. Written on both sides
- c. Sealed with seven seals

(1) Roman wills sealed with seven seals

"A written will sealed with the seals of seven witnesses, though the heir therein named only became bonorum possessor, was vailed by praetorian practice confirmed by the Emperor, and possession under it, being abundantly protected by interdiction and otherwise, was good for all purposes."

R. W. Leage, Roman Private Law 205

"A will, according to the Praetorian Testament, in Roman law bore the seven seals of the seven witnesses on the threads that secured the tablets or parchment (see Smith, Dict. of Greek and Roman Ant., p 1117). Such a Testament could not be carried into execution till all the seven seals were loosed." Charles, International Critical Commentary, Revelation, I 137

(2) The nature of the seven-sealed book--A book of judgment

"When Pilate washed his hands, saying 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person,' the priests joined with the ignorant mob in declaring passionately, 'His blood be on us, and on our children.

"Thus the Jewish leaders made their choice. Their decision was registered in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, the book which no man could open. In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah." COL 294

"The man who thinks that should he confess his sins, he would show weakness, will not find pardon, will not see Christ as his Redeemer, but will go on and on in transgression, making blunder after blunder, and adding sin to sin. What will such an one do in the day that the books are opened, and every man is judged according to the things written in the books?

"The fifth chapter of Revelation needs to be closely studied. It is of great importance to those who shall act a part in the work of God for these last days. There are some who are deceived. They do not realize what is coming on the earth. Those who have permitted their minds to become beclouded in regard to what constitutes sin, are fearfully deceived. Unless they make a decided change, they will be found wanting when God pronounces judgment upon the children of men 9T 266,267

"When the justice of God was expressed in judicial sentence, declaring the final disposition of Satan, that he should be utterly consumed with all those who ranked under his banner, all Heaven rang with hallelujahs, and "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to have all authority and power, and dominion, and glory." 3 SP 186. Cf Rev 5:9,12,13

2. Who is worthy to loose the seals and open the book? Rev 5:2
 - a. No man in heaven, earth, or under the earth worthy Rev 5:3
 - b. John weeps because no one was found worthy Rev 5:4

"We are told that the book had unknown revelations in it, which

John was very impatient to understand; and that his much weeping was caused by the prospect of having his personal desire to obtain a knowledge of the future, ungratified. Poor John! what a silly mortal, to be troubling himself about unrevealed prophecy, and to keep up this crying in heaven because there was no one to open the book for him! . . . What a picture of inspiration, that it should thus strip a venerable and disciplined servant of God of all manly dignity, and make of him a silly and peevish child! No, no; John knew by that Spirit in which he was, what that sealed book meant. He knew that if no one was found worthy and able to take it from the hand of God, and to break its seals, that all the promises of the prophets, and all the hopes of the saints, and all the preintimations of a redeemed world, must fail. . . Was the promised inheritance, now at the ripened moment for its recovery, to go by default into eternal alienation? How could he bear the thought? . . . And in this view of the case, well might an earnest prophet weep without damage to his meekness or his honor. . . That book, unlifted and unopened, is the Church's brief and distress. It bespeaks the inheritance unredeemed--the children still estranged from their purchased possession. But that book opened, is the Church's joy and glory. It is the assertion of her reinstatement into what Adam lost--the recovery to her of all of which she has been so long and cruelly deprived by sin. Until, therefore, that book is opened, and its seals broken, the people of God must remain in privation, sorrow, and tears." J. S. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 276-278

c. The One worthy to open the book

- (1) The Lion of the tribe of Judah Rev 5:5; Gen 49:9,10
- (2) The Root of David Rev 5:5; Isa 11:1,10,12; Matt 21:9; Rev 22:16

"His being introduced just here as such implies that this 'book' must relate to the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah, and that it is in the capacity of the divine founder of the throne of Judah that He was found worthy and able to take the book, to loose the seven seals thereof, and to read its contents into execution."

W. C. Stevens, Revelation the Crown-Jewel of Biblical Prophecy, 117

- (3) The Lamb as it had been slain Rev 5:6; Isa 53:7; John 1:29

"The Saviour is presented before John under the symbols of the 'Lion of the tribe of Judah,' and of a 'Lamb as it had been slain.' These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejecters of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful." AA 589

- (a) Seven horns--symbols of power, kingly authority Deut 33:17; Matt 28:18; Rev 1:5; Dan 4:17

- (b) Seven eyes--symbols of insight, penetration
Zech 3:8,9; 4:10; 2 Chr 16:9

The number seven for the horns and eyes denotes fullness of power and wisdom

- 1) The seven spirits of God

d. The book of destiny

Although no name has been given to the book in the hands of Him who sat upon the throne, its nature is clear. It is the great book of destiny, the book which when opened will reveal the fate of the world and of all who have ever lived upon it. This book has to do with condemnation,--with the condemnation of those who put Christ to death, and all who reject His saving grace. It has to do with redemption and salvation,--the salvation of all who accept Jesus as the Lamb of God. The One who opens this book is at once the one who smites and the one who redeems; He is the Lion and the Lamb, the One whose power it is to save and whose right it is to condemn. This is the One who has in His hand the title deed of the world, and who possesses the right to give it to whomsoever He will. Only Christ has this power, and only Christ can open this book of destiny.

"At his creation, Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. . . . When man became Satan's captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became 'the god of this world.' He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam. But Christ, by his sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, would not only redeem man, but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second. Says the prophet, 'O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion.' And the apostle Paul points forward to the 'redemption of the purchased possession.' . . .

"God gave his own dear Son--one equal with himself--to bear the penalty of transgression, and thus he provided a way by which they might be restored to his favor, and brought back to their Eden home. Christ undertook to redeem man, and to rescue the world from the grasp of Satan.' PP 67,69

"When Satan declared to Christ, The kingdom and glory of the world are delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it, he stated what was true only in part, and he declared it to serve his own purpose of deception. Satan's dominion was that wrested from Adam, but Adam was the vicegerent of the Creator. His was not an independent rule. The earth is God's, and He has committed all things to His Son. Adam was to reign subject to Christ. When Adam betrayed his sovereignty into Satan's hands, Christ still remained the rightful King." DA 129

"The opening of the seals means the successive steps by which God in Christ clears the way for the final reading of the book at the visible setting up of Christ's kingdom. . . None is worthy to do so save the Lamb; for He alone has redeemed man's forfeited inheritance, of which the book is the title deed. The question (v 2) is not, Who should reveal the destinies of the Church (this any inspired prophet might do)? but, Who has the WORTH to give man a new title to his lost inheritance?"
 A. R. Fausset, A Commentary, Critical, Experimental and Practical, VI 674

"It is not ecclesiastical history, which this book is introduced to foreshow, but something to which all ecclesiastical history is only the prelude and introduction, and which the Scriptures call 'The redemption of the purchased possession.'
 . . .

"The word redemption comes to us, and takes its significance from certain laws and customs of the ancient Jews. Under these laws and customs, it was impossible to alienate estates beyond a given time. Whatever disposition one may have been forced to make of his lands, and whoever might be found in possession of them, the year of Jubilee returned them to the lawful representatives of their former owners. Upon this regulation there was found another, which made it the right of the nearest of kin to one who, through distress or otherwise, had alienated his inheritance to another party, to step in and redeem it; that is, to buy it back, and retake it. . .

"There has been an inheritance forfeited and disposed away for these thousands of years. . . Everything testifies that it was a high, holy, and blessed investiture. But, alas, its original possessor sinned, and it passed out of his hands to the disinheritance of all his seed. The sealed book, the title-deeds of its forfeiture and mortgage, are in the hands of God, and strangers and intruders have overrun and debased it. And from the days of Adam until now, those deeds have lain in the Almighty's hands, with no one to take them up or to dispossess the aliens. . .

"Sin cannot vitiate any of the rights of God. Satan's possession is a mere usurpation, permitted for the time, but in no way detrimental to the proprietorship of the Almighty. The true right still lives in the hand of God, until the proper Goel comes to Redeem it, by paying the price, and ejecting the alien and his seed. . .

"What, indeed, have been all the endeavors of unsanctified men, in politics, in science, and in all the arts of civilization, improvement, philosophy, and even religion, but to work out this problem of successful repossession of what was lost in Adam. . . What, indeed, has been the spring of the activity of the underworld, in these ages of seductive effort with mortals, but to

persuade men that they can make good the lying promise, 'Ye shall be as God,' and in spite of the Almighty, and without Him, to realize through human expansion and demoniacal guidance, the dream of a better destiny for the world and the race. It has also been in the plan of God so far, to drop the reins to His rebellious creatures, to permit the experiment to be carried to its utmost, and to give scope for its most conspicuous failure at the last. . . The spirit of liberty, democratic confederation, and universal communism and enlightenment, uniting largely with elements of infernal origin, is now trying it, and will perpetuate its efforts to the most gigantic and bewitching consummation that the world shall ever have seen, but only to work out the most dreadful failure that has yet occurred. . .

"Jesus is the Lion sprung from Judah. . . He hath paid the redemption price of the forfeited inheritance. He is the true Goel, who, having so far triumphed and been accepted, will also prove ready and worthy to complete His work, by lifting those long-standing deeds of forfeiture, and breaking their debarring seals." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 267-280

3. The opening of the book

a. Jesus takes the book from the right hand of the Father
Rev 5:7

b. Universal acclaim of the Lamb

(1) The living creatures and elders Vss 8-10

(a) Vials of incense, the prayers of saints
EW 32,256; LS 100; PP 353

"Between the cherubim was a golden censer, and as the prayers of the saints, offered in faith, came up to Jesus, and He presented them to His Father, a cloud of fragrance arose from the incense, looking like smoke of most beautiful colors. . . As the incense ascended to the Father, the excellent glory came from the throne to Jesus, and from Him it was shed upon those whose prayers had come up like sweet incense." EW 252

(b) Song of redemption

(2) The angels about the throne Rev 5:11

(a) Worthy is the Lamb. V 12; Phil 2:5-11;
Ps 2:7-9; Eze 21:27

(3) Every creature Rev 5:13

c. The occasions for the anthem of praise

Every time there is a new disclosure of divine love and grace, there is a new outburst of praise from all creatures in heaven.

(1) Christ's taking His priestly throne after His resurrection

"The time had now come for the heavenly universe to receive their King. . .

"All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train. . .

"Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

"There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion, -- all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King. . .

"With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"

"Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.'" DA 832-835

"Not now 'upon the throne of His glory;' the kingdom of glory has not yet been ushered in. Not until His work as a mediator shall be ended, will God 'give unto Him the throne of His father David,' a kingdom of which 'there shall be no end.' As a priest, Christ is now set down with the Father in His throne." GC 416

(2) Christ's first coronation after His second advent

"The Son of God redeemed man's failure and fall; and now, through the work of the atonement, Adam is re-instated in his first dominion.

"Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight. . . He looks about him, and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, standing in the Paradise of God.

Then he casts his glittering crown at the feet of Jesus, and falling upon His breast, embraces the Redeemer. He touches the golden harp, and the vaults of heaven echo the triumphant song, 'Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again!' The family of Adam take up the strain, and cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet as they bow before Him in adoration." GC 648

"We must have a vision of the future and of the blessedness of heaven. Stand on the threshold of eternity, and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake. As they unite with the angels, they cast their crowns at the feet of the Redeemer, exclaiming: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor and glory, and blessing. . . Honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.' Rev 5:12,13

"There the redeemed ones greet those who directed them to the uplifted Saviour. They unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, 'Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.'" 8T 44

"Never can the cost of our redemption be realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer before the throne of God. Then as the glories of the eternal home burst upon our enraptured senses we shall remember that Jesus left all this for us, that He not only became an exile from the heavenly courts, but for us took the risk of failure and eternal loss. Then we shall cast our crowns at His feet, and raise the song, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'" DA 131

"While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. . .

"Then I saw Jesus lay off His priestly attire, and clothe Himself with His most kingly robes. Upon His head were many crowns, a crown within a crown. Surrounded by the angelic host, He left heaven. The plagues were falling

upon the inhabitants of the earth. . . The plan of salvation had been accomplished." EW 280,281

(3) The final coronation of Jesus at the end of the thousand years

"At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. . .

"As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the holy city. . .

"Satan consults with his angels. . . They lay their plans to take possession of the riches and glory of the New Jerusalem. . .

"Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. . .

"In the presence of the assembled inhabitants of earth and heaven the final coronation of the Son of God takes place. And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government, and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people. . .

"It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion. . . All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. . .

"As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God... . They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved; and as the wave of melody sweeps over the multitudes without the city, all with one voice exclaim, 'Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints;' and falling prostrate, they worship the Prince of life.

"Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for heaven. . . And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence. . .

"With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.'

. . .

"The hour has come when Christ occupies His rightful position, and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. . . He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in His own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. . . And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' . . .

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. . .

"The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. . .

"The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored."
GC 662-674

(4) Throughout the years of eternity

"The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. . . As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer, and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song, 'Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!'" GC 651,652

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." GC 678

(5) The spirit of this song to be our theme today

"Why not awake the voice of our spiritual songs in the travels of our pilgrimage? . . .

"The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. . .

"God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever." 6T 368

d. The living creatures and the elders bow and worship God
Rev 5:14

e. The significance of the striking scenes of Revelation five

C. The opening of the seals Rev 6:6,7; 8:1--A MARTIAL SCENE

An important aid in Bible study is the comparison of scripture with scripture. If certain points in one place are not clear, light can often be gained from some other reference dealing with the same theme. Rev 19 contains many striking similarities to Rev 4 to 7, among which are the following:

Heaven Opened	Rev 4:1	Rev 19:11
God seated on His throne	Rev 4:2,9; 5:13	Rev 19:4
Ascription of glory and honor to God	Rev 5:12,13	Rev 19:1
Sound like thunder	Rev 6:1	Rev 19:6
God the judge and avenger	Rev 6:10	Rev 19:2
Four living creatures	Rev 4:6-9; 5:6,8; 6:1-7	Rev 19:4
Twenty-four elders	Rev 4:4,10,11; 5:8,14	Rev 19:4
White horse goes forth to battle	Rev 6:2	Rev 19:11
Crown on rider	Rev 6:2	Rev 19:12
Victory and conquest	Rev 6:2	Rev 19:15,16
Blood of the Lamb, the worthy King	Rev 5:6,9,12,13	Rev 19:7,9,13
Death by judgments of God	Rev 6:8 Cf Eze 14:21	Rev 19:15,21

In Rev 19:11 we are told that the rider of the white horse went forth to "judge and make war." In Rev 4 and 5 the basic picture is one of judgment, and in Rev 6 and 7 the scene is war. Here are four horses of various colors with their riders engaged in war. The first goes forth "conquering and to conquer," while the last bears the rider of death. These are none other than scenes in the great controversy between good and evil in which both heaven and earth are engaged, and in which the final issue will be victory and life eternal, or defeat and eternal death.

In the Bible God is frequently set forth as a warrior, alligned with the forces of righteousness to lead them on to glorious victory, or arrayed against the forces of evil to bring about their ultimate complete and final destruction.

One such picture of God as a warrior is found in Hab 3:8-15, where He is viewed as riding forth as a horseman to accomplish the salvation of His

people and the destruction of the forces of the enemy. The scene is introduced with the questions of V 8:

"Was the Lord displeased against the rivers?
Was thine anger against the rivers?
Was thy wrath against the sea,
That thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of
salvation?"

And the description continues: "Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked" (Vss 12,13).

As man surrenders himself to the guidance of God, or turns against Him in varying degrees of coldness, active resistance, stubborn perversity, or incorrigible intransigence, the attitude of God would be one of varying degrees of approval, displeasure, anger or wrath, and these could be represented by such colors as white, red, black, or the pale, livid color of death. In the Bible horses of various colors are at times employed to portray the attitudes of God in His dealings with men.

One such picture is found in Zech 1:2-17. Here the attitudes of God are said to be those of sore displeasure (V 2), indignation (V 12), and comfort and mercy (Vss 12-17). The view is that of the Babylonian captivity, at the close of which this vision was given. Here were seen "red horses, speckled, and white" (V 8). Red would be the time of God's extreme displeasure against His rebellious people when they were permitted to go into Babylonian captivity (Vss 2-6). For the mixed experiences of suffering or felicity of the seventy years in Babylon, speckled would be a fitting color. And at the end of the seventy years, when God had "returned to Jerusalem with mercies," when the temple was to be rebuilt and Zion was to be comforted and restored (Vss 16,17), there would be no more fitting color than white.

Similar imagery is employed in Zech 6:1-8 for a later period, where there are four chariots with red, black, bay, and grisled horses.

These scenes should be kept in mind in seeking for a correct understanding of the four horsemen of Rev 6:1-8.

1. The purpose and use of a seal

Seals were used extensively in the ancient East. They were placed on documents to indicate power, authority, and authenticity. Upon material objects they were employed as marks of ownership. On contracts and agreements they were regarded as guarantees of validity. An object that was sealed was under the authority and control of the individual whose seal it bore. A command or decree bearing the seal of the king carried with it the authority of the king. A commercial document bearing the seals of witnesses was regarded as legal evidence of the highest authority and marked the sealed document as authentic. A sealed package, tomb, tablet, will, or testament

was not to be opened except by the one having the authority to break the seal.

2. The lessons and basic features of the seals and the sealing messages

John's vision of the opening of the seven-sealed scroll is introduced by two chapters picturing some of the most striking and impressive scenes revealed anywhere in the word of God. The very gates of heaven are opened before the astonished gaze of the prophet and He sees God Himself seated upon His eternal throne. The supreme functionaries of the heavenly universe are present. There also is Jesus, the Lamb of God as the Saviour of those who repent, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah to the wicked who persist in their rebellion against God. A scroll sealed with seven seals is in the hand of the Father. It is a document of supreme importance, one having to do with the eternal fate of the beings of earth. In all the universe only Jesus is found worthy to break the seals and open this book. And the reason He is found worthy is given as follows: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev 5:9). After the scene of this book being given into the hands of Jesus, comes one of the most glorious scenes of the entire Bible, that of the rapture and adoration of all Heaven for the Lamb that was slain who is found worthy "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev 5:11-13). This comes at the time of Christ's final coronation.

But all this is preliminary to the prophet's vision of the opening of the seals and the sealing of the children of God. Surely we must in this latter vision have something of supreme importance involving the summation of man's highest hopes, something destined to lead man to a realization of these hopes, or failing that, to an understanding of the awful fate that awaits the doomed. The picture before us is one of life or death, of glorious victory or ignominious defeat, of calling on the rocks to hide us from the wrath of the Lamb or of irrepressible thrills of adoration and praise upon the consummation of our greatest hopes.

Notice the striking way in which these chapters set forth the contrasting fate of the righteous and the rebellious:

FOR THE SAVED	FOR THE LOST
Jesus, the Lamb slain Rev 5:6	Jesus, the Lion of Judah Rev 5:5
White horse 6:2	Black horse 6:5
Conquering and to conquer 6:2	Death and Hell 6:8
Stand before the throne 7:15	Hide in the dens and rocks 6:15
"Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne" 7:10	"Hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne" 6:16
God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes 7:17	The great day of God's wrath to come upon them 6:17
The book unsealed--	The book unsealed--
Redeemed by His blood 5:9	His blood upon them

- a. A great conflict is on between the forces of good and evil

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. . .

"The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. Now the soldiers of the cross gave way, 'as when a standard-bearer fainteth.' Isa 10:18. But their apparent retreat was but to gain a more advantageous position. . . 8T 41,42

- b. The forces of God will play an active part in this war to the very end.

"Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth, as it is in heaven. . .

"Should we not see in the world to-day Christians who in all the features of their work are worthy of the name they bear? Who aspire to the doing of deeds worthy of valiant soldiers of the cross? We are living near the close of the great conflict." 8T 42,45,46

- c. Regardless of how things may appear to the sight of men, God has the affairs of this world under control and has agencies which will carry out His will.

"In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely Heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth, and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to Him. The world is not without a ruler, The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of His church in His own charge. . .

"The tireless vigilance of the heavenly messengers, and their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God's hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel. The divine Instructor is saying to every actor in his work, as He said to Cyrus of old, 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.'" 5T 753,754

"Upon the banks of the river Chebar, Ezekiel beheld a whirlwind seeming to come from the north. . . A number of wheels, intersecting one another, were moved by four living beings. . . The wheels were so complicated in arrangement that at first sight they appeared to be in confusion; but they moved in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings, sustained and guided by the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, were impelling these wheels; above them, upon the sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; and round about the throne a rainbow, the emblem of divine mercy.

"As the wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth.

"The history of nations that one after another have occupied their allotted time and place, unconsciously witnessing to the truth of which they themselves knew not the meaning, speaks to us. To every nation and to every individual of to-day God has assigned a place in His great plan. To-day men and nations are being measured by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes." Ed 177,178

- d. God assists the righteous in their struggles and will lead them on to final triumph

"It is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Saviour in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone, and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Saviour. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; he sitteth between the cherubim; and amid the strife and tumult of nations, he guards his people still. He who ruleth in the heavens is our Saviour. . . When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of his enemies, his people will be safe in his hands." ST 754

"We may triumph gloriously; for not one watching, praying, believing soul will be ensnared by the devices of the enemy. All heaven is interested in our welfare, and waits our demand upon its wisdom and strength. Neither wicked men nor evil spirits can hinder the work of God or shut out His presence from His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises. Every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.'" EGW RH Jan 11, 1887; Mar 8, 1945

- e. God resists the wicked and thwarts their purposes

"He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His own work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men, and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people." MB 175,176

"The Lion of Judah, whose wrath will be so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of cloud will speak terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law, but light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The Arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong

to deliver the loyal." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887; Mar 8, 1945

f. God sends judgments upon men to lead them to repent

"The heavy judgments that were to befall the impenitent,--war, exile, oppression, the loss of power and prestige among the nations,--all these were to come, in order that those who would recognize in them the hand of an offended God, might be led to repent." PK 309

g. Repeated and severer judgments are sent for the purpose of causing men to consider and take heed before final judgment falls.

"The destroying angels have the commission from the Lord, 'Begin at My sanctuary.' And 'they began at the ancient men which were before the house.' If the warnings which God has given are neglected, if you suffer sin to be cherished, you are sealing your soul's destiny; you will be weighed in the balances and found wanting." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887; Mar 8, 1945

"'And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell. . . . But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.' . . .

"The Lord has blotted out two of our largest institutions that were established in Battle Creek, and has given warning after warning, even as Christ gave warning to Bethsaida and Capernaum . . . The Saviour urges the erring ones to repent. Those who humble their hearts and confess their sins will be pardoned. Their transgressions will be forgiven. But the man who thinks that should he confess his sins, he would show weakness, will not find pardon. . . . What will such an one do in the day that the books are opened, and every man is judged according to the things written in the books?

"The fifth chapter of Revelation needs to be closely studied. It is of great importance to those who shall act a part in the work of God for these last days. There are some who are deceived. . . . Unless they make a decided change, they will be found wanting when God pronounces judgment upon the children of men. . . .

"'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair. . . . And the heaven departed as a scroll. . . . The mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?' Rev 6:12-17

"'After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude. . . . stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes,

and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.' Rev 7:9-17

"In these scriptures two parties are brought to view. One party permitted themselves to be deceived, and took sides with those with whom the Lord has a controversy. . .

"'Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come . . . But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Matt 24:42-51." 9T 265-269

- h. God at length sends final irrevocable judgments of doom and death upon the finally impenitent

"With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One keeps an account with all nations. While his mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when a certain limit which God has fixed is reached, the ministry of his wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading in their behalf." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887

"Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfil the purpose of 'the Watcher and the Holy One.' Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires,--Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another.

"While the nations rejected God's principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, overruling purpose was working through all their movements.

"This lesson is taught in a wonderful symbolic representation given to the prophet Ezekiel during his exile in the land of the Chaldeans. . .

"The final overthrow of all earthly dominions is plainly foretold in the word of truth. In the prophecy uttered when sentence from God was pronounced upon the last king of Israel is given the message:--

"'Thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; . . . exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more,

until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.'

"The crown removed from Israel passed successively to the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. God says, 'It shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.' . . .

"At this time, before the great final crisis, as before the world's first destruction, men are absorbed in the pleasures and the pursuits of sense. . .

"From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the pages of Holy Writ, they need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and its magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld,-- power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring,--how completely has it passed away! As 'the flower of the grass,' it has perished. So perishes all that has not God for its foundation." Ed 176,177,179,183

i. The timetable of this world's affairs is under the control of Heaven

"The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are to-day in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order. . .

"To-day the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Everything in our world is in agitation. Before our eyes is fulfilling the Saviour's prophecy of the events to precede His coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.'" Ed 178,179

"The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitations has nearly come. Although loth to punish, nevertheless he will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril. . .

"Christ upon the Mount of Olives rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede his second coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars.' 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.' While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application in these last days.

"John also was a witness of the terrible scenes that will take place as signs of Christ's coming. He saw armies mustering for battle, and men's hearts failing them for fear. . . He saw the vials of God's wrath opened, and pestilence, famine, and death come upon the inhabitants of earth.

"Already the restraining Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the earth. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession. Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. . .

"The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord; the world is not without a ruler. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of his church, in his own hands." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887

- j. Angels of God are now holding the winds and keeping the events of earth under divine control till God's work is finished

"Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth; and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture." Ed 179,180

- k. The present is a time of tremendous interest and concern, for the world is face to face with the hour of its last great crisis

"The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,--that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis." Ed 179

"Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in perils by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void his law. When God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand?. . . To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few,--this will be our test. . .

"The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that his fan is in his hand, and that he soon will thoroughly purge his floor. . .

"The prophet, looking down the ages, had this time presented before his vision. The nations of this age have been the recip-

ients of unprecedented mercies. The choicest of Heaven's blessings have been given them; but increased pride, covetousness, idolatry, contempt of God, and base ingratitude, are written against them. They are fast closing up their account with God . . .

"We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The Lord is at the door. There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived. New controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not even dreamed of. . .

"Let all who have received the light, who have had the opportunity of reading and hearing the prophecy, take heed to keep those things that are written therein; 'for the time is at hand.'" EGW RH Jan 11, 1887

1. Before the final crisis breaks, God will draw a sharp dividing line between the loyal and disloyal, marking off plainly those who are to be eternally His

"The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. . .

"Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. . .

"When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon his people. . .

"Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. . .

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. . .

"When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for Heaven." 5T 212-216

"The command is, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done

in the midst thereof.'. . .

"In the time when his wrath shall go forth in judgments, the humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul-anguish. . .

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. The Lord commissions his messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: 'Go ye after him through the city, and smite:. . . but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.'

"Here we see that the church--the Lord's sanctuary--was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interest of the people, had betrayed their trust. . .

"Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they may not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but when God shall bid his angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of his avenging wrath as no pen can picture." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887

- m. The lessons that God's people must learn are lessons of trust, faith, resignation, and courage

"The important future is before us. To meet its trials and temptations, and to perform its duties, will require great faith, energy, and perseverance. . .

"In the time of trial just before us, God's pledge of security will be placed upon those that have kept the word of His patience. If you have complied with the conditions of God's word, Christ will be to you a refuge from the storm. . ." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887; Mar 8, 1945

"When the Lord comes forth as an avenger, he will also come as a protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity, and kept themselves unspotted from the world. . .

"Courage, fortitude, faith, and implicit trust in God's power to save, do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right, the children of God were sealing their destiny. . .

"Oh, for living, active faith! We need it; we must have it, or we shall faint and fail in the day of trial. The darkness that will then rest upon our path must not discourage us, or drive us to despair. It is the vail with which God covers his glory when he comes to impart rich blessings. We should know this by our past experience. In that day when God has a controversy

with his people, this experience will be a source of comfort and hope." 5T 210,213,215

- n. At times of severe crisis, when the forces of evil are seemingly triumphant, God would have His people look upon Him seated upon His eternal throne, and take courage in His great love and power

(1) Isaiah

"It was under circumstances of difficulty and discouragement that Isaiah, while yet a young man, was called to the prophetic mission. Disaster was threatening his country. By their transgression of God's law the people of Judah had forfeited his protection, and the Assyrian forces were about to come against the kingdom of Judah. . . Were the gods of Nineveh to rule the earth, in defiance of the God of heaven?

"Such thoughts as these were crowding upon his mind as he stood under the portico of the holy temple. Suddenly the gate and the inner vail of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he was permitted to gaze within, upon the holy of holies, where even the prophet's feet might not enter. There rose up before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, while his train filled the temple. . .

"What though earthly powers should be arrayed against Judah? What though Isaiah should meet with opposition and resistance in his mission? He had seen the King, the Lord of hosts; he had heard the song of the seraphim, 'The whole earth is full of his glory;' and the prophet was nerved for the work before him. The memory of this vision was carried with him throughout his long and arduous mission." 5T 749-751

(2) Ezekiel

"Ezekiel, the mourning exile prophet, in the land of the Chaldeans, was given a vision teaching the same lesson of faith in the mighty God of Israel. . . A number of wheels of strange appearance, intersecting one another, were moved by four living creatures. High above all these 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 it.' . . .

"There were wheels within wheels, in an arrangement so complicated that at first sight they appeared to Ezekiel to be all in confusion. But when they moved, it was with beautiful exactness, and in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings were impelling these wheels, and above all, upon the glorious sapphire throne, was the Eternal One. . .

"This vision was given to Ezekiel at a time when his mind was filled with gloomy forebodings. He saw the land of his fathers lying desolate. The city that was once full of people was no longer inhabited. The voice of mirth and the song of praise were no more heard within her walls. The prophet himself was a stranger in a strange land, where boundless ambition and savage cruelty reigned supreme. That which he saw and heard of human tyranny and wrong distressed his soul, and he mourned bitterly day and night. But the wonderful symbols presented before him beside the river Chebar, revealed an overruling power mightier than that of earthly rulers. Above the proud and cruel monarchs of Assyria and Babylon, the God of mercy and truth was enthroned.

"The wheel-like complications that appeared to the prophet to be involved in such confusion, were under the guidance of an infinite hand. The Spirit of God; revealed to him as moving and directing these wheels, brought harmony out of confusion; so the whole world was under his control. Myriads of glorified beings were ready at his word to overrule the power and policy of evil men, and bring good to his faithful ones." 5T 751,752

(3) Zechariah

"Zechariah had a series of visions regarding the work of God in the earth. These messages, given in the form of parables and symbols, came at a time of great uncertainty and anxiety, and were of peculiar significance to the men who were advancing in the name of the God of Israel. It seemed to the leaders as if the permission granted the Jews to rebuild was about to be withdrawn; the future appeared very dark. God saw that His people were in need of being sustained and cheered by a revelation of His infinite compassion and love." PK 580

(4) The disciples of Jesus and John

"The Saviour beheld the years that stretched out before His disciples, not, as they had dreamed, lying in the sunshine of worldly prosperity and honor, but dark with the tempests of human hatred, and Satanic wrath. Amid national strife and ruin, the steps of the disciples would be beset with perils, and often their hearts would be oppressed by fear. They were to see Jerusalem a desolation, the temple swept away, its worship forever ended, and Israel scattered to all lands, like wrecks on a desert shore. Jesus said: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.' 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.' . . . Yet Christ's followers were not to fear that their hope was lost, or that God had forsaken the earth. The power and the glory belong unto Him whose great purposes would still move on unthwarted toward their consummation."

"In like manner, when God was about to open to the beloved John the history of the church for future ages, he gave him an assurance of the Saviour's interest and care for his people. . . While John was shown the last great struggles of the church with earthly powers, he was also permitted to behold the final victory and deliverance of the faithful. He saw the church brought into deadly conflict with the beast and his image, and the worship of that beast enforced on pain of death. But looking beyond the smoke and din of the battle, he beheld a company upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having, instead of the mark of the beast, the 'Father's name written in their foreheads.'" 5T 752

(5) God's people today

"We are now standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. A crisis is before us, such as the world has never witnessed. And sweetly to us, as to the first disciples, comes the assurance that God's kingdom ruleth over all." MB 175

"We need to stay our faith upon God; for there is just before us a time that will try men's souls. Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede his second coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.' . . .

"Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The Lord is at the door. There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived; new controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet even dreamed of. . . A crisis is just upon us.

"But God's servants are not to trust to themselves in this great emergency. In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely Heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth, and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to him." 5T 753

- o. God would have His people ever remember that final victory in the great conflict against the forces of evil will be with the forces of righteousness

"There are revealed in these last days visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, and these should be dear to His church. . .

"We must have a vision of the future and of the blessedness of heaven. Stand on the threshold of eternity, and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake. As they unite with the angels, they cast their crowns at the feet of the Redeemer, exclaiming: 'Worthy is the

Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. . . Honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.' Rev 5:12,13 . . .

"Songs of victory fill all heaven as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, 'Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.'

"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.' . . . Rev 7:9,10

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.' . . . 'And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.' Rev 7:14-17; 21:4

"Will you catch the inspiration of the vision? Will you let your mind dwell upon the picture? Will you not be truly converted, and then go forth to labor in a spirit entirely different from the spirit in which you have labored in the past, displacing the enemy, breaking down every barrier to the advancement of the gospel, filling hearts with the light and peace and joy of the Lord?" 8T 43-45

Note: It should be noted that the above quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy have not been selected at random, but have been taken from a number of sections bearing on this subject of the seals and sealing work and closely related to the scenes accompanying this chapter. A careful study of this material as a whole will reveal the basic features of this subject of the seals and will indicate its pertinence for these days in which we live.

3. The opening of the book and the opening of the seals

"The 'book' of antiquity was a roll. The seven threads were tied around that roll, and all had to be cut or broken before the roll could be unwound." Harry Rimmer, Letter, March 14, 1941

"The opening of each seal does not usher in the reading of a corresponding part of the book, in fact, although the book is full of writing (5:1), nothing is at any time read." R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation, 217

"The seals are successively opened; giving final access to its (the roll's) contents as a perfect whole, when the events symbolized by the seals shall have been past. . . The opening of the seals

means the successive steps by which God in Christ clears the way for the final reading of the book at the visible setting up of Christ's kingdom." A. R. Fausset, A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments, VI. 674

"The Jewish leaders made their choice. . . In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah." COL 294

4. The first seal Rev 6:1,2

a. The command of the living creature

It should be noted that the Greek word ERKOU translated in the King James Version as "Come," also means, "Go". It is a present imperative, which would indicate continuous action. The meaning would be something like, "Be on your way." Lenski translates it, "Be going."

b. Horses and chariots as types of messengers for God
Zech 1:8-11; 6:2-5; Hab 3:8; Joel 2:4,11; Jer 4:13;
2 Kin 6:16,17; Ps 68:17; 18:10

c. The relationship of the horses to the living creatures

There were four horses and four living creatures. The indications are that each of the horses was under the direction of one of the living creatures, and went forth on its mission in response to the heavenly command. As each of the first four seals was opened a command was issued, and the next scene is a horse with its rider on its way to accomplish its mission. Heaven ordered that mission, and heavenly messengers directed its accomplishment.

The four living creatures of Revelation are identical with the four living creatures of Ezekiel (the Septuagint of Ezekiel uses the same term as the Greek in Revelation), and the four living creatures of Ezekiel are the same as the four cherubim (Eze 10:15,20). The Spirit of Prophecy calls them "cherubim," "sentinel angels," "heavenly messengers," "heavenly beings," or "glorified beings."

In Ezekiel there were also four wheels, one by each of the cherubim (Eze 10:9). The wheels were under the direction and control of the living creatures or cherubim (Eze 1:19-21; 10:16,17), and moved with the "Spirit" (Eze 1:12,20; 10:17)

In Zechariah there were four horses and chariots, which we are told were "the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth." (Zech 6:5) "These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth." (Zech 1:10). As in Revelation heavenly commands were issued to the horses, so also in Zechariah: "Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth." (Zech 6:7) As these messengers were sent by Heaven they accomplished the purpose of Heaven:

"Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country." (Zech 6:8)

The four living creatures or cherubim are no doubt commanding angels, having under their direction the angel forces of heaven, as Lucifer once was and Gabriel now is the "anointed cherub" who stands next to Christ in command of the army of angels.

And under the control of God are the forces and powers of earth, ever guided and directed by unseen messengers from heaven. "As the wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth." Ed 178. "In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely Heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth, and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to him. The world is not without a ruler. The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of his church, in his own charge. . . The tireless vigilance of the heavenly messengers, and their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God's hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel." ST 753,754

In Eze 1:10 each of the living creatures is described as having four faces: "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." "As to what they looked like, they had human faces, and all four had a lion's face to the right, and all four had a bull's face to the left, and all four had an eagle's face" (JB). Since these living creatures were angels or cherubim (Eze 10:15), their various faces would be representative of the various types of missions they were to carry out on earth.

In Rev 4:7 we are told that "The first creature was like a lion, the second like an ox, the third had a human face, the fourth was like an eagle in flight" (NEB). Since in Ezekiel each of the living creatures had four types of faces, the particular manifestation on any occasion was no doubt determined by the nature of that particular mission.

The messengers sent are messengers of salvation and judgment. Co-operation means life and victory, resistance means defeat and death.

In accord with this concept, the activities of the four horses and their riders must encompass the manifold activities of God's angelic messengers to earth, bringing man to repentance, and to life and victory; protecting the righteous and keeping under restraint the wicked; assisting in the conduct of God's work on earth, that it may be carried on to ultimate triumph; striving

with the wicked and ever endeavoring to bring them to repentance; bringing judgments and afflictions upon the resisters of God's grace in order to cause them to repent; being the wicked face to face with the stark and black realities of life that they may be led to weigh carefully the serious issues of their course and understand the dire results before them if they do not turn from their wicked ways; and ultimately bringing final retribution and death for those who refuse to hear.

In these four horses we see the powers of Heaven in action among the children of earth. Here are seen the four living ones and the four loving ones, here we see the lion and the ox, the man and the eagle. Here is the love of God and His justice; here is the power of God and His righteousness and mercy. Here is Jesus as the Lamb of God and the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Here is God saving the righteous, guiding and protecting them, ever solicitous of their welfare, and leading them on to final victory, certain and overwhelming, joyous and complete. And here is God before the wicked, pleading with them and endeavoring to save them, bringing to them warning judgments and retributive justice, ever merciful, and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, willing and anxious always to forgive iniquity, but unwilling to clear the guilty, visiting the fruits of iniquity upon the rejecters of His mercy, bringing men to the very gates of eternity and endeavoring to cause them to consider deeply the seriousness of their plight, doing all that an infinite God can do, again, and again, to bring them to salvation, but failing that, doing what infinite justice demands must ultimately be done, allowing the last stark messenger of death to go forth for the accomplishment of his task.

Is this subject of the horses, the living creatures, the throne, the rainbow, the book, the elders, and the seals difficult to understand? Then is it because heaven and the world and the complexity of forces operating therein are difficult to understand. All this play and counter-play of the forces of good and the forces of evil, brings into action powers of infinite magnitude. In this great struggle all the forces of Heaven,--all the infinite love, wisdom, justice, and power of God and of all the angelic hosts, are brought into action against the forces of Satan. These forces are so vast, so complex, so involved, so all-inclusive, that it is difficult for man to comprehend them, difficult to set them forth in any picture with any degree of simplicity so that man will secure an adequate comprehension of the scene. The picture of the four horsemen sweeping forth at the command of the leaders of Heaven is at once magnificent in its complexity and superb in its simplicity. Eternity will be needed to grasp fully pictures so involved as these, and eternity will be spent reviewing the tremendously interesting details of this grand and thrilling theme.

d. The white horse

- (1) White the color of righteousness Isa 1:18; Ps 51:7;
Rev 7:14; 19:8

(2) White the color of victory Rev 19:14

White among the Romans was not only the color of innocence and purity, but also the color of victory. Julius Caesar, according to Dio Cassius, at the time of his great triumph, rode in a chariot drawn by four white horses. A rider upon a white horse was in the East regarded as symbolical of a conquering hero.

"Especially on the day of a Triumph white was the universal colour." W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, 386

- e. The bow in the hand of the rider Hab 3:8,9; Ps 7:11,12;
Ps 45:4,5

"When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of his enemies, his people will be safe in his hands." 5T 754

"The words of the apostles were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting men of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory." AA 45

- f. A crown given to the rider 2 Tim 4:7,8; James 1:12;
1 Pet 5:4; 1 Cor 9:25

- g. Conquering and to conquer PK 725

"God's workers. . . will plant the standard of truth upon fortresses till then held by Satan, and with shouts of victory take possession of them. They bear the scars of battle, but there comes to them the comforting message that the Lord will lead them on, conquering and to conquer." CE 70

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict, one army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel. . .

"The Captain of our salvation was ordering the battle, and sending support to his soldiers. His power was mightily displayed, encouraging them to press the battle to the gates. He taught them terrible things in righteousness as He led them on step by step, conquering and to conquer." 8T 41

The white horse with its rider holding a bow and being given a crown, is representative of the righteous throughout the ages, going forth to conquer and to conquer. They go forth under the direction of the powers of heaven. The strength of Heaven is theirs. Their conquests are the conquests of Heaven in the great controversy between good and evil. There will be no end to these conquests until the end of earth's history, when the righteous enter upon their eternal reward and the forces of evil go down to ignominious defeat and ruin at the second coming of Christ. In our age this is the first angel's message which goes on to victory.

MAN'S RESPONSES TO GOD'S OFFERS OF MERCY AND THE CONSEQUENCES

"When a certain limit which God has fixed is reached, the ministry of his wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading for mercy." EGW RH Jan 11, 1887

MERCY ACCEPTED	MERCY SLIGHTED	MERCY RESISTED	MERCY SPURNED AND WITHDRAWN
God pleased	God displeased	God angry	God's wrath poured out
Salvation	Adversity--peace withdrawn	Heavy judgments	Doom of death
Faces of the living creatures of Eze 1:10; Rev 4:7 Face of a man	Living creature aspects pictured in Eze 1:10; Rev 4:8 Face of an ox	Living creature aspects pictured in Eze 1:10; Rev 4:7 Face of a lion	Living creature aspects pictured Eze 1:10; Rev 4:7 Face of an eagle
Reason exercised Blessing is result "Come now and let us <u>reason</u> together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow....If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land" Isa 1:18,19	Ill fortune "There is no peace ...to the wicked" Isa 57:21 "If ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword" Isa 1:20 "These are the <u>horns</u> which have scattered Judah... and Jerusalem" Zech 1:19	Severe judgments "The peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the Lord. He hath forsaken His covert as a <u>lion</u> " Jer 25:37,38	Final retribution "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" Matt 24:28 NEB "Wherever the corpse is there the vultures will gather" NEB, JB vultures denote death
1st Horse Rev 6:2 White Crown given to rider Conquering and to conquer	2nd Horse Rev 6:4 Red Sword given to rider Peace taken away	3rd Horse Rev 6:5 Black Rider has balances "Hurt not the oil and the wine"--a charge given not to hurt people of God	4th Horse Rev 6:8 Paleness of death Death is the rider To kill with sword, hunger, pestilence and beasts--the scourges of God's wrath see Eze 14:21
1st Angel of Rev 14 "Fear God and give glory to Him" V 7 God's message which brings triumph to those who accept it	2nd Angel of Rev 14 "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" V 8 A turning away from God's message	3rd Angel of Rev 14 "If any man worship the beast....the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God" Vss 9,10 God's last message of mercy--a warning of the outpouring of the wrath of God	Last Angel of Rev 14 "The angel thrust in his sickle....the great winepress of the wrath of God" V 19 God's last warning having been rejected the wrath of God is poured out upon the rejecters of His mercy

5. The second seal Rev 6:3,4

a. A red horse

(1) The movements of the horses

"We are not to suppose, however, that the action of one ceases entirely, before the other comes into play. They are consecutive in their incoming, in the main stress of them, and in some of their more marked circumstances, but they are all, in a measure, contemporaneous. The action of the first horseman certainly is continuous; for he goes forth in conquest unto conquest, which terminates only in the complete victory in which the opening of the seals ends. His career, therefore, runs on through that of his three successors, and through all the remaining seals."
 J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 328

(2) Another horse under the control of the powers of heaven

"And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living one saying, Be going! And there went out another horse, fiery. And to the one sitting on him, there was given to him to take the peace from the earth, and that they shall slay one another. And there was given to him a great short sword." Rev 6:3,4 R. C. H. Lenski, Interpretation of St. John's Revelation, 223,224

"The first four seals are mainly distinguished by the part which the four Living ones have in the proceedings, and the appearance of a horseman in connection with each. In all of them, the action goes out from heaven, and proceeds from the enthroned powers on high. The effect, however, is uniformly on earth, or on what relates to the earth. Some of the scenes are exceedingly disastrous and revolutionary. It would sometimes seem as if everything were falling into utter destruction. But, amid all the extraordinary and fearful shaking, upheaval, and commotion, in earth and sky, our planet still continues revolving in its place, and reappears from every scene, however terrible, neither depopulated of its generations, nor stripped of its proper investiture or elements. There is suffering, change, and an accumulation of awful and destructive prodigies; but there is no missing of our mundane orb, and no interruption to the succession of its seasons, or the continuity of the orders of being with which God has peopled it."
 J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 306,307

(3) The significance of colors in symbolism

"The use of colour here as symbolical is illustrated by the custom of Tamerlane. When he laid siege to a city, he put up white tents, indicating clemency to the enemy. If resistance was prolonged forty days, he changed the tents,

and put up red ones, portending a bloody capture. If obstinate resistance was persisted in for other forty days, black tents were substituted: the city was to be sacked with a general massacre." W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, 58,59

- (4) Red, the bloody color of sin, war, and judgement
 - (a) Sins as scarlet Isa 1:18
 - (b) Christ's garments red in the day of vengeance
Isa 63:2-4; Rev 19:13-15
 - (c) Warfare and judgments 2 Kings 3:22,23
 - (d) A red cup of judgment Ps 75:8
 - (e) Judgments of blood upon the wicked Isa 26:21; 34:2-6
Eze 16:38; 32:6; Jer 46:10; Nahum 2:3

b. Power to take peace from the earth and to kill

- (1) The rejection of God's message of righteousness brings trouble, war and bloodshed Isa 57:20,21; 19:2; Jer 16:4,5; Hag 2:22; 2 Chron 15:5,6; Matt 10:34,35; 24:6,7

"Our Lord's words, 'I came not to send peace on the earth but a sword,' are here eminently applicable. The symbolism of the rider upon the red horse may be taken as denoting the fulfillment of what those weighty words import.... It comprehends the whole idea of that conflict between the world-power and the kingdom of Christ among men, with the destructive attendant wars amongst the nations themselves, more or less involving that higher and more momentous struggle, or else involved in it. Viewing this whole mighty struggle as taking place under the superintending providence of God, and all its issues shaped in accordance with His own purposes of mercy or of judgment, we perceive in the rider on the red horse just the symbol of a great fact, then a prophecy, now a history." Justin A. Smith, Commentary on the Revelation, 96

c. A great sword given the rider

- (1) God uses the sword in his judgments against the forces of evil. Isa 26:21-27:2; 34:5,6; 66:15-16; Jer 9:16; 11:22; 14:12-15; 25:13; 46:10; 50:35-37; Eze 5:17; 6:11-12; 21:3-5; 32:10; Matt 10:34

"Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. . . And I saw that the Lord was whetting His sword in Heaven to cut them down." IT 190

d. The judgment work of the second seal

- (1) The Lord sends judgments upon erring men in the endeavor to bring them to wakefulness and repentance Jer 5:17-25; Isa 26:9
- (2) The Lord frequently uses nations as instruments to accomplish His purposes
 - (a) Assyria Isa 10:5-7,15

- (b) Babylon Jer 25:9; 27:5-8; 44:30; 46:2,10,13,25-26;
Eze 29:19,20; 32:2,11
(c) Persia Isa 44:28; 45:1,2

- (3) Among the signs enumerated by Jesus to precede His second coming were judgments to fall upon the earth Matt 24:6,7

"Christ upon the Mount of Olives rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede His second coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars.' 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.'" EGW, RH Jan 11, 1887

6. The third seal Rev 6:5,6

a. A black horse

(1) Black, a portent of tragedy, disaster and death

(a) Darkness, the ninth plague of Egypt - a final warning
Ex 10:21-23

"In this mysterious darkness the people and their gods alike were smitten by the power that had undertaken the cause of the bondmen. Yet fearful as it was, this judgment is an evidence of God's compassion and His unwillingness to destroy. He would give the people time for reflection and repentance before bringing upon them the last and most terrible of the plagues." PP 272

(b) The day of the Lord a day of blackness Jer 4:20-28 Joel 2:1-10

(c) The heavens black - solemn warnings Isa 50:1,3 Heb 12:18,9

(d) Days of bitterness and tragedy Job 3:4-6

(e) Faces of men in fear and terror Nah 2:10 Jer 8:20,21
Joel 2:6

(f) The skin black in disease and famine Lam 4:8-11; 5:10
Job 30:30

(g) Gates of Jerusalem in time of dearth Jer 14:1,2

b. A pair of balances in the hands of the rider

(1) Balances, a symbol of judgment Job 31:6 Dan 5:27

(2) The Laodicean church is being weighed by God

"Saith the Angel, 'God is weighing his people.' ..
"Your pride, your love to follow the fashions of the world, your vain and empty conversation, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and the weight of evil is fearfully against you." 1T 186, 189, 190

"The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting. .. If her light has become darkness, she is indeed found wanting."
5T 83,84

- (b) Babylon Jer 25:9; 27:5-8; 44:30; 46:2,10,13,25-26;
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The four horses and horsemen of Rev 6 represent four stages of men in the positions they take toward God and the principles of His kingdom. First comes the white horse, representing the righteous who have taken their position on the side of God. The next three horses represent the wicked in increasing degrees of iniquity and perversity. The red horse whose rider was given a sword and the power to take away peace, represents men in their first stage of turning away from God and righteousness, and who in doing this bring upon themselves trouble and woe. Mercy is graciously extended to them, and they may, if they will, turn away from their iniquities and take their position with those in the first group. From the first introduction of sin this red horse has been going forth, taking away peace from the earth. In our age the white horse represents the first angel's message and those who respond to the call to fear God and give glory to Him, while the red horse represents those who turn away from the call of the first angel and are included among those in fallen Babylon. Many of these will respond to God's gracious invitations and will join those who go on to victory with the white horse.

6. The third seal Rev 6:5,6

a. A black horse

Black is the color of the evil one and of the powers of darkness. This horse represents those who have defiantly turned from God and have taken their positions with the enemy of God and the forces of evil. Mercy is still extended to them, and they may, if they give heed to the warnings of God, turn away from their service of Satan, and join the group of the righteous. But mercy will not be extended for ever. Everything that God can do will be done to bring them to a realization of the serious plight in which they find themselves, and to warn them of the next final stage when mercy will no longer be extended. In the present age this represents the solemn message of the third angel which is the final message of mercy before the close of probation and the pouring out of the wrath of God.

The Spirit of Prophecy makes clear the fact that black is the color of the hosts of darkness. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. . . . Raging waves of the sea, foaming

out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 6,13).

"Men have failed to co-operate with Jesus in His divine mission, and have placed themselves under the black banner of the prince of darkness. . . The earth is the field of battle in which the powers of light and darkness are in controversy over the human souls for whom Christ died." EGW,RH May 8, 1894

- (1) Black, a portent of tragedy, disaster and death
- (a) Darkness, the ninth plague of Egypt - a final warning
Ex 10:21-23

"In this mysterious darkness the people and their gods alike were smitten by the power that had undertaken the cause of the bondmen. Yet fearful as it was, this judgment is an evidence of God's compassion and His unwillingness to destroy. He would give the people time for reflection and repentance before bringing upon them the last and most terrible of the plagues." PP 272

- (b) The day of the Lord a day of blackness Jer 4:20-28;
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- (c) The heavens black - solemn warnings Isa 50:1,3; Heb 12:18,9
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"Saith the Angel, 'God is weighing His people.' . . .
"Your pride, your love to follow the fashions of the world, your vain and empty conversation, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and the weight of evil is fearfully against you." 1T 186,189,190

"The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessing God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting. . . If her light has become darkness, she is indeed found wanting."
5T 83,84

- (3) Rejectors of God's mercy found wanting during the last judgments

"I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.'" EW 37

c. A voice in the midst of the four living creatures Rev 6:6

The fact that this voice is in the midst of the four living creatures is an indication that all are present and that its message is intended not for one but for all. Although the message in the record is placed with the third seal it is evidently not restricted to that seal. Its message is no doubt of particular importance at the going forth of the third horse, but it has an application to the others as well.

- (1) A measure of wheat, three measures of barley

Knox "A silver piece, it said, for a quart of wheat, a silver piece for three quarts of barley."

RSV "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius."

Moffatt "'A shilling for a quart of wheat, a shilling for three quarts of barley.'" "

NEB "A whole day's wage for a quart of flour; a whole day's wage for three quarts of barley meal."

A penny - The wages for a day Matt 20:2,4,9,10

Wheat - The chief food for the people of Palestine

Barley - A cheaper food. "It was, and is, grown chiefly as provender for horses and asses (1K 4:28), oats being practically unknown, but it was, as it now is, to some extent the food of the poor in country districts (Ruth 2:17 2 K 4:42; Jn 6:9,13)." E. W. G. Masterman, "Barley," International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia.

The fact that the price is the same for three measures of barley as for one of wheat seems to be setting forth the fact that a choice is to be made as between wheat and barley. The individual has his wages for the day; he may if he will, have a measure of wheat, or if he so decides have three measures of barley. What will his choice be, wheat or barley? What will the church and the world choose, a measure of the food for men, or three measures of the food for horses and mules? There is no doubt a reference here to the four horseneb and their messages, - a choice is to be made between the certain victory of the first, and the bitter experiences of the other three. Whether he will or not each man must make his choice; the decision is for life or death.

(2) "Hurt not the oil and the wine"

NEB "Spare the olive and the vine"

(a) The oil and the wine - the people of God

"In view of the infinite price paid for man's redemption, how dare any professing the name of Christ treat with indifference one of His little ones? How carefully should brethren and sisters in the church guard every word and action, lest they hurt the oil and the wine! How patiently, kindly, and affectionately should they deal with the purchase of the blood of Christ! How faithfully and earnestly should they labor to lift up the desponding and the discouraged! How tenderly should they treat those who are trying to obey the truth!" 5T 614

(b) The orders of heaven - God's people not to be hurt

The fact that God here issues the command through His messengers that the oil and the wine, - His people, - are not to be hurt, is an indication that somebody is going to receive serious injury, but it will not be His people. The wicked are going to be hurt, but not the people of God. The instruction here is parallel to that given to Ezekiel's messengers with the destroying weapons in their hands: "Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark."

Eze 9:6

d. The judgment work of the third seal

If red is a judgment color, then black is a color of judgments more severe. If red is a warning color, then black is a color of warnings much more solemn and stern. The one is a warning of danger ahead, the other is a warning of danger at hand. The one is a portent of trouble and woe, the other is a portent of death. The one means: Beware, you are embarking on a pathway of danger and affliction; the path you are treading will bring stones and bruises; it is a way that is red with blood; it is the way of the sword, of tears and not of laughter, of bitterness and not of joy. It was the way of Adam when he first left the paths of innocence and beauty in Eden and met with thistles and thorns, the blood of his son Abel, and a cherub from heaven with a flaming sword. It was the way of Balaam when he set out for hoped-for fame and fortune and met the angel of the Lord with drawn sword. Such then is the message of red,

But black is a color much more sombre and grave. It is not yet death, but it is very close to death. It means: Watch out, you have no time to lose, you have travelled far the way of danger and woe and you are now face to face with the end. Stop and stop now, or pay the last price of death. Black was the color by which Tamerlane warned his foes that their last hour of hope was almost gone, that the white tents of mercy had been left far far behind, that the red tents of blood were already past, that the present was an hour of blackness, stark and gloomy, with only bitter annihilation ahead. Black was the color with which God clothed heaven and earth in Egypt in one last warning judgment

just before the death angel was to go forth and strike down the firstborn in Pharaoh's land. And blackness today is a message by which God still warns the world that its last hour of mercy is almost gone, and that the next turn of the clock will bring the pale rider of death and the end of all. Such then is God's message of black to a sinful and unrepentant world.

At the time of the rider of black no other message could be more timely than a solemn warning of judgment to come, no other scene could be more fitting than that of the balances of God in which the wayward soul is soon to be weighed, and, unless he repents, is to be found wanting. At the hour when the death angel is about to strike down the rebellious and unrepentant, what more can God do, after having sent forth the message of the red horse, than to send forth the message of black, - to give man every possible portent of the coming doom, to set before him in the most vivid way the somber blackness of his plight without God and without hope, to cause him to weigh most carefully the terribleness of the loss he is about to sustain, and to bring to him by means however painful, a sense of the awfulness of the pass into which he has brought himself by his ways of sin, The message that the black horse has to bear to a sinful world is not a pleasant message but is a necessary one.

"With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when a certain limit which God has fixed is reached, the ministry of his wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading for mercy in their behalf. . . .

"The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitations has nearly come. Although loth to punish, nevertheless he will punish, and that speedily. . . .

"Already the restraining Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the earth. Murricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession. . . . Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they may not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but when God shall bid his angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of his avenging wrath as no pen can picture.

"In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely heaven is connected with the events transpiring upon the earth. . . . The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. . . .

"If the warnings which God has given are neglected or regarded with indifference, if you suffer sin to be cherished, you are sealing your soul's destiny; you will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. . . . While mercy still lingers, while Jesus is making intercession for us, let us make thorough work for eternity." EGW, RH Jan 11, 1887

The black horse represents the mission of Heaven for the wicked of all ages who by their gross iniquities and persistent rebellion against Heaven have alligned themselves with the prince of

darkness and are well along the path of evil to certain ruin. The pair of balances provides warnings of being weighed in the judgment scales of Heaven. The injunction from the heavenly messenger, not to hurt the oil and the wine, - the people of God, gives solemn warning that the hour is near when some are to be seriously hurt, but only those under the black banner of the prince of darkness, not those under the white banner of God.

In this last age of earth's history this message of the black horse is of supreme importance, because today this is the message of the third angel of Rev 14, where the warning is given of the wrath of God to be poured out in the cup of His indignation. This is the world's last call to mercy, the time when the close of probation is fast approaching. Those who reject this warning can expect to become participants in the drinking of the cup of wrath when the seven last plagues will overwhelm the earth.

7. The fourth seal Rev 6:7,8

When the fourth horse goes forth, Heaven is still in supreme control of the things of earth. Men have rejected God and His mercy, but they are still accountable to Him and cannot escape the justice of Heaven which will be meted out to all. When God's account with individuals or nations reaches a certain limit, "Divine patience ceases" and "the ministry of His wrath begins." Thus it will be when the door of mercy is closed and the plagues of the wrath of God will be poured out upon a guilty world. It should be noticed that when that hour comes, it is one of the four living creatures who is in command: "Then one of the four living creatures" gives "the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God" (Rev. 15:7 NEB).

a. A pale horse

J.B. "Immediately another horse appeared, deathly pale."

Amer. "I saw a horse the color of ashes."

Moffatt "I looked, and there was a livid horse."

NEB "There as I looked, was another horse, sickly pale, and it's rider's name was Death."

The fourth horse was a ghastly grey in color, the color of ashes and the color of death. It was the terrifying palor of a man stricken with the utmost of terror and distress, the paleness that will come over the faces of men at the time of the terrible day of the Lord (Jer 30:6)

b. The rider - death

- (1) Death, the wages of sin Rom 6:23; Gen 2:17; James 1:15
- (2) Annihilation and utter destruction - the fate of the wicked Ps 37:9,10,20,38
- (3) When the limits of divine forbearance are reached, God in fury smites the impenitent Eze 9:5,6; Jer 25:31-33; Isa 1:24;28; 28:18,21,22; 34:2,3,8; 66:15,16

c. The companion - Hell or Hades, the grave

Weymouth "And Hades came close behind him,"

N.E.B. "Its rider's name was Death, and Hades came close behind."

The term here employed in the Greek, Hades, is synonymous with the grave. This personification of death and the grave strikingly dramatizes the awfulness of the judgment of the fourth horse. While the first horse goes on to glorious triumph, the fourth horse goes on to ignominious defeat.

d. Power to kill v 8

Knox "He was allowed to have his way with all the four quarters of the world, killing men by the sword, by famine, by plague, and through wild beasts of the earth."

These four judgments are a direct parallel to the "four sore judgments" of Eze 14:21, which were sent by God to punish those who had forsaken Him. The terms employed in the Greek Septuagint of Eze 14:21 are the same as those in the Greek of Rev 6:8.

This is death by the command of God and by means of the judgments of God. It is death upon the wicked who have rejected the grace of God and have incurred His wrath.

The pictures in this section of Revelation are parallel to the pictures in this section of Exekiel. While the judgments of God were to fall upon the wicked, the righteous were not to be hurt. In Eze 9:6 we read: "Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark." And in Rev 6:6 the instruction was, "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine," which the Spirit of Prophecy defines as "the purchase of the blood of Christ" 5T 614

This death is the doom that by divine decree comes upon the finally impenitent, the doom that came upon Jerusalem of old when it turned its back upon God, the doom that invariably befalls nations when their cup of iniquity is full, that encompasses those who are weighed in the balances of Heaven and are found wanting, and that will fall upon all the wicked earth when Jesus returns to reign.

Quoting Eze 9:5 the Spirit of Prophecy speaks of this doom as follows: "'And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity.' . . .

"There are limits even to the forbearance of God, and many are exceeding these boundaries. They have overrun the limits of grace, and therefore God must interfere and vindicate His own honor.

"Of the Amorites, the Lord said: 'In the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.' Although this nation was conspicuous because of its idolatry and corruption, it had not yet filled up the cup of its iniquity, and God would not give command for its utter destruction. The people were to see the divine power manifested in a marked manner, that they might be left without excuse. The compassionate Creator was willing to bear with their iniquity until the fourth generation. Then, if no change was seen for the better, His

judgments were to fall upon them. . .

"Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent." 5T 207,208,212

"I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. . .

"I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.'" EW 36,37

"The description of the day of God is given through John by the Revelator. The cry of the terror-stricken myriads has fallen on the ear of John. 'The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?' The apostle himself was awed and overwhelmed. . .

"Those that overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, will be the favored ones who shall receive the seal of the living God. Those whose hands are not clean, whose hearts are not pure, will not have the seal of the living God. . .

"This sealing of the servants of God is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision. John also had been a witness of this most startling revelation . . . He was shown plagues, pestilence famine, and death performing their terrible mission.

"The same angel who visited Sodom is sounding the note of warning, 'Escape for thy life.' . . .

"The individual members of the Christian church will be weighed; and if her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond to the benefits and blessings conferred upon her, she will be found wanting." TM 444-446,450

"Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in perils by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void his law. When God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? . . .

"The Lord commissions his messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: 'Go ye after him through the city and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity.' . . .

"Christ upon the Mount of Olives rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede his second coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars.' 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers place. All these

are the beginning of sorrows.' While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application in the last days.

"John also was a witness of the terrible scenes that will take place as signs of Christ's coming. . . He saw the vials of God's wrath opened, and pestilences, famine, and death come upon the inhabitants of the earth." EGW, RH Jan 11, 1887

It should be noted that the first four seals are concerned with the going forth of the four horsemen, the messengers of God. With the going forth of these horsemen, the destinies of men are being sealed for weal or for woe. The issue is one of life or death, of victory or defeat. Accounts are being closed in the ledgers of heaven. But the work of the four horsemen will not end till time has run its course. God is patient and long-suffering beyond the comprehension of men, beyond the understanding and often beyond the wishes of men. In all the world Christ is manifesting Himself, and will continue to do so to the very end, in all of His attributes, as both Saviour and Judge. He is doing everything that in His infinite power it is possible to do, to bring about the salvation of men; but if man will not be saved, then will it be His work to judge.

In these last days the work of the first three horsemen may be compared to the three messages of Rev 14:6-12. First comes the presentation of the glorious gospel message which will go through victoriously to the end. Next comes a message of warning to fallen Babylon, made necessary because of a rejection of the message of the first angel. Then comes the third solemn and final message of mercy and warning to men--the message of "The wine of the wrath of God, poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation." Rev 14:10. The rejection of this last warning will be followed by the going forth of the angel of death. This fourth messenger no longer bears a saving message. His is a work of doom carried out when the last warning has been rejected.

"The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. . .

"Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent." 5T 212

"The Saviour is presented before John under the symbols of the 'Lion of the tribe of Judah,' and of a 'Lamb as it had been slain.' These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of fire that speaks terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law, is a token of light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal." AA 589

The parallel pictures presented in Rev 4 to 7 and in Eze 1 and 10 throw light upon each other, and make the total picture much more clear. The four angels of Rev 4:7 with the same four faces as those of the four angels of Eze 1:10 and 10:14,22, portray four diverse aspects of the work in which the heavenly messengers are engaged. And the four horses of Rev 6:1-8, under the direction of the four living creatures, are the same as the four wheels of Eze 10:9,16 and 1:15-21 which are operated by the four heavenly messengers. And all are under the direction of the sovereign God of heaven sitting upon His eternal throne
Eze 1:24-28; 10:1-8; 43:2,3

Concerning the work of these living creatures of Ezekiel the Spirit of Prophecy speaks as follows: "While the nations rejected God's principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, over-ruling purpose was working through all their movements. This lesson is taught in a wonderful symbolic representation given by the prophet Ezekiel. . . A number of Wheels, intersecting one another, were moved by four living beings. High above all these was the 'likeness of a throne. . . And there appeared in the cherubim the form of a man's hand under their wings.' . . Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth. . . To every nation and to every individual of today God has assigned a place in His great plan. To-day men and nations are being measured in the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes." ED 177,178

The basic missions of the four horses of Rev 6 may be epitomized as follows:

<u>HORSE</u>	<u>ATTITUDE OF MAN</u>	<u>ATTITUDE OF GOD</u>	<u>GOD'S MERCY</u>	<u>HEAVENS MESSAGE</u>	<u>DESTINY FOR MAN</u>
white	penitent	approval	offered-accepted	appro- bation	victory
red	resistant	disfavor	offered-withstood	repre- mand	turmoil
black	perverse	anger	offered-disdained	final warning	scourge
pale	abandoned	wrath	rejected-with- drawn	condem- nation	doom

According to Rev 15:7 it is one of the four living creatures who has supervision of the pouring out of the seven last plagues, and according to Rev 8:13 it was an "eagle" (NEB) that proclaimed the coming of the three woes that were to scourge the world. The translation "eagle" in Rev 8:13 is correct, for that is the word that appears in the Greek, and "angel" as it appears in the King James version, is not correct. Thus it is with the face of an eagle that God's messenger of wrath goes forth in the world.

God is constantly at work in the world and He will continue

to work to the end, to the time when in His own good wisdom He sees that the hour has come for the scroll to be unrolled. The timetable of heaven has been perfectly arranged and the clock of Heaven is keeping perfect time. As Christ was the one who opened the first four seals, so it is also He who opens the last three. He who exercises final control in the affairs of earth not only determines what men and nations may be permitted to do, but He also controls the matter of time.

8. The fifth seal Rev 6:9-11

NEB: "When he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for God's word and for the testimony they bore. They gave a great cry: 'How long, sovereign Lord holy and true, must it be before thou wilt vindicate us and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?' Each of them was given a white robe; and they were told to rest a little while longer, until the tally should be complete of all their brothers in Christ's service who were to be killed as they had been."

With the fifth seal there is a distinct break in the nature of the seals. The first four seals were concerned with horses of various colors and horsemen who went forth on their varied missions at the command of the four living creatures. Since man first sinned and was in need of salvation, these horses have been going forth. Zechariah pictures the work that these horses of diverse colors did at his time. And the same work is going on in the world today.

The great question is how long the missions of these horses will continue. Must they go on for ever? With the terrible iniquity, suffering, and cruelty that there is in the world, how long will it be before God at last puts an end to the woes that are plaguing the world? And how long must the people of God continue to suffer unjustly at the hands of the wicked? Ever since righteous Abel was slain by the wicked Cain, cries have been ascending to God for succor and for the manifestation of a divine avenging hand. This is the question with which the fifth seal deals.

Man in his impatience and limited understanding cannot comprehend the wisdom or the patience of God. But God desires men to know that He is still the sovereign Lord - that it is He who sits on the throne of the universe and is the supreme arbiter in the affairs of earth. He does not want His suffering children to think that He has forgotten them or that He is blind to the iniquities of the world in which they live. The Sovereign Lord will in His own good time and in His own good way work out the problems of earth to the best interests of all involved. The concerns of none can be forgotten - the righteous or the wicked, the loyal angels and those that have rebelled, and the inhabitants of all the unfallen worlds. When the final verdicts of the judgment are announced, all must acknowledge that the decisions are wise and just, and that nothing can be or should

be reversed. Only when everything has been done that needs to be done to make this possible, can God's great book of destiny for this world be opened and the eternal fate of every child of earth be justly determined.

All these manifold activities and interests of Heaven for the children of earth are involved in the breaking of the seals. The first four seals are concerned with the work of the heavenly messengers in behalf of men. The fifth and the sixth seals are concerned with time. Time is a factor of primary importance in the economy of God. It was when the fulness of time had come that Jesus came to earth, and it will again be in the fulness of time that He will return to receive His own.

Not only is there work that must be done for God, but it must be done at the very time that is determined as best by His wisdom, justice, and love. The fifth seal provides the assurance that the program of the events of earth is in the hands of God, and that in His own good time justice will be done. The sixth seal points out the hour to which the great clock of God is pointing, so that men might have impressive warnings of the approach of the final cataclysmic events connected with the great day of the wrath of God.

"With unerring accuracy the Infinite One keeps an account with all nations. While his mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when a certain limit which God has fixed is reached, the ministry of his wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading for mercy in their behalf. . .

"The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitations has nearly come. Although loathe to punish, nevertheless he will punish, and that speedily. . .

"In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely heaven is connected with the events transpiring upon the earth. We see the care of God for those who are loyal to Him. The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord; the world is not without a ruler. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of his church in his own hands." EGW, RH Jan 11, 1887

a. The souls of them that were slain Rev 6:9

(1) Under the altar

That these souls were not in heaven, crying for God's vengeance, is clear from the context. It was on the earth that the martyrs suffered and shed their blood. So the earth is the altar from which the cries for vengeance arise to God. If these souls were already in heaven, they would no longer need to call on God for vindication.

"As the blood of sacrificial victims on the altar was

poured at the bottom of the altar, so the souls of those sacrificed for Christ's testimony are symbolically represented under the altar." A. R. Fausset, A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical. VI 678

- (2) Slain for the word of God
- (3) Slain for the testimony which they held

b. Cry for God to judge and avenge the blood of the slain v 10

The cry, "How long, O Lord," is not restricted to any single period of earth's history, for this cry has arisen to God from the earliest days when the blood of the first martyr was shed, and it will continue to ascend to the last hour of crisis preceding Christ's return. The following are some of the times when such cries went up to God to intervene:

- (1) From the days of Abel onward

"The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to Heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." 5T 451

- (2) From the days of David

Ps 6:3 "My soul is also sore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long?"

Ps 13:1,2 "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long?"

Ps 35:17 "Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul."

Ps 74:10 "O God, how long shall the adversary reproach?"

Ps 89:46 "How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever?"

Ps 94:1-7 "Lord, how long shall the wicked . . . triumph?"

- (3) From the last days of Judah

Hab 1:2 "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?"

- (4) The end of the seventy years of Babylonian captivity

Zech 1:12 "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy?"

- (5) Time when Christ was on earth

"The earth was filled with transgression. The voices of those who had been sacrificed to human envy and hatred were crying beneath the altar for retribution." EGW, RH July 17, 1900

(6) Persecutions of the dark ages

"In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy, - the Inquisition. . . ."Babylon the great" was "drunken with the blood of the saints." The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried to God for vengeance upon that apostate power." GC 58

(7) Earth's last crisis

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to Heaven." 5T 451

"When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. After this came the scenes described in the eighteenth of Revelation, when those who are faithful and true are called out from Babylon." EGW MS 39, 1906

c. God's answer Rev 6:11

(1) White robes given them

"From garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains and deserts, from the caves of the earth and the caverns of the sea, Christ will gather His children to Himself. On earth they have been destitute, afflicted, and tormented. Millions have gone down to the grave loaded with infamy because they refused to yield to the deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals the children of God have been adjudged the vilest of criminals. But the day is near when 'God is judge Himself.' Then the decisions of earth shall be reversed. 'The rebuke of His people shall He take away.' White robes will be given to every one of them. And 'they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.'

"Whatever crosses they have been called to bear, whatever losses they have sustained, whatever persecution they have suffered, even to the loss of their temporal life, the children of God are amply recompensed." COL 179,180

(2) To rest a season

As time rolls onward, as iniquity increases, as the faithful servants of God are persecuted and pursued on land and sea, a period is reached when it seems to the children of God that the hour of vengeance has come, when God should intervene

to put an end to sin and oppression, and to bring in everlasting righteousness and peace. But God in His infinite wisdom knows best, and asks His saints to wait a little longer till their time and His, and that of the wicked has come. The times and the work are in the hands of God. God's clock keeps perfect time, and in His time the fatal book of destiny will be unsealed.

9. The sixth seal Rev 6:12-17

a. Signs in heaven and earth

These signs were given by God in order that men might know where they stand in relationship to the end of the world and the return of Christ. Certain of the signs here given were among those given by Christ Himself in Matt 24. It is God's desire that men should know that it is He who has in His hands the program of world events and that the destiny of this world is under His control. As men view the scenes that have already taken place their understanding may be opened, and they may see clearly just where they stand in relationship to the solemn events that have not yet transpired but which will take place at Christ's return when the last seal is broken and Christ and His saints take up their judgment work at the beginning of the thousand years of Rev 20:4-6

(1) In the past

(a) A great earthquake Rev 6:12. Cf Matt 24:7; Luke 21:11

The Lisbon earthquake, November 1, 1755

"The revelator thus describes the first of the signs to precede the second advent: 'There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.'

"These signs were witnessed before the opening of the nineteenth century. In fulfilment of this prophecy there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the Island of Madiera, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles." GC 304

(b) The sun darkened Rev 6:12; Matt 24:29; Luke 21:25

The dark day, May 19, 1780

"Almost, if not altogether alone, as the most mysterious and as yet unexplained phenomenon of its kind, in nature's diversified range of events, during the last century stands the Dark Day of May Nineteenth, 1780, - a most unaccountable darkening of the whole visible heavens and atmosphere in New England. . . Thousands of the good people of that day became fully convinced

that the end of all things terrestrial had come; many gave up, for the time, their secular pursuits, and betook themselves to religious devotions; while many others regarded the darkness as not only a token of God's indignation against the various iniquities and abominations of the age, but also as an omen of some future destruction." R. M. Devens, The Great Events of Our Past Century, 40

(c) The falling of the stars Rev 6:13; Matt 24:29

The great meteoric shower, November 13, 1833

"Extensive and magnificent showers of shooting stars have been known to occur at various places in modern times; but the most universal and wonderful which has ever been recorded is that of the thirteenth of November, 1833, the whole firmament, over all the United States, being then, for hours, in fiery commotion! No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another. . . During the three hours of its continuance, the day of judgment was believed to be only waiting for sunrise. . . Impromptu meetings for prayer were held in many place." R. M. Devens, The Great Events of Our Past Century, 214, 215

"During these three hours of its continuance, hundreds and thousands of people, of all classes, were thrown into the utmost consternation, and filled with the belief that the very scene described in this text was actually transpiring." J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I 387

(2) In the future

(a) The heavens depart as a scroll Rev 6:14; Isa 34:4; 13:13
Heb 12:26; Joel 3:16; 2 Pet 3:10; Matt 24:29; Luke 21:26

"The powers of heaven will be shaken at the voice of God. Then the sun, moon and stars will be moved out of their places. They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God.

"Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. The atmosphere parted and rolled back." EW 41

"It was at midnight that God chose to deliver His people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. . . Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. . .

"The sky opened and shut and was in commotion." EW 285

(b) Mountains and Islands moved out of their places.

Rev 6:14; 16:20; Jer 4:24; Eze 38:20 Ps 46:2,3 Isa 24:19,20

"The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as

of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters." GC 637

b. The wrath of God upon the wicked Rev 6:15-17

- (1) Great men hide in the rocks and mountains Rev 6:15;
Isa 2:19-21
- (2) Cry to be hidden from the wrath of the Lamb Rev 6:16;
Hos 10:8; Luke 23:30; Matt 24:30; Zeph 1:14-18
- (3) The great day of God's wrath is come. Rev 6:17; 16:19;
Isa 13:11,13; Eze 38:19,22

c. Who shall be able to stand? Rev 6:17

d. The sealing work and the reward of the sealed Rev 7

(1) The relationship of Revelation seven to the sixth seal

The chapters in this section of Revelation deal with the fate of the world, the settling of the destinies of the righteous and the wicked. The sixth seal portrays the closing events to take place just before the second advent of Jesus. Rev 6:15-17 pictures the awful fate of the wicked in the great day of the wrath of God, just before Jesus returns to reign. In Revelation seven the contrasting fate of the righteous is portrayed, - the sealing of the righteous remnant in which their destinies are settled forever, and the holding of the winds to permit this closing work to be completed. The events are parallel to those set forth in the latter part of Rev 6, under the sixth seal. The seventh chapter of Revelation closes with a forward look upon the redeemed, standing about the throne of God, praising Him, and rejoicing in their salvation.

(2) The holding of the winds Rev 7:1-3

- (a) The angels - God's messengers Matt 13:41;
2 Kings 19:35; Gen 19:1-13
- (b) The nature of the winds

1) Strife among the nations EW 36-38

"We are standing upon the threshold of great and solemn events. . .As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle. Satan is busily laying his plans for the last mighty conflict, when all will take sides. . .The mark of

the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll. . .The Lord God of heaven will not send upon the world His judgments for disobedience and transgression, until He has sent His watchmen to give the warning. . .While the angels hold the four winds, we are told to work with all our capabilities." 6T 14,17

"While already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle." 6T 14

"When God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture." 6T 408

2) Elements of nature 6T 408

"John sees the elements of nature - earthquake, tempest, and political strife - represented as being held by four angels." TM 444

3) Sunday legislation and succeeding events

"The time is coming when we cannot sell at any price. The decree will soon go forth prohibiting men to buy or sell of any man save he that hath the mark of the beast. We came near having this realized in California a short time since; but this was only the threatening of the blowing of the four winds. As yet they are held by the four angels. We are not just ready. There is a work yet to be done, and then the angels will be bidden to let go, that the four winds may blow upon the earth. That will be a decisive time for God's children, - a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." 5T 152

(c) The holding of the winds in 1848

1) The political crisis in Europe in 1848

A good idea of the tremendous outbreak of violent unrest which took place in 1848 is set forth in the volume by Priscillia Robertson, Revolutions of 1848 (Princeton, 1952). The total number of revolutions, counting those in the small German and Italian states and those in the Austrian Empire, was over fifty. "Looking at the year 1848," we are told, "most students have found something

'inexplicable' about the ferocity of the June revolts in Paris." "The different concepts of freedom" are described as having "pulled and pushed not only one race against another, but, . . . each man against himself." The second chapter bears the significant title, "The wind of Revolution." A basic cause was "a philosophy of self-interest, God was not in the heart." "Violence was present in society as a whole." "The revolutions, then, seem like a hurling of violence against violence."

The famous New York editor Horace Greeley spoke of the period as follows: "It was a wonder to us all what started so suddenly that confusion among nations, but it a greater wonder still what stopped it."

A century after 1848, Life magazine, Nov 22, 1948, 85-112, published an article entitled "1848" - "One hundred years ago Europe erupted in a series of revolutions brought on by forces which still shape and trouble the modern world."

2) Vision of Ellen G. White

An understanding of what took place in 1848 and why, and what it was that brought a stop to the violent uprisings that were taking place, may be gained from a vision given to Mrs. White at Rocky Hill, Conn., Jan 5, 1849. She says: "I saw four angels winging their way to the gate of the city. They were just presenting the golden card to the angel at the gate, when I saw another angel flying swiftly from the direction of the most excellent glory, and crying with a loud voice to the other angels. . . Then I saw an angel with a commission from Jesus, swiftly flying to the four angels who had a work to do in the earth, and waving something up and down in his hand, and crying with a loud voice, "Hold! hold! hold! hold! until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. . . It was God that restrained the powers. . . The four angels had power from God to hold the four winds, and that they were about to let them go; but while their hands were loosening, and the four winds were about to blow, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father, and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels, and bid them hold, until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads." LS 118,119 See also EW 38

Elder Loughborough records the following words spoken by Mrs. White during a vision of Nov 18, 1848:

"The angels are holding the four winds. It is God that restrains the powers. The angels have not let go, for the saints are not all sealed. When Michael stands up, this trouble will be all over the earth. Why, they are just ready to blow. There's a check put on because the saints are not sealed. Yea, publish the things thou hast seen and heard, and the blessing of God will attend." J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, 274

(d) The other angel from the east Rev 7:2

1) The highest, mightiest angel of heaven
TM 444,445

2) Has a commission from Jesus EW 38

(e) The earth not to be hurt till the sealing work is completed

(f) Events to take place when the winds are allowed to blow

1) Time of trouble 5T 152

2) Seven last plagues EW 36,37

(g) Duties of the people of God

1) To pray that the winds be held
6T 61; 5T 718

2) To proclaim the message 7T 220

(h) The significance of the holding of the winds

The fact that angels of God are in control of the basic forces of this world should be of great encouragement to the children of God. Doom will come, but not until God in His infinite wisdom sees that the time has fully come. Once more is the lesson brought home to us by the work of the four angels that it is God's clock that is keeping time in the world.

(3) The sealing of the servants of God Rev 7:3-8; Eze 9

"This sealing of the servants of God is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision. John also had been a witness of this most startling revelation." TM 445

(a) Sealed in the forehead Rev 7:3; Eze 9:4; Jer 31:33

- 1) The Father's name written in their foreheads
Rev 14:1; TM 446; 1T 59; EW 15
- 2) The law of God written in mind, forehead, and
heart EW 58
- 3) Those to whom immortality shall be granted TM 445

- (b) Sealed by the Holy Spirit Eph 4:30; 1:13,14; AA 30

"Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done' in the church." 3T 267

- (c) The work of the third angel

"Said the angel, 'The third angel is binding, or sealing, them in bundles for the heavenly garner.'" EW 89

"Who are voicing the message of the third angel, calling upon the world to make ready for the great day of God? The message we bear has the seal of the living God." CT 459

- (d) The character of those sealed Rev 14:5

- 1) Must reflect the image of Jesus fully EW 71
- 2) Without spot before God--candidates for
Heaven 5T 216
- 3) Prove selves loyal to the divine precepts
GC 613
- 4) Receive the heavenly mold 5T 216
- 5) Have manifested in them God's character of
love MH 37
- 6) Clear view of exceeding sinfulness of sin
3T 267
- 7) Have the spirit of work of the Lord
3T 266
- 8) Steadfastly wait for the appearance of Jesus
TM 445

- (e) Those who will not be sealed

- 1) Those whose minds are filled with worldly
thoughts EW 58
- 2) Who do not feel grieved over own spiritual
declension 5T 211
- 3) Whose hands and hearts are not pure
TM 445,446
- 4) Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath

"Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal

of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. . .

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. . .

"The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts." 5T 213,214, 216

(f) The Sabbath and the sealing work

- 1) The Sabbath a sign of man's allegiance to God
Eze 20:12,20; Ex 31:13

"All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him." PP 307

"The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment, since this is the sign of God's creative power and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage." 9T 16

"The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation." 8T 117

- 2) The seal of God's law in the Sabbath commandment
GC 452

"The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to his law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force." PP 307

- 3) A special test on the Sabbath in the last days
1T 223; GC 445,446

"The mark of the beast is the opposite of this,-- the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge

the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God." 8T 117

"The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial and to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the conflict, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark." 9T 16

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God." GC 605

"As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be a sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome--'the mark of the beast.'" GC 449

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each Sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion." 6T 352

"In every case the great decision is to be made whether we shall receive the mark of the beast or his image, or the seal of the living God." 6T 130

4) The decree and the final crisis

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near.

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction to Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble." 5T 451

"God keeps a reckoning with the nations. . . When the accumulated figures in heaven's record book shall mark the sum of transgression complete, wrath will come, unmixed with mercy. . . This crisis will be reached when the nations shall unite in making void God's law." 5T 524

"This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it. The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth." 7T 141.

5) God's people to find their power in the Sabbath sign

"God's tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Ex 31:12-18" 9T 16

6) The law revealed from heaven just before Jesus returns

"There appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. . . God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth. . .

"Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God"
GC 639,640

(g) The time of the sealing work

1) Vision of the sealing work, 1848

"'It's the seal! It's coming up! It arises, commencing from the rising of the sun. . .

"'The angels have not let go, for the saints are not all sealed.'" Words spoken by Mrs. E. G. White in vision, Nov 18, 1848. J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement 274

2) The closing work of the church 3T 266

3) Soon to be over EW 58

4) Closes with the close of probation

a) All the righteous sealed when Jesus leaves the sanctuary EW 48,279; GC 613,614

b) When the time of trouble comes

"When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon his people. . . The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death." 5T 213

(h) All God's children soon to have the seal

"In a little while, every one who is a child of God will have His seal placed upon Him." EGW RH May 28, 1889

(i) When sealed, saints' characters fixed for eternity

"When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity." 5T 216

(j) Trials for God's people even after they are sealed

"Even after the saints are sealed with the seal of the living God, His elect will have trials individually. Personal afflictions will come; but the furnace is closely watched by an eye that will not suffer the gold to be consumed. The indelible mark of God is upon them. God can plead that His own name is written there. The Lord has shut them in. Their destination is inscribed--'GOD, NEW JERUSALEM.' They are God's property, His possession." TM 446

(k) The solemn responsibilities of the sealing hour

1) To make own calling and election sure

"Let the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ be in your minds continually and let them crowd out worldly thoughts and cares. When you lie down and when you rise up, let them be your meditation. Live and act wholly in reference to the coming of the Son of man. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure." EW 58

2) A burden for the salvation of others Eze 9:4

"In the time when his wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul-anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. . . Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. . . They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. . .

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God." ST 210,211

"Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God, and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them, and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! Unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work, and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. . .

Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done' in the church." 3T 267

- (1) The number of the sealed--the 144,000 Rev 7:4-8; 14:1-5

- 1) Twelve thousand from all the tribes of Israel Rev 7:4-8

- a) The greater Israel Rom 2:28,29; 9:6-8, 24:33; 11:24-26; Gal 3:28,29; Col 3:10,11
 b) Caution not to number Israel 1 Kings 19:14,18; Rom 11:2-5

"Just as long as we are in the world, we shall have to do a special work for the world; the message of warning is to go to all countries, tongues, and peoples. . .

"The message of warning has not reached large numbers of the world in the very cities that are right at hand, and to number Israel is not to work after God's order." TM 202

"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. . .

"What strange work Elijah would have done in numbering Israel at the time when God's judgments were falling upon the back-sliding people! . . .

"Then let no man attempt to number Israel to-day." PK 188,189

- 2) The character of the 144,000

- a) Without fault before God's throne Rev 14:5

- b) God's name written in their foreheads
Rev 14:1

"The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name." EW 15

"In this world their minds were consecrated to God; they served Him with the intellect and with the heart; and now He can place His name 'in their foreheads.'" AA 591

- c) Have a sense of the true nature of sin
3T 266

- 3) The special privileges of the 144,000 in the world to come

- a) Stand with Jesus on the sea of glass
Rev 14:1; 15:2

"Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,--so resplendent is it with the glory of God,--are gathered the company that have 'gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.' With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, 'having the harps of God,' they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men." GC 648

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with his own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square." 1T 60,61

- b) Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth
Rev 14:4

"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.' The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is

the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth." AA 591

c) Enter the temple on Mount Zion

"We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion. . .

"Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. . . And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, 'Only the 144,000 enter this place,' and we shouted 'Alleluia.'

"This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The wonderful things I there saw I cannot describe. Oh, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold. After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out." EW 18,19

d) Sing the song of Moses and the Lamb
Rev 14:2,3; 15:3

"And they sing 'a new song' before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb,--a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience,--an experience such as no other company have ever had." GC 649

"When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and re-echoing through the heavenly courts. Thus the song of God's providence is sung, connecting the varying dispensations; for all is now seen without a veil between the legal, the prophetic, and the gospel. The church

history upon the earth and the church redeemed in heaven all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song,--Christ all and in all, --in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven." TM 433

e) Privilege of visiting all the other worlds

"The Lord has given me a view of other worlds. Wings were given me, and an angel attended me from the city to a place that was bright and glorious. The grass of the place was living green, and the birds there warbled a sweet song. . . Then I was taken to a world which had seven moons. . . I begged of my attending angel to let me remain in that place. I could not bear the thought of coming back to this dark world again. Then the angel said, 'You must go back, and if you are faithful, you, with the 144,000 shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.'" EW 39,40

4) The identity of the 144,000

a) Living when Jesus comes 1T 59,60

"Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. . .

"Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, 'Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise.' Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, 'Alleluia!' as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." EW 15,16

- b) Translated from among the living

"These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as 'the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.'" GC 649

- c) Have passed through great tribulation
Rev 7:14-17

"These are they which came out of great tribulation;' they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. . .They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But 'they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'" GC 649

"These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous. . .A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The 144,000 triumphed." EW 36,37

- d) The firstfruits Rev 14:4

- (1 The firstfruits of the harvest
Lev 23:4,5,10,11

- (a The choicest and best Num 18:12,
29,30,32

"With joyful hearts they should dedicate to the Creator the firstfruits of their bounties,--their choicest possessions, their best and holiest service." AA 340

- (2 Christ the firstfruits from the dead
1 Cor 15:20,23 GC 399

"Christ arose from the dead as the firstfruits of those that slept. He was the antitype of the wavesheaf, and His resurrection took place on the very day when the wavesheaf was to be presented before the Lord. . .The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the firstfruits represented the great spiritual harvest to be gathered for the kingdom of God. His resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead." DA 785,786

- (3) The multitude raised with Christ
Eph 4:8

"He presents to God the wavesheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming." DA 834

- e) The exact meaning not known

"When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the Word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand. This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question." EGW Ms 26, 1901

- (m) The great multitude which no man can number
Rev 7:9-17

- 1) Various classes among the redeemed

"The most exalted of the redeemed host that stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clad in white, know the conflict of overcoming, for they have come up through great tribulation." 5T 215

"Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. . .

"Nearest the throne are those who were once zealous in the cause of Satan, but who, plucked as brands from the burning, have followed their Saviour with deep, intense devotion. Next are those who perfected Christian characters in the midst of falsehood and infidelity, those who honored the law of God when the Christian world declared it void, and the millions, of all ages, who were martyred for their faith. And beyond is the 'great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, . . .before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.'" GC 665

- 2) A cry of victory from the whole multitude of the redeemed

"The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, 'Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.'

"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne.' . . . Rev 7:9,10

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' . . . Rev 7:14-17; 21:4

"Will you catch the inspiration of the vision? . . . Shall not the incense of praise and thanksgiving ascend from hearts purified and sanctified and glorified by the presence of Christ?" 8T 44,45

"The redeemed raise a song of praise that echoes and re-echoes through the vaults of heaven, 'Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.' And angel and seraph unite their voices in adoration. . . In all that shining throng there are none to ascribe salvation to themselves, as if they had prevailed by their own power and goodness. Nothing is said of what they have done or suffered; but the burden of every song, the keynote of every anthem, is, Salvation to our God, and unto the Lamb." GC 665

"The heirs of God have come from garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains, from deserts, from the caves of the earth, from the caverns of the sea. . . They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honored of the earth have ever worn. . . The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm-branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of heaven, 'Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.' And all the inhabitants of heaven respond in the ascription, 'Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever.'" GC 650,651

3) Present lessons for the people of God

a) Personal effort required

"The characters formed in this life will determine the future destiny. When Christ shall come, he will not change the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb." 4T 429

b) Affliction for all the people of God

"None will be there who have not, like Moses, chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God. The prophet John saw the multitude of the redeemed, and inquired who they were. The prompt answer came: 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'" 1T 78

c) Smallness of present trials compared with coming glory

"We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us, that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia!'" 1T 61

10. The seventh seal Rev 8:1

a. The time of the opening

(1) Silence in heaven about half an hour

- (a) All the angels with Christ upon His return
Matt 25:31
- (b) The saints' seven-day ascent to heaven

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass." 1T 60

- (c) Half an hour equals seven and a half days prophetic time
- (d) The occasion of the silence in heaven

Silence in heaven would be inexplicable as long as there were any beings in heaven. When Jesus returns, heaven will be empty of angels, and this no doubt accounts for the silence in heaven. It is thus at the second coming of Jesus that the seventh seal is opened.

b. The events of the seventh seal

The events of the seventh seal are not recorded in Revelation, but they are the events recorded elsewhere in connection with the second coming of Christ.

- (1) The gathering of all for their final awards Rev 22:12;
Matt 25:31-46; 24:31
- (2) Raising of the righteous dead 1 Thess 4:16
- (3) The translation of the righteous living 1 Thess 4:17
- (4) Destruction of the wicked living 2 Thess 2:8;
Isa 11:4; Luke 19:27
- (5) Beginning of Satan's term in prison Rev 20:2,3
- (6) Setting up of Christ's kingdom Dan 2:44; Eze 21:27
- (7) Dominion given to the saints Dan 7:27
- (8) Adoration of Christ for the accomplishment of His work of redemption Rev 5:12

"When Satan declared to Christ, The kingdom and glory of the world are delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it, he stated what was true only in part, and he declared it to serve his own purpose of deception. Satan's dominion was that wrested from Adam, but Adam was the viceroy of the Creator. His was not an independent rule. The earth is God's, and He has committed all things to His Son. Adam was to reign subject to Christ. When Adam betrayed his sovereignty into Satan's hands, Christ still remained the rightful King. . .

"By the one who had revolted in heaven the kingdoms of this world were offered Christ, to buy His homage to the principles of evil; but He would not be bought; He had come

to establish a kingdom of righteousness, and He would not abandon His purpose. With the same temptation Satan approaches men. . . While he allures them with the hope of worldly dominion, he gains dominion over the soul. But he offers that which is not his to bestow, and which is soon to be wrested from him. In return he beguiles them of their title to the inheritance of the sons of God. . .

"Christ's victory was as complete as had been the failure of Adam. . .

"Never can the cost of our redemption be realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer before the throne of God. Then as the glories of the eternal home burst upon our enraptured senses we shall remember that Jesus left all this for us, that He not only became an exile from the heavenly courts, but for us took the risk of failure and eternal loss. Then we shall cast our crowns at His feet, and raise the song, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'" DA 129-131

c. Significance of the opening of the seventh seal

The opening of the seventh seal involves events of the greatest significance. Here is nothing less than the final opening of the world's great book of destiny. Here God's great plan for this earth finally goes into execution; here the saints enter upon their eternal rewards, and the final doom of Satan and all his evil hosts is fixed. Here the work of God's messengers reaches its culmination,--the white horse of victory has attained its goal of glory, and the pale horse of death has carried out its awful work of doom. It is Jesus, the Lamb of God and the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who alone has the right to break the seals binding this book of fate and to open the book and carry into effect its decrees of life or death. When Jesus opens that book then will the kingdom be given to Him whose right it is, and to the saints, who will sit and reign with Him. Then will the hour have arrived when the wicked are shut out forever from an inheritance in the earth, while the righteous are eternally secure in possession "of their title to the inheritance of the sons of God."

"Although the seventh seal covers such a short period of time, it embraces a series of events on this earth greater and more telling than anything in any like portion of time--the resurrection of the just and the slaying of the wicked by the consuming glory of Christ's coming. Then Satan will begin his long prison sentence of one thousand years. . .

"The seven seals are a graphic presentation of the power of the cross. The overruling and guidance of the affairs of this world were placed in the hands of Him who permitted cruel men to place a crown of thorns upon His head. . .

"In the great final days of His wrath the cross ultimately triumphs. As there is silence in heaven, the redeemed are gathered as sheaves in the harvest. The Saviour of men who went as a lamb to the slaughter 'shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.'" A. J. Lockert, RH Apr 12, 1945

"We also know very well, that there has been an inheritance forfeited and disposed away for these thousands of years, and that for all this time the proper heirs have lain out of it, and had no proper possession of it. . .The sealed book, the title-deeds of its forfeiture and mortgage, are in the hands of God, and strangers and intruders have overrun and debased it. And from the days of Adam until now, those deeds have lain in the Almighty's hands, with no one to take them up or to dispossess the aliens. . .

"Seven seals' are upon this book, indicative of the completeness of those bonds of forfeit which have all this while debarred Adam's seed from their proper inheritance. The original estate is totally gone from man, apart from some competent Redeemer. . .

"Sin cannot vitiate any of the rights of God. Satan's possession is a mere usurpation, permitted for the time, but in no way detrimental to the proprietorship of the Almighty. The true right still lives in the hand of God, until the proper Goel comes to redeem it, by paying the price, and ejecting the alien and his seed. . .

"John knew by that Spirit in which he was, what that sealed book meant. . .That book, unlifted and unopened, is the Church's grief and distress. It bespeaks the inheritance unredeemed--the children still estranged from their purchased possession. But that book opened, is the Church's joy and glory. It is the assertion of her reinstatement into what Adam lost--the recovery to her of all of which she has been so long and cruelly deprived by sin. . .

"Jesus is the Lion sprung from Judah. . .He hath paid the redemption price of the forfeited inheritance. He is the true Goel, who, having so far triumphed and been accepted, will also prove ready and worthy to complete His work, by lifting those long-standing deeds of forfeiture. . .

"The opening of the seals, is an act of strength--an exploit of war--a going forth of power to take possession of a kingdom. As one after another is broken, out flies a strong One in fierce assault upon the enemies and usurpers who occupy the earth. . .

"John hears the lofty anthem rolling sublime through heaven: 'THOU ART WORTHY TO TAKE THE BOOK, AND TO OPEN THE SEALS OF IT; for Thou wert slain, and redeemedst us to God by Thy blood.' . . .There was not a holy heart unmoved, nor a holy tongue that did not lift up its song. . .

"Now to take all this sacred pomp, and universal thrill of adoration, as the mere Proem to a few chapters of dim and often untraceable outline of the Church's history in this world, I confess to you, looks to me as little less than blasphemy. . . I must therefore take this act of the Lamb, . . . as involving the heading up and highest consummation of the highest things of our faith. . .

"'And we shall reign on the earth.' Why express themselves thus, just at this point? Because this taking up of the book was the pledge and proof that now He was fully invested and ready to redeem the inheritance, and to carry into effect the blessed promises, that 'the meek shall inherit the earth,' and that 'the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.'" J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, I, 272-291

VI

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 8:2-9:21; 10:7; 11:15-19
- II. THE SEVEN ANGELS AND THE SEVEN TRUMPETS Revelation 8:2
- III. THE ANGEL AND THE CENSER Revelation 8:3-5
- A. Standing at the golden altar before the throne V 3
- B. Offering incense with the prayers of the saints Vss 3,4;
PP 367; EW 252,256

"In the offering of incense the priest was brought more directly into the presence of God than in any other act of the daily ministrations. As the inner veil of the sanctuary did not extend to the top of the building, the glory of God, which was manifested above the mercy-seat, was partially visible from the first apartment. . . . As in that typical service the priest looked by faith to the mercy-seat which he could not see, so the people of God are now to direct their prayers to Christ, their great high priest, who, unseen by human vision, is pleading in their behalf in the sanctuary above.

"The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God. Before the veil of the most Holy place, was an altar of perpetual intercession, before the holy, an altar of continual atonement. By blood and by incense, God was to be approached,--symbols pointing to the great Mediator, through whom sinners may approach Jehovah." PP 353

"Between the angels was a golden censer. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory, that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark, and as the saints' prayers came up to Him, and incense in the censer would smoke, and He would offer up their prayers with the smoke of the incense to His Father." EW 32

- C. The censer filled with fire and cast into the earth Rev 8:5;
Eze 10:2,6,7; 9:8-10. Cf Ps 18:6-15

"An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, 'It is done.' . . .

"As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, . . . a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God. While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was re-

moved and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent. It was impossible for the plagues to be poured out while Jesus officiated in the sanctuary; but as His work there is finished, and His intercession closes, there is nothing to stay the wrath of God."
EW 279,280

To understand what is here taking place, it is necessary to understand the meaning of the symbolism involved. The offering of incense before the mercy seat symbolized the intercession of Christ before God in behalf of sinners. The cessation of such a service on the part of Christ, would denote cessation of His intercessory work and the termination of mercy toward the guilty. With no mediator between man and God, the wicked would be left to the complete control of Satan, to carry out his merciless cruelties. This is what will take place at the end of probation when the seven last plagues are poured out, and the wicked partake of the wrath of God unmixed with mercy.

Here in Rev 8:5 something significant is taking place. There is an abrupt change in the use of the censer, which is now filled with fire which is cast to the earth, instead of with incense to be offered to God. But there is no complete termination of the intercessory work of Christ. The golden altar still stands, and the heavenly High Priest still continues His work of ministry. But where the fire is permitted to fall, there the powers of the enemy are permitted to take over control, as the Spirit of God is withdrawn. This takes place not for the entire world, as will be the case at the close of earth's probation, but only for such segments of mankind as have rejected God's grace and given themselves over to the control of the evil one. While certain groups might be involved, individuals as such and the majority of mankind would still have access to the grace and mercies of Christ and would not find the presence and blessings of God withdrawn. But what is here localized and restricted, typifies what at the end will be universal and unrestricted.

1. The work of fire

a. Purification of the righteous Isa 6:6,7; Mal 3:3

b. Consuming of the wicked Deut 4:24-26; 9:3; Matt 3:10

D. Voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake Rev 8:5; 11:19; 16:17,18

The fact that at the pouring out of the last of the seven last plagues there are "voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and . . . a great earthquake (Rev 16:18), and now also there are "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake" (Rev 8:5), provides evidence of some definite correlation between the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues.

IV. THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS

A. The trumpet a warning of impending scourges and judgments ..
Jer 4:4,5,19-21; Joel 2:1,2; Zeph 1:14-17

B. The relationship between the trumpets and the seven last plagues

Trumpets

1. Upon the earth Rev 8:7
2. Upon the sea Rev 8:8
3. Rivers and fountains
of waters Rev 8:10
4. The sun smitten Rev 8:12
5. Air darkened Rev 9:2
6. Great river
Euphrates Rev 9:14
7. Mystery of God
finished Rev 10:7
Rev 11:15
Lightnings, voices
thunderings, earth-
quake, great hail Rev 11:19

Plagues

1. Upon the earth Rev 16:2
2. Upon the sea Rev 16:3
3. Rivers and fountains
of waters Rev 16:4
4. Upon the sun Rev 16:8
5. Darkness Rev 16:10
6. Great river
Euphrates Rev 16:12
7. "It is done" Rev 16:17
Voices, thunders,
lightnings, great earth-
quake, great hail Rev 16:18,21

"Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth. Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us." EGW 7 SDA C; Letter 109, 1890

The striking pallelisms here seen make it clear that there must be some relationship between the trumpets and the plagues. That the two must be closely related is further seen from the fact that immediately preceding the sounding of the trumpets, the censer which had been used in the temple for the offering of incense, was filled with fire and cast to the earth, while immediately preceding the plagues Jesus threw down the censer and terminated His work of intercession for man in the heavenly sanctuary (EW 279; Eze 10:2). In Rev 9:20 the destructive work of the trumpets is distinctly referred to as the work of "plagues." The basic nature of the trumpets and plagues must be the same; both are judgments and scourges upon the wicked, impenitent men; both see a termination of Jesus' work of intercession followed by a letting loose of the evil passions of men as Satan takes over control. But while the two are similar they are not identical; the one is a type of the other. The trumpets for the most part are in the past while the plagues are still in the future.

C. The nature of judgments and scourges Hos 13:9; 14:1; Ps 78:49

"Their (the Jews) sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy; the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control.

"We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God's mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil

one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejecters of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. . . The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan. The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are trifling with the offers of divine grace, and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy." GC 35,36

"This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it." 7T 141

D. Preparation for the sounding of the trumpets Rev 8:6

The position taken here is that the trumpets are warning judgments and scourges of a limited nature that have largely taken place in past times when men in various places and ages forsook God and gave themselves over to the control of powers of darkness. When this happened the results were harvests of blood and passion, with darkness taking the place of light, and peace, happiness and tranquility giving way to outbreaks of strife, terror, and cruelty, and with the inevitable result of misery, devastation, and ruin. Those stricken might not only be the recipients of scourges but also be the instruments of scourging to others.

In accord with this view the first trumpet symbolizes the Divine judgments that came upon Jerusalem and the Jewish nation when it set itself against Christ and His followers; the second symbolizes judgments upon the western Roman world; the third fell upon the professed church of Christ when it allowed itself to become defiled and sent forth streams of death rather than life; the fourth was the ensuing darkness of the middle ages; the fifth constituted the Mohammedan scourges that swept over the Middle East and into Europe; the sixth consisted of the scourges that continued under Turkish control of large sections of Asia, Africa, and Europe; and the seventh constitutes the final terrifying outbreaks of human passion and hate that characterize the final period of earth's history prior to the second coming of Christ.

The judgments and scourges under the seven trumpets provide a foretaste of the final scourges under the seven last plagues. Under the seven trumpets various national and religious groups were involved, and that will again be the case with the plagues which will ultimately involve the entire world.

Trumpet judgments upon the groups involved, however, did not include judgments upon or the rejection of, all individuals within those groups. When the Jews as a national group, for instance, rejected Christ, many Jews accepted Him and became His staunch supporters. As individuals, men still had access to Divine grace and salvation, and in spite of the judgments suffered by the groups to which they belonged, many continued to rejoice in the blessings of Heaven.

E. The first trumpet Rev 8:7

1. Hail, fire, and blood Rev 8:7
 - a. Figures of judgment Eze 38:19-22; Ps 11:6; Isa 28:1,2; Isa 29:1,6
2. Cast upon the earth Rev 8:7. Cf Rev 16:2
3. Third part Rev 8:7,8,9,10,11,12; 9:18

The "third part" used so frequently in connection with the trumpets in all probability denotes partial measures or incompleteness. In connection with the plagues this term is never used, indicating no doubt the much greater extent and severity of these judgments as compared with the trumpets. Many of the actions of the Bible took place in series of threes (Ex 23:14,17; Deut 16:16; 2 Chr 8:13; Num 22:28; Num 24:10; Jud 16:15; 1 Sam 20:41; 1 Ki 9:25; 17:21; Dan 6:10,13; Acts 11:10). When God foretold the doom of the nations and the coming of Christ, He declared: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Eze 21:27. A single overturning would have been incomplete, only a third of the whole.

4. Trees burnt Rev 8:7
 - a. Trees--a symbol of the people of God Ps 1:3; 52:8; 92:12; Isa 65:22 7T 22
 - b. Trees burnt--a symbol of judgment on the people of God Isa 10:16-20; Jer 11:16,17; 21:14; 22:7; Eze 15:6,7; Zech 11:1,6; Joel 1:19,20
 - c. The dry, unfruitful tree of Jerusalem smitten Matt 21:19 Mark 11:13-21; Luke 23:31; 13:1-9; Ps 80:8-11,15,16; 79:1-5

"The Jewish leaders had 'built up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.' . . . 'Therefore,' continued the prophet, 'shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.' . . .

"The parable of the unfruitful tree represented God's dealings with the Jewish nation. The command had gone forth, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?' but divine mercy had spared it yet a little longer. There were still many among the Jews who were ignorant of the character and the work of Christ . . .

"The long-suffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus, they rejected the last offer of mercy. Then God withdrew His protection from them, and removed

His restraining power from Satan and his angels, and the nation was left to the control of the leader she had chosen." GC 27,28

"The cursing of the fig tree was an acted parable. That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ, was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Saviour desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and the certainty of Israel's doom . . .

"In the barren tree they might read both their sin and its punishment. Withered beneath the Saviour's curse, standing forth sere and blasted, dried up by the roots, the fig tree showed what the Jewish people would be when the grace of God was removed from them." DA 582,583

"'Daughters of Jerusalem,' He said, 'weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.' From the scene before Him, Christ looked forward to the time of Jerusalem's destruction. In that terrible scene, many of those who were now weeping for Him were to perish with their children.

"From the fall of Jerusalem the thoughts of Jesus passed to a wider judgment. In the destruction of the impenitent city He saw a symbol of the final destruction to come upon the world. He said, 'Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?' By the green tree, Jesus represented Himself, the innocent Redeemer. . . All the impenitent and unbelieving would know a sorrow and misery that language would fail to express." DA 743

"Israel was a cumberer of the ground. Its very existence was a curse; for it filled the place in the vineyard that a fruitful tree might fill. . .

"The day of wrath was near. In the calamities that had already befallen Israel, the owner of the vineyard was mercifully forewarning them of the destruction of the unfruitful tree." COL 215,216

5. Green grass burnt up Rev 8:7
 - a. Grass--flourishing vegetation a symbol of a flourishing people, the fruitage of righteousness Isa 44:3,4; 43:19-21; 2 Sam 23:4
 - b. Grass dried and burnt--the once flourishing made desolate Joel 1:19,20; Ps 37:1,2; 90:5-7; 92:7; Isa 40:6,7
6. Judgment begins with the apostate people of God 1 Pet 4:17; Eze 9:6; Rev 16:2; Jer 25:15-29

"The work of destruction begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall." GC 656

7. The hour at hand at Peter's time. "The time is come" (1 Pet 4:17)

"The church--the Lord's sanctuary--was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust."
5T 211

8. Judgment upon Jerusalem foretold by Jesus as ushering in a series of judgments to come upon the world Matt 23:37,38; 24:1,2,6-8

"As Christ looked upon Jerusalem, the doom of a whole city, a whole nation, was before Him. . .

"Looking down the ages, He saw the covenant people scattered in every land, 'like wrecks on a desert shore.' In the temporal retribution about to fall upon her children, He saw but the first draught from that cup of wrath which at the final judgment she must drain to its dregs." GC 21

9. Judgments upon Jerusalem a type of judgments at the end of the world.

"The judgments upon Jerusalem were a symbol of the events of Christ's coming to judgment in the last day." TM 232

"John lived to be very aged. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, and the ruin of the stately temple,--a symbol of the final ruin of the world." DA 816

"The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfilment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law." GC 36

G. The second trumpet Rev 8:8,9

1. A great mountain burning with fire Rev 8:8

a. Mountain--a symbol of a people, nation, or power
Jer 51:24,25; Isa 2:2,3; 13:4; Dan 2:35,44,45

b. Fire--a force of destruction and judgment Ps 50:3; 97:3;
Jer 4:4; Isa 10:16-18; 2 Sam 22:9-16

2. The sea--nations and peoples, the turbulent sea of humanity
Dan 7:2,3,17; Rev 17:1,15

"The Old World,--that turbulent sea of 'peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.'" GC 440

3. Blood--a symbol of war, strife and bloodshed 1 Ki 2:5;
Eze 32:6; 38:21,22; Joel 2:30; Mic 3:10

4. Creatures in the sea and ships--people making up the great sea of humanity, and their material possessions and conveniences
Eze 47:9,10; Zeph 1:2-4; Hab 1:14

5. Barbarian invasions and the downfall of the Roman world

"Rapacious pagan nations left their own wild homes, and overran the Christian countries in countless swarms, laying waste all before them with fire and sword. . . Some of them were named the Huns, Alans, Heruli, Goths, Suevi, Lombards, Burgundians, Vandals, Franks, Angles, Saxons . . . The Roman Empire, more than one thousand years old, and once so powerful, could no longer resist these savage tribes, and was at last completely overthrown. Odacer, King of the Heruli, took Rome, and was proclaimed King of Italy in 476. It is impossible to describe the extent of misery which these barbarous hordes inflicted on all Europe, until finally God subdued and civilized them by means of that very Church which they had threatened with destruction." Joseph Deharbe, A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion, 33,34

After the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish state, the next scene of judgment is one on a much broader and vaster scale, one in which a large share of the creatures in the international scene were to be involved. The second trumpet calls for some terrible, fiery, destructive force to fall into the troubled seas of the ancient world and to turn their turbid waters into blood. After the fall of Jerusalem came the fall of Rome. As the Jews had outlived their days of national usefulness, so also had Rome. Avarice and greed, lewdness and intemperance, extravagance and voluptuousness, cruelty and rapaciousness,--every vice known to demons and men,--had so weakened the moral fiber of the inhabitants of the Roman world that they were ripe for dissolution. The empire of the Caesars was doomed. The ax of divine retribution must fall. Like flames of fire from heaven came Genseric the Vandal, Alaric the Goth, and Attila the Hun, leaving in their wake scenes of ruin, desolation, carnage, and blood. Irresistible and destructive as a flaming mountain, the hordes of barbarians fell upon the peoples of Rome, till all the empire was involved in a grand and irretrievable catastrophe. Rome was gone and justice again had had its way.

H. The third trumpet Rev 8:10,11

1. A great star falls from heaven

JB: "A huge star fell from the sky, burning like a ball of fire."

NEB: "A great star shot from the sky, flaming like a torch."

a. Angels, the stars of heaven Job 38:7

b. Satan a star fallen from heaven Isa 14:12,13; Rev 12:3,4,9; Luke 10:18

2. Fell upon the rivers and fountains of waters

a. Pure fountains, rivers, and wells--sources of life and blessing Ps 36:8,9; Jer 2:13; 17:8,13; Isa 12:3; 41:18; Deut 8:7,8; Prov 13:14; 14:27; Joel 3:18-20; Zech 13:1; Rev 21:6; John 4:10,11; Eze 47:1-12; 6T 86; PP 412

"God made Joseph a fountain of life to the Egyptian nation. . . Every worker in whose heart Christ abides. . . is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life. . . 'In that day,' says the Scriptures, 'there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.' . . .

"From this fountain flows the mighty river seen in Ezekiel's vision. . .

"Such a river of life and healing God designs that, by His power working through them, our sanitariums shall be."
6T 227,228

"The fountain is open for all, The weary and exhausted ones are offered the refreshing draught of eternal life." DA 454

"The heart that receives the word of God is not as a pool that evaporates, not like a broken cistern that loses its treasure. It is like the mountain stream, fed by unfailing springs, whose cool, sparkling waters leap from rock to rock, refreshing the weary, the thirsty, the heavy-laden. It is like a river constantly flowing, and as it advances, becoming deeper and wider, until its life-giving waters are spread over all the earth. The stream that goes singing on its way, leaves behind its gift of verdure and fruitfulness. The grass on its banks is a fresher green, the trees have a richer verdure, the flowers are more abundant." PK 233,234

"Wonderful is the work which the Lord designs to accomplish through His church, that His name may be glorified. A picture of this work is given in Ezekiel's vision of the river of healing. . .

"From the beginning God has wrought through His people to bring blessing to the world. To the ancient Egyptian nation God made Joseph a fountain of life. . .

"God chose Israel to reveal His character to men. He desired them to be as wells of salvation in the world." AA 13,14

- b. Corrupt and defiled fountains--sources of illness and death
Prov 25:26; Jer 6:7; James 3:11
- c. Springs once pure may become dry or corrupt Hos 13:15,16;
Jer 50:12,38

"The priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, destroyed the living pastures, and defiled the wellsprings of the water of life." DA 478

"In patriarchal times, the Jordan valley was 'well watered everywhere, . . . even as the garden of the Lord.' . . . At the time that the cities of the plain were destroyed, the

region round about became a desolate waste.

"Five centuries passed. . . Even the springs that had made residence in this portion of the valley so desirable, suffered the blighting effects of the curse. . .

"Not far from Jericho, in the midst of fruitful groves, was one of the schools of the prophets and thither, after the ascension of Elijah, Elisha went. During his sojourn among them, the men of the city came to the prophet, and said, 'Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.' The spring that in former years had been pure and life-giving, and had contributed largely to the water supply of the city and the surrounding district, was now unfit for use. . .

"The world needs evidences of sincere Christianity. The poison of sin is at work at the heart of society. . . Nigh and afar off are souls in poverty and distress, weighed down with a sense of guilt, and perishing for want of a saving influence. The gospel of truth is kept ever before them, yet they perish, because the example of those who should be a savor of life to them, is a savor of death. Their souls drink in bitterness, because the springs are poisoned, when they should be like a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."
PK 229-232

3. The star, Wormwood

- a. Source of bitterness, spiritual pollution and death
Deut 29:18; Jer 9:15,16; Amos 5:7; Acts 8:23; Heb 12:15

4. Waters made bitter, bring death to men Rev 8:11

Here a remarkable, revolutionary transformation is depicted. The once pure, life-giving fountains become contaminated and corrupt as the death-star Wormwood falls upon them, and henceforth men die rather than live as they partake of the polluted waters. The pure church is a clear stream and a life-giving fountain. When the enemy enters that church it becomes corrupt. Henceforth it is a scourge rather than a blessing to men. Satan rather than Christ is in control, and the church is to take over complete control, a savor of death unto death instead of life unto life. What history has witnessed in this regard in the past, history will again witness to a still greater degree in the future. As the Spirit of God will be withdrawn and Satan endeavours to take over complete control of the church and the world, the "man of sin" will manifest himself in a way never seen before.

"Satan was seeking to corrupt the doctrines of the Bible.

"I saw that at last the standard was lowered, and that the heathen were uniting with the Christians. Although these worshipers of idols professed to be converted, they brought their idolatry with them into the church, only changing the objects of their worship

to images of saints, and even of Christ and of Mary His mother. As the followers of Christ gradually united with them, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost its purity and power." EW 211

"This outward splendor, pomp, and ceremony, that only mocks the longings of the sin-sick soul, is an evidence of inward corruption . . .

"In unfolding the sins of his life to a priest,--an erring, sinful mortal, and too often corrupted with wine and licentiousness,--his standard of character is lowered, and he is defiled in consequence. . . This degrading confession of man to man is the secret spring from which has flowed much of the evil that is defiling the world, and fitting it for the final destruction." GC 567

"Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. . . Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. . .

"This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the 'man of sin' foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will. . .

"To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth; and having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance to the representative of Satan,--the bishop of Rome." GC 49,50

"When Satan wrought through the Roman Church to lead men away from obedience, his agency was concealed, and his work was so disguised that the degradation and misery which resulted were not seen to be the fruit of transgression. . . The people did not trace the effect to its cause, and discover the source of their miseries." GC 285

I. The fourth trumpet Rev 8:12

1. Darkness--sun, moon, and stars smitten Rev 8:12

The smiting of the sun, moon, and stars indicates a circumscribing of the light-giving powers of earth. As God through his prophet Ezekiel pronounced doom upon Egypt, He declared: 'I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.' Eze 32:7,8. The darkness here foretold for Egypt was not a mere physical darkness. It was a darkness far worse than that accompanying a temporary eclipse of the sun or moon. This darkness was one that involved the whole being of man, a darkness that would involve the entire nation. The light

of Egypt, that had shone so brightly and so long in the ancient East, was to go out in darkness. So also under the fourth trumpet a period of darkness for the world was foretold.

"The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. . .

"About the close of the eighth century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome had possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed. . .

"The darkness seemed to grow more dense. . .

"In the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII proclaimed the perfection of the Roman Church. . .

"In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy,--the Inquisition. The prince of darkness wrought with the leaders of the papal hierarchy. In their secret councils, Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men. . .

"Popery had become the world's despot. . . Never since has the Roman Church attained to greater dignity, magnificence, or power.

"But the 'noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world.' . . . A moral and intellectual paralysis had fallen upon Christendom.

"The condition of the world under the Romish power presented a fearful and striking fulfilment of the words of the prophet Hosea: 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee: . . . seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.' 'There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.' Such were the results of banishing the word of God." GC 55-60

J. Pronouncement of the three woe trumpets Rev 8:13

The fact that the last three trumpets are declared to be woe trumpets, indicates that they will be scourges of greater severity than those preceding them, sent upon men because of their increasing iniquities. It was during the time of these trumpets that gunpowder came to be widely used in warfare, and that military operations became ever more deadly and extensive.

In the Word of God woes are pronounced upon men and nations that have strayed from God and righteousness and have, by their iniquities, invited upon themselves outpourings of trouble, suffering and disaster.

"Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone." Num 21:29

"Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him." Isa 3:11

"Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord." Isa 30:1

"Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem!" Jer 13:27
 "Woe to the bloody city." Eze 24:6
 "After all thy wickedness, woe, woe unto thee!" Eze 16:23
 "Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds!"
 Mic 2:1
 "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood." Hab 2:12
 "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" Matt 11:21
 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" Matt 23:13
 "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain." Jude 11

Concerning the coming of the woe trumpets the King James version states that it was "an angel flying through the midst of heaven" who made this pronouncement. However the word "angel" here is not the correct translation, for the Greek word employed is "aetos," meaning eagle. The word is thus correctly translated in the newer versions:

NEB: "Then I looked, and I heard an eagle calling with a loud cry as it flew in mid-heaven: 'Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth when the trumpets sound which the three last angels must now blow!'"

Phillips: "Then in my vision I saw a solitary eagle flying in mid-heaven, crying in a loud voice, 'Alas, alas, alas for the inhabitants of the earth, for there are three more trumpet blasts which the three angels shall sound!'"

RSV: "Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice, as it flew in midheaven, 'Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets which the three angels are about to blow!'"

Knox: "And I heard, in my vision, words spoken by an eagle that flew across the middle part of heaven, crying aloud. Woe, woe, woe to all that dwell on earth, when those other calls are sounded by the three angels whose trumpets have yet to sound."

JB: "In my vision, I heard an eagle, calling aloud as it flew high overhead, 'Trouble, trouble, trouble, for all the people on earth at the sound of the other three trumpets which the three angels are going to blow.'"

Although it was an angel who made this pronouncement, John in vision saw him as an eagle because of the mission he was to perform. In Rev 4:7 and Eze 1:10; 10:14 the face of an eagle is given as one of the faces of the cherubim or living creatures, that being a fitting symbol of the judgment work which they at times were called upon to perform. The eagle was a symbol of a scourge unusually fierce and severe:

"Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law." Hos 8:1

"Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God, . . . therefore shalt

thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, . . . until he have destroyed thee. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle that flieth; . . . a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young." Deut 28:47-50

K. The fifth trumpet Rev 9:1-12

The fifth trumpet is presented in much greater detail than any of the first four trumpets, and that is likewise true of the sixth. At the close of the fifth trumpet Rev 9:12 declares: "One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter." Then comes the account of the sixth trumpet in Rev 9:13-21, but with no statement at that place that the second woe is past. Instead, there comes Rev 10 with its message of the angel and the little book, and then in Rev 11:1-13 a mention of the time period which was to close in 1798 and of the vicious attacks upon the Bible in France from 1793 to 1797, with the accompanying earth-shaking events of the French revolution. Only then, in Rev 11:14, comes the statement that the second woe is past, to be quickly followed by the third woe. Evidently these events of Rev 10 and of 11:1-13 must fall within the time period of the sixth trumpet, and possibly bear some relationship to that trumpet.

The position concerning the fifth and the sixth trumpets taken here is that which has been traditionally accepted by Seventh-day Adventists, and that is that they reveal the devastating onsweps of Mohammedan power and the decline of Turkey in the early 1800s.

1. A star falls from heaven Rev 9:1

NEB: "I saw a star that had fallen to the earth, and the star was given the key of the shaft of the abyss."

Knox: "I saw where a star had fallen from heaven to earth. This star was entrusted with the key which leads to the abyss."

a. Satan a fallen star Isa 14:12,13; Rev 12:3,4,9; Luke 10:18

b. Men as agents of Satan

Individuals causing distraction and division by their erroneous teachings. "Such are wandering stars. They seem to emit a little light; they profess and carry along a little truth, and thus deceive the inexperienced. Satan endows them with his spirit, but God is not with them." 1T 327

"Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness." PK 188

c. Mohammed

2. The bottomless pit Rev 9:1
 - a. Greek: Abusos, a deep or bottomless pit
 - (1) The earth without form and void, covered with darkness
Gen 1:2
 - (2) The earth desolate during the thousand years--Satan's
abode Rev 20:3
 - b. The desolate wastes of Arabia
3. The key--symbol of power and control Rev 9:1; 1:18
4. The pit opened, smoke emerges and darkness ensues Rev 9:2
 - a. Spiritual darkness and confusion John 3:19; Acts 26:18;
Rom 1:21; Isa 9:2
 - b. The false teachings of Mahammedanism leading men into
spiritual confusion and blindness. The darkness emitting from
the Arabian wastes overlapped and added to the darkness that
had spread over Europe.
5. Locusts emerge out of the smoke Rev 9:3,7-9
 - a. Scourges upon the earth Deut 28:42,25; Joel 1:4; 2:25;
2 Chr 6:28-30; 7:13,14; Ex 10:13-15; Ps 78:46; 105:34,35
 - b. Forces of men as locust scourges Nah 3:15,17; Jud 7:12
 - c. Mohammedan hordes like locusts

"Like locusts, the Osmanlis swarmed in all directions, and no village missed their notice up to the very walls of Constantinople." Herbert Adams Gibbons, The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire, 198

"Warrior after warrior, column after column, whole tribes in endless procession with their women and children, issued forth to fight. And ever, at the marvelous tale of cities conquered; of rapine rich beyond compute - fresh tribes arose and went. Onward and still onward, like swarms from the hive, a flight of locusts darkening the land, tribe after tribe issued forth and hastening northward, spread in great masses to the East and to the West." Sir Wm. Muir, The Caliphate: Its Rise, Progress and Decline, 43
6. Power as scorpions Rev 9:3,5,10
 - a. Scorpions--symbolic of demons Luke 10:18-20

"He who 'so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,' will not desert us in the battle with the adversary of God and man. 'Behold,' He says, 'I give

unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.'" MB 173

"Henceforth Christ's followers are to look upon Satan as a conquered foe. Upon the cross, Jesus was to gain the victory for them; that victory He desired them to accept as their own.

'Behold,' He said, 'I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.'" MH 94

b. The strike of a scorpion's tail--a weapon of deceit

(1) False prophet compared to the tail Isa 9:15

(2) Deception, the weapon of Satan Rev 12:9

7. Grass and trees not to be hurt, only those without the seal of God Rev 9:4

At the beginning of the Syrian campaign, Abu Bekr gathered the forces of Usama and said to them: "Men, I have ten orders to give to you, which you must observe loyally: Deceive none and steal from none; betray none and mutilate none; kill no child, nor woman, nor aged man; neither bark nor burn the date palms; cut not down fruit trees nor destroy crops; slaughter not flocks, cattle nor camels except for food. You will fall in with some men with shaven crowns; smite them thereon with the sword. You will also meet with men in cells; leave them alone in that to which they have devoted themselves." Sir Wm. Muir, The Caliphate: Its Rise, Progress and Decline, 65

The Arab conquerors were particularly intent on destroying idolaters. Eastern Christian churches in which there were no graven images suffered less than the Western churches.

a. Grass and trees--symbols of the people of God Isa 44:4; 61:3; 65:22

b. Those not having the seal of God in their foreheads Rev 7:3

8. Power to torment for five months--July 27, 1299-1449
Rev 9:5,10

"The fifth trumpet presents the rise of Mohammedanism with its cloud of errors, but especially the period of 'five months,' or one hundred and fifty literal years from the time they 'had a king over them.' July 27, 1299, Othman, the founder of the Ottoman empire, invaded the territory of Nicomedia. From that time the Ottomans harassed and 'tormented' the Eastern empire of Rome till July 27, 1449, the one hundred and fifty years of the sounding of the fifth trumpet." J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, 128

THE BEGINNING OF THE PERIOD OF TORMENT--July 27, 1299

"It was on the twenty-seventh of July, in the year twelve hundred and ninety-nine of the Christian era, that Othman first invaded

the territory of Nicomedia; and the singular accuracy of the date seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster." Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, VI, 226

"Now it is our task to give the exact and fundamental epoch of the Ottoman Empire. This we shall try to effect by a thorough-going comparison of the dates given by Arab chronologists and the testimony of our Pachymeres. The last-mentioned author reports in the fourth book of this second part, chapter 25, that Atman (Greek name for Othman) grew strong by taking the command over a very strong band of bold and energetic warriors from Paphlagonia. When Muzalo, the Roman army commander, attempted to block his progress, he defeated him in a battle near Nicomedia, the capital of Bithynia. This city the lord of the battlefield henceforth kept as if it were besieged. Now, Pachymeres is very explicit in stating that these events took place in the immediate vicinity of Bapheum, not far from Nicomedia, on the 27th day of July. The year, we asserve in our synopsis, comparing carefully the events, to have been the year of our Lord 1299." Possinius, Observationum Pachymerianarum, Book III (Chronology), 8, Sec 5, translation made at the Library of Congress

"As in former times He had chastised the Israelites for the neglect of His laws, so He now punished the degenerate Christians also. In the beginning of the seventh century (A.D. 622), there had appeared in Arabia an arrogant impostor called Mahomet. . .

"In the year 637 Jerusalem, the capital of the Holy Land or Palestine, had fallen under the power of the Mahometans or Saracens . . . In 1079, it was conquered, together with the fairest portions of Western Asia, by the Seljukian Turks. . . About the year 1300, fresh hordes of Turks, called the Ottomans, poured down from Tartary, subdued the Seljukians, and extended their conquests over Western Asia, Rumelia, Moldavia, Servia, Bulgaria, Greece, and the Morea; until at last, under the monster of brutality and voluptuousness called Mahomet (II.) the Great, they rendered themselves masters of Constantinople, the capital of the Greek Empire (A.D. 1453), which calamity God no doubt permitted in punishment for the grievous offences it had committed against Him." Joesph Deharbe, A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion, 36-38

THE END OF THE PERIOD OF TORMENT AND BEGINNING OF DEATH--1449

"Melancholy is the story of the last generation of the New Rome under those princes who still claimed to be the true successors of Augustus and Constantine. . .

"Only one thing could really have saved Constantinople--a great military exertion by Western Christendom. . . The emperors made pathetic efforts to buy Western help by compromising their religious scruples. John VII visited Italy, cast himself on the mercy of Pope Eugenius IV, and in 1438 was received into the Roman Church in the Duomo of Florence. He gained next to nothing thereby, save the benedictions of the Holy Father and the curses of his own people.

. . . Greek opinion, even later while the Moslem was closer at the gates, is summed up in the declaration of the Grand-Duke Notaras, one of the first of John's magnates: 'Better a turbaned Turk in Constantinople than the cap of a Papal Legate!' Under these circumstances the most the Christian Empire could hope for was an honorable burial." William Stearns Davis, A Short History of the Near East, 205-207

"The Palaeologia put themselves on record as one of the most iniquitous families that have ever disgraced the kingly office. When Constantine, one hundred and twenty-seven years later, fell with the walls of his city, his death was a striking illustration of the wrath of God upon the fourth generation of those who had hated and despised Him." H. A. Gibbons, The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire, 48

"In the long career of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, I have reached at length the last reign of the princes of Constantinople, who so feebly sustained the name and majesty of the Caesars. On the decease of John Palaeologus. . . the royal family. . . was reduced to three princes. . . An ambassador, the historian Phranza, was immediately dispatched to the court of Adrianople. Amurath received him with honor and dismissed him with gifts; but the gracious approbation of the Turkish sultan announced his supremacy, and the approaching downfall of the Eastern empire. By the hands of two illustrious deputies, the Imperial crown was placed at Sparta on the head of Constantine." Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, VI, 365

The death of John Palaeologus, ruler of the Greek Roman Empire of the east, took place on October 31, 1448. Two brothers of the deceased king, Constantine and Demetrius, surviving sons of the emperor Manuel, were rival candidates for the throne. To secure the powerful support of Turkey, an embassy was sent to the sultan, Murad II. With his consent, the imperial crown was placed upon the head of the elder brother, who became Constantine XI. Constantine was crowned January 6, 1449. The ill-fated emperor was destined to be the last ruler of the dying Roman Empire of the East, meeting his death in battle four years later when Constantinople was taken by the Turks. The independence of the empire had been virtually surrendered to Turkey when the sultan was approached for his support in placing Constantine upon the imperial throne.

9. A king over them, the destroyer Rev 9:11 Cf. Isa 14:16,17
 - a. The angel of the bottomless pit
 - b. Hebrew: "Abaddon," destroyer
 - c. Greek: "Apollyon," destroyer

"The name Osman or Othman signifies 'breaker of limbs.' It was this name which became that of Osman's people, the Osmanlis or Ottomans. . .

"At the close of the thirteenth century of our era the Ottoman headquarters of empire were advanced as far north-westward as the city of Yenisher, within a short march of the important Greek cities of Brusa and Nicaea, which were now the special objects of Turkish ambition. . .

"It was about this time (1299) that he coined money with his own effigy, and caused the public prayers to be said in his name. These, among the oriental nations, are regarded as the distinctive marks of royalty." Henry Smith Williams (ed.), *Historians' History of the World*, XXIV, 312, 313

"Osman's name is said to signify 'bone-breaker,' fit title for a ruler of resistless energy. . . Osman was close to the Christian lands, and the restored Greek rulers of Constantinople had neither the leisure nor the means for serious attacks against him. . .

"Even as late as 1306 Pope Clement V exhorted the Venetians to join in a new attempt to conquer the Greek schismatics. Under these circumstances such a chieftain as Osman could build up a formidable military power on the very flank of the Christian territories in Bithynia, and nothing important be done against him until it was too late." Williams Stearns Davis, *A Short History of the Near East*, 183,184

10. First woe past, two more to follow Rev 9:12

L. The sixth trumpet Rev 9:13-21

1. A voice from the four horns of the golden altar Rev 9:13

2. The four angels bound in the River Euphrates to be loosed
Rev 9:14; Cf Rev 7:1

3. The angels loosed Rev 9:15

a. For an hour, a day, a month, and a year--391 years, 15 days
prophetic time

(1) Beginning 1449

"In the same year the Emperor John VIII died, and the rival claimants appealed to Sultan Murad, who designated Constantine as his successor. . . On May 29, 1453, Constantinople was carried by assault, and the last Greek emperor died fighting in the breach. . .

"To the people of that day the capture of Constantinople was merely the inevitable climax of a long series of Ottoman victories on European soil. The Sultan was already sovereign of the Greek Empire; the emperor was his vassal; the taking of the imperial city was merely a question of time.

"Nevertheless, the fall of Constantinople is in the true historical sense 'epoch marking'. . . Perhaps even Luther's historic protest at Wittenberg, may be ascribed, remotely perhaps but in no fanciful sense, to the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. But most important of all its consequences, from our present standpoint, was the foundation of a new empire. . . The Ottomans were in truth not merely the conquerors of the Balkans but the heirs of the Graeco-Roman Empire of the East."
 J. A. R. Marriott, The Eastern Question, 71,72

(2) Close of the 391-year period--1840

"In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfilment of prophecy excited wide-spread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown 'in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;' and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: 'Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.'

"At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction." GC 334,335

"Rifat Bey arrived at Alexandria on the 11th of August; but found no Mohemet Ali there. He had been for some days on a tour in lower Egypt, under the pretext of visiting the canals of the Nile, but in reality to gain time, and prepare his means of defense. Having returned to Alexandria on the 14th, he received Rifat Bey on the 16th, and without entering into discussion with him--scarcely giving him time to speak--he rejected the first summons prescribed by the treaty. On the following day (the 17th), the consuls of the four subscribing powers asked an audience, and remonstrated with him on his refusal. He repulsed them sharply, cut short Colonel Hodges, the English consul, and persevered in his remonstrance, saying, 'I shall only yield to the saber what I have won by the saber.'" James Ewing Ritchie, The Life and Times of Viscount Palmerston, Div II, 529

TURKISH POWER BROKEN IN 1840

"The four great powers, in a collective note of July 27, 1839, declared that they would take the settlement of the

Eastern Question into their own hands. . . This state of things was officially expressed in the quadruple treaty of July 15th, 1840, concluded at London." Henry Smith Williams (ed.), Historians' History of the World, XXIV, 453

"The power of Islamism is broken forever; and there is no concealing the fact even from themselves. They exist now by mere sufferance. And though there is a mighty effort made by the Christian governments to sustain them, yet at every step they sink lower and lower with fearful velocity. And though there is a great endeavor made to graft the institutions of civilized and Christian countries upon the decayed trunk, yet the very root itself is fast wasting away by the venom of its own poison. How wonderful it is, that when all Christendom combined together to check the progress of Mohammedan power, it waxed exceeding great in spite of every opposition; and now when all the mighty potentates of Christian Europe, who feel fully competent to settle all the quarrels, and arrange the affairs of the whole world, are leagued for its protection and defense, down it comes, in spite of all their fostering care." Rev. Mr. Goodell, in address to the American Board at Constantinople, Missionary Herald, Apr 1841

"After the century of conquest came the century of stagnation and decay--then the 'Turkish peril' vanishes, and the outward disintegration of Solyman's mighty Empire begins. . .

"The Ottoman Empire therefore remained all through the eighteenth century a huge dominion, overshadowing by its bulk the Near-East, but with its feebleness increasingly manifest. . . In this long, unhappy period there was no real arrest of the forces of decay. . .

"Czar Nicholas nevertheless refused to take seriously any suggestion that the Ethiopian could change his skin or the Ottomans transform their Empire into a modernized, well-ordered state. In 1844, when he made a visit to England, he stated frankly: 'In my Cabinet there are two opinions about Turkey. One is that she is dying. The other is that she is dead already.'" W. S. Davis, A Short History of the Near East, 273,308,309

b. Loosed to slay the third part of men Rev 9:15

Under the fifth trumpet a restraint had been placed on the Ottoman power. For a period of 150 years they were not to "kill" but only "torment." Now at the beginning of the 391 years the previous restraint was removed and they were to go forth to "kill." History reveals a striking fulfilment to this prophecy. Within a few years of the time when the restraint was removed the Ottomans had put an end to the Roman empire of the East.

"Hitherto, despite their victories, the control of the Asiatics over the Balkan lands had seemed provisional. Now there seemed little danger that the native Christians unaided could shake off their fetters. . .

"Thus it was the New Rome of Constantine Augustus passed under the power of a horde of Oriental adventurers. . .

"Hitherto for seven hundred years, like the Twin Rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, there had been two great currents of history in the Near East,--that proceeding from Christian Constantinople and that proceeding from the lands of Islam. Now the Christian current appears to be almost dried up. For over three centuries the annals of the Near East seem merely those of the Ottoman Empire. Until the new gleams of Greek and Serbian freedom, early in the nineteenth century, about all the historian can do is to relate how the sons of Ertoghul the Nomad, lorded it in the capital of the departed East Roman Empire. . .

"The formative days for the Ottoman power were over. A great military state was in existence and in possession of one of the most strategically located cities in the world." William Stearns Davis, A Short History of the Near East, 211-213

4. The number of the armies Rev 9:16

Knox: "And the muster of the armies that followed them on horseback (for I heard their muster called) was twenty thousand armies of ten thousand."

RSV: "The number of the troops of cavalry was twice ten thousand times ten thousand."

5. Fire, smoke and brimstone Rev 9:17,18

This is probably a reference to the muskets which the Turks fired while galloping into battle, and to cannons dragged around by artillery horses. The Turks made extensive use of artillery in their final assault on Constantinople.

"The incessant volleys of lances and arrows were accompanied with the smoke, the sound, and the fire, of their musketry and cannon. Their small arms discharged at the same time either five, or even ten, balls of lead, of the size of a walnut; and, according to the closeness of the ranks and the force of the powder, several breastplates and bodies were transpierced by the same shot. . . The same destructive secret had been revealed to the Moslems; by whom it was employed with the superior energy of zeal, riches, and despotism. . . The long order of the Turkish artillery was pointed against the walls; fourteen batteries thundered at once on the most accessible places; and of one of these it is ambiguously expressed, that it was mounted with one hundred and thirty guns, or that it discharged one hundred and thirty bullets. Yet in the power and activity of the sultan, we may discern the

infancy of a new science. . .

"A circumstance that distinguishes the siege of Constantinople is the reunion of the ancient and modern artillery. The cannon were intermingled with the mechanical engines for casting stones and darts; the bullet and the battering-ram were directed against the same walls: nor had the discovery of gunpowder superseded the use of the liquid and unextinguishable fire. . .

"The sultan himself on horseback, . . . was surrounded by ten thousand of his domestic troops. . . The Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides; and the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman empire."
Edward Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, VI, 388,390,400

6. Power in their mouth and in their tails Rev 9:19
7. Rest of men do not repent in spite of these plagues Rev 9:20,21

NEB: "The rest of mankind who survived these plagues still did not abjure the gods their hands had fashioned, nor cease their worship of devils and of idols made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood."

Weymouth: "But the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues, did not even then repent and leave the things they had made, so as to cease worshipping the demons, and the idols of gold and silver."

Under the fifth and sixth trumpets, not only did the Turks gradually destroy the Eastern Roman Empire, a process which culminated with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, but they were a perpetual thorn in the side of Europe for over three centuries. At length, however, their power began to weaken and their stranglehold on Europe was over. By 1840 Turkish power in Europe had been so reduced that were it not for the conflicting interests of the European powers, the Turks might have been expelled from Europe altogether. With the defeat of the Central Powers in the first World War (1914-1918), Turkey lost all its territories in Asia except Anatolia.

In spite of all the woes brought upon Europe by the Turks, mankind did not repent, and, with a few exceptions, Christianity has been losing ground in Europe since the Renaissance, as men turned to humanism, rationalism, the worship of money, science, and power.

M. The seventh trumpet Rev 10:7; 11:14-19; 19:1-21

1. The second woe past, the third woe to come quickly Rev 11:14

This announcement of the second woe being past does not appear at the close of the account of the sixth trumpet in Rev 9:21; as we might expect that it would, but only after the account of the mighty angel with the open book in Rev 10:1-11, and of the messages concerning the measuring of the temple, and the two witnesses clothed in sackcloth, 538-1798, and the attacks against them in

France from 1793 to 1797 during the earth-shaking events of the French revolution (to be dealt with here in chs VII and VIII).

It might be expected, then, that the announcement of the coming of the third woe--the seventh trumpet--after the above events, would give the approximate time of the commencement of the seventh trumpet to be shortly thereafter, or early in the 1800s.

The seventh trumpet was to see the fiercest outbreaks of human violence and bloodshed ever to take place, and ultimately to result in the destruction of the earth itself. But it was also to be the time when God's temple would be opened in heaven, when the ark of his testament would be revealed to view, and when Christ would finally return to take over His rightful position of rulership over the kingdoms of earth. No other period of world history was to witness events so terrifying or so glorious as these. This is the age in which we live.

2. The mystery of God finished Rev 10:7; Eph 3:3-6; Rom 16:25,26; Col 2:2; 4:3

The "mystery of God" constitutes the plan of salvation which is made clear to men through the gospel of Christ. When the gospel has at length been proclaimed to all the world, the work of salvation will be completed and the mystery of God may be said to be finished.

It is under the seventh trumpet that the final phase of Christ's ministration in heaven commenced in 1844. That is the time when Christ began His work of investigative judgment in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. That is the time when He goes over the records and makes the decisions concerning those whose names should be retained in the Book of Life and be citizens of His heavenly kingdom. And that also was the time when God's people were given a glimpse of God's temple in heaven and saw the ark containing the ten commandments and had revealed to them the light in regard to the Sabbath truth.

3. Great voice announcing that the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of God Rev 11:15; 19:6,11-16; Dan 2:44; 7:14; EW 280,281; GC 613,614

Textual evidence favors the singular "kingdom" rather than "kingdoms"

JB: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

NEB: "The sovereignty of the world has passed to our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Although this event marks not the opening of the seventh trumpet but its close, it is presented first because it is the climactic event of that trumpet and overshadows everything else not only in this trumpet but in all of earth's history.

"About His coming cluster the glories of that 'restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.' Acts 3:21. The long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; 'the kingdoms of this world' will become 'the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.'" GC 301

4. Four and twenty elders fall before God and worship Him Rev 11:16; 5:8-10; 19:4
 - a. Because Christ has taken His power and has reigned Rev 11:17; 5:11-14; 19:6
5. The nations angry Rev 11:18

Never in all earth's history have nations been as angry as they have been in our modern age. The extent, bitterness and result of this anger are absolutely terrifying. The end result will be world destruction..

"We are standing upon the threshold of great and solemn events. . . The nations are angry, and the time of the dead has come, that they should be judged. . . But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle." 6T 14

"I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out." EW 36

6. The hour of God's wrath Rev 11:18; 15:1,7; 16:1

"The storm of God's wrath is gathering, and those only will stand who are sanctified through the truth in the love of God." TM 182

"I saw that the seven last plagues were soon to be poured out upon those who have no shelter, yet the world regarded them no more than they would so many drops of water that were about to fall. I was then made capable of enduring the awful sight of the seven last plagues, the wrath of God. I saw that His anger was dreadful and terrible, and if He should stretch forth His hand, or lift it in anger, the inhabitants of the world would be as though they had never been." EW 64

7. The time of the dead that they should be judged Rev 11:18; Dan 7:10; 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Pet 4:17; Rev 20:4

The investigative judgment which decides the cases of the righteous takes place before the close of probation, preceding the seven last

plagues and the return of Christ; while the judgment of the wicked by Christ and the righteous takes place during the thousand years, after Christ's return.

8. Time to reward God's servants Rev 11:18; 22:12; Isa 40:10
9. To destroy them that destroy the earth Rev 11:18; Isa 24:3-6
Cf Jer 2:7

"Satan's power upon the human family increases. If the Lord should not soon come and destroy his power, the earth would ere long be depopulated." 1T 304

"In the laws of God in nature, effect follows cause with unerring certainty. The reaping will testify as to what the sowing has been. . . God destroys no man. Every one who is destroyed will have destroyed himself." COL 84

"Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old. . . There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission to spread desolation everywhere." GC 614

10. The temple of God opened in heaven Rev 11:19; 1T 75,76; EW 42;
PP 356

"The announcement that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His testament was seen, points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, in 1844, as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement." GC 433

"When the temple of God was opened in Heaven, John saw in holy vision a class of people whose attention was arrested, and who were looking with reverential awe at the ark, which contained the law of God. The special test upon the fourth commandment did not come until after the temple of God was opened in Heaven." 2T 693

"The Lord gave me a view of the heavenly sanctuary. The temple of God was opened in heaven, and I was shown the ark of God covered with the mercy seat. Two angels stood one at either end of the ark, with their wings spread over the mercy seat, and their faces turned toward it. This, my accompanying angel informed me, represented all the heavenly host looking with reverential awe toward the law of God, which had been written by the finger of God." LS 95

11. Lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquake, great hail Rev 11:19;
16:18-21 Cf Isa 2:10-21; Rev 8:5

VII

THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 10

II. A MIGHTY ANGEL COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN Rev 10:1

A. Angels--messengers with tidings from God Rev 14:6-9; 18:1; Dan 10:5,6B. The appearance of the angel

1. Cloud and rainbow Rev 10:1; 4:3. Cf Eze 1:28
TM 157; MH 94; Ed 115

"How great the condescension of God, and His compassion for His erring creatures, in thus placing the beautiful rainbow in the clouds as a token of His covenant with men! . . . He speaks to us in our own language, that we may better understand Him. It was God's purpose that as the children of after-generations should ask the meaning of the glorious arch which spans the heavens, their parents should repeat the story of the flood, and tell them that the Most High had bended the bow, and placed it in the clouds as an assurance that the waters should never again overflow the earth. Thus from generation to generation it would testify of divine love to man, and would strengthen his confidence in God. . .

"When man by his great wickedness invites the divine judgments, the Saviour, interceding with the Father in his behalf, points to the bow in the clouds, to the rainbow around the throne and above His own head, as a token of the mercy of God toward the repentant sinner." PP 106,107

2. The face as the sun

- a. The face of Jesus shining as the sun Rev 1:16;
Matt 17:2. Cf Dan 10:6

3. His feet as pillars of fire Rev 10:1

- a. Jesus' feet as burning brass Rev 1:15; Dan 10:6

C. In His hand a little book open Rev 10:2

1. The book of Daniel a book that had been closed and sealed
Dan 12:4-9
2. The book of Daniel to be unsealed in the last days
Dan 12:9-13; GC 356

"It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who unsealed the book, and gave to John the revelation of what should be in these last days.

"Daniel stood in his lot to bear his testimony which was sealed until the time of the end, when the first angel's message should be proclaimed to our world." TM 115

"If the last age, the age of opening these things, be now approaching, as by the great successes of late interpreters it seems to be, we have more encouragement than ever to look into these things. . . Amongst the interpretaters of the last age there is scarce one of note who hath not made some discovery worth having; and thence I seem to gather that God is about opening these mysteries." Sir Isaac Newton, Observations Upon the Prophecies (1733), 251-253

D. One foot on the earth, the other on the sea Rev 10:2,5

1. A world message to be proclaimed Matt 24:14; 28:18,19

"The mighty angel who instructed John was no less a personage than Jesus Christ. Setting his right foot on the sea, and his left upon the dry land, shows the part which he is acting in the closing scenes of the great controversy with Satan. This position denotes his supreme power and authority over the whole earth." EGW MS 59-1900

E. The seven thunders Rev 10:3,4

"After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: 'Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered.' These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angel's messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.

"The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened. John heard the mysteries which the thunders uttered, but he was commanded not to write them. The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels' messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God, most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels' messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work." EGW MS 59-1900

F. The message proclaimed Rev 10:5-11

1. Proclaimed with a solemn oath

a. Hand uplifted Rev 10:5; Dan 12:7; Deut 32:40

b. Swears by the Creator who lives forever Rev 10:6; 4:11; 14:7

2. There shall be time no longer Rev 10:6

"This time which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844. The angel's position with one foot on the sea, the other on the land signifies the wide extent of the proclamation of the message. It will cross the broad waters and be proclaimed in other countries, even to all the world."
EGW MS 59-1900

a. The hour for a solemn time message to be fulfilled

- (1) The hour of God's judgment come Rev 14:6,7
- (2) The sanctuary to be cleansed after 2300 days
Dan 8:14,17,26
- (3) The mystery of God to be finished Rev 10:7; Eph 3:3-6;
Rom 16:25,26

G. The little book eaten Rev 10:8-10

1. At first sweet as honey Rev 10:9,10; Ps 119:103; Jer 15:16;
Eze 2:8,9; 3:1-3

"The glad reception of the message is represented in the eating of the little book. The truth in regard to the time of the advent of our Lord was a precious message to our souls." EGW MS 59-1900

John acted as a representative of the Church. His eating the little book meant that the Church by accepting the message of Christ's soon coming during the revival of 1840-1844 experienced a great elation. The Advent Hope was sweet to the early believers. But the fact that Christ did not come in 1844 produced a bitter disappointment.

2. Bitter when eaten Rev 10:9,10

H. Thou must prophesy again Rev 10:11

The Advent believers of 1844 were rescued from their state of despondency after the disappointment, by the realization that there still was a great work for them to perform for the world. With a clear understanding of the three angels' messages of Rev 14, came the conviction that this message must go to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev 14:6). Inspired with this conviction Seventh-day Adventists have undertaken a world-wide program of evangelization aimed at reaching all people everywhere on the globe.

VIII

THE TEMPLE AND THE TWO WITNESSES

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 11

II. THE TEMPLE Rev 11:1,2

A. The temple to be measured--a work of careful investigation and verification

"In the Revelation, John says, 'The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.' Rev 11:19. John saw in vision the Lord's people looking for His coming and searching for truth. As the temple of God was opened unto His people, the light of the law of God, which was in the ark, shone forth. Those who receive this light are brought to view in the proclamation of the third angel's message." EGW 4BC 1152

"The announcement that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His testament was seen, points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, in 1844, as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement." GC 433

"As foretold in the Scriptures, the ministration of Christ in the most holy place began at the termination of the prophetic days in 1844. To this time apply the words of the Revelator, 'The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.' Rev 11:19. The ark of God's testament is in the second apartment of the sanctuary. As Christ entered there, to minister in the sinner's behalf, the inner temple was opened, and the ark of God was brought to view. To those who by faith beheld the Saviour in His work of intercession, God's majesty and power were revealed." SR 379

"The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth, (also) the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law." CW 30

"When the temple of God was opened in Heaven, John saw in holy vision a class of people whose attention was arrested, and who were looking with reverential awe at the ark, which contained the law of God. The special test upon the fourth commandment did not come until after the temple of God was opened in Heaven. 2T 693

"Those who were seeking for the truth found indisputable proof of the existence of a sanctuary in Heaven. . .

"In the temple in Heaven, the dwelling-place of God, his throne is established in righteousness and judgment. . .

"Those who followed in the advancing light of the prophetic word saw that instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary." 4 SP 261,266

"'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.' . . . These prophetic days had been shown to terminate in the autumn of 1844. . .

"But the appointed time had passed, and the Lord had not appeared. . .

"With this reckoning, all was clear and harmonious, except that it was not seen that any event answering to the cleansing of the sanctuary had taken place in 1844. . .

"With earnest prayer they reviewed their position, and studied the Scriptures to discover their mistake. . .

"They found in the Bible a full explanation of the subject of the sanctuary, its nature, location, and services. . .

"The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844." GC 409-411,423

B. The temple--the heavenly sanctuary Rev 4:1,2; 8:1-3

C. Measuring the worshipers in the temple--a work of judgment

"The grand judgment is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, Measure the temple and the worshipers thereof. Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is measuring you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is measuring you. . . Here is the work going on, measuring the temple and its worshipers to see who will stand in the last day." 7 SDA BC 972

"Every case is coming in review before God; He is measuring the temple and the worshipers therein." 7 T 219

D. The court not to be measured--the earth

"Christ. . . is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth. . . He is the true watchman in the Lord's house, the true warden of the temple courts." AA 586

"Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth." 6T 366

E. The holy city trodden under foot forty-two months--the true church 4SP 188

THE TWO WITNESSES CRUSHED TO EARTH AND RAISED AGAIN Rev 11:3-13

A. God's witnesses--the Old and New Testaments John 5:39

"The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament." GC 267

B. Prophecy in sackcloth a thousand two hundred and threescore days--538-1798 A.D. Rev 11:3 Cf Dan 7:25; Rev 11:2; 12:6,14; 13:5

"The suppression of the Scriptures under the dominion of Rome, the terrible results of that suppression, and the final exaltation of the word of God, are vividly portrayed by the prophetic pencil. To John the exile on lonely Patmos was given a view of the 1260 years during which the papal power was permitted to trample upon God's word and oppress his people. Said the angel of the Lord: 'The holy city (the true church) shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.' The periods here mentioned are the same, alike representing the time in which God's faithful witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. . .

"Notwithstanding the Lord's witnesses were clothed in sackcloth, they continued to prophesy throughout the entire period of 1260 years." 4SP 188,190

"During the greater part of this period, God's witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. The papal power sought to hide from the people the Word of truth, and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. When the Bible was proscribed by religious and secular authority; when its testimony was perverted, and every effort made that men and demons could invent to turn the minds of the people from it; when those who dared proclaim its sacred truths were hunted, betrayed, tortured, buried in dungeon cells, martyred for their faith, or compelled to flee to mountain fastnesses, and to dens and caves of the earth,--then the faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth. Yet they continued their testimony throughout the entire period of 1260 years. . .

"The period when the two witnesses were to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, ended in 1798. . .

"It had been Rome's policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it locked up in an unknown tongue, and hidden away from the people. Under her rule the witnesses prophesied, 'clothed in sackcloth.'" GC 267-269

C. The olive trees and candlesticks Rev 11:4

1. The two olive trees Zech 4:2-14; Ps 119:105; TM 510; COL 408
2. The two candlesticks Ps 119:105; GC 267

D. The power of the two witnesses

1. To slay those who would hurt them Rev 11:5; Rev 22:18,19

"Men cannot with impunity trample upon the word of God. . .

"All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility. The written word, the law of God, will measure the character of every man, and condemn all whom this unerring test shall declare wanting." GC 268

2. Power to shut heaven that it rain not Rev 11:6 Cf. 1 Ki 17:1; Luke 4:25; James 5:17,18
3. Power to bring plagues on the earth Rev 11:6

E. Beast of the bottomless pit to make war against them and kill them
Rev 11:7

1. Satan the beast of the bottomless pit Rev 20:2,3

"When they shall have finished (are finishing) their testimony.' The period when the two witnesses were to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, ended in 1798. As they were approaching the termination of their work in obscurity, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as 'the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.' In many of the nations of Europe the powers that ruled in church and state had for centuries been controlled by Satan, through the medium of the papacy. But here is brought to view a new manifestation of satanic power." GC 268,269

2. Their bodies to lie in the street Rev 11:8,9

- a. The great city called Sodom and Egypt Rev 11:8

"The 'great city' in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, 'is spiritually Egypt.' Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God, and resisted His commands. No monarch ever ventured upon more open and high-handed rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt. When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered, 'Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go.' This is atheism; and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God, and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance. The 'great city' is also compared, 'spiritually,' to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in licentiousness. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfil the specifications of this scripture.

"According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some power of satanic origin and character would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God's two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh and the licentiousness of Sodom.

"This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the history of France." GC 269

b. Where our Lord was crucified Rev 11:8

"'Where also our Lord was crucified.' This specification of the prophecy was also fulfilled by France. In no land had the spirit of enmity against Christ been more strikingly displayed. In no country had the truth encountered more bitter and cruel opposition. In the persecution which France had visited upon the confessors of the gospel, she had crucified Christ in the person of His disciples." GC 271

The vicious attacks in France against the followers of Christ and the messages of the Master, is regarded by God as nothing less than the rejection and crucifixion of Christ Himself. Among these might be mentioned the crusade against the Albigenses in the 13th century; the opposition against the Reformation which climaxed with the massacre on the night of St. Batholomew in 1572; the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1688 which resulted in the flight of thousands of Huguenots from France; and the spread of rationalism by Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau and others which led to the excesses of the French Revolution in the period of 1789-1797.

c. Three and a half days, or years Rev 11:9

"During the Revolution, in 1793, 'the world for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of a Deity.' . . .

"The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror, did wage such a war against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed. The worship of the Deity was abolished by the National Assembly. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn." GC 269,270,273

EVENTS OF 1793 -- BEGINNING OF THE THREE AND A HALF YEARS

- Aug 5 Republican calendar adopted by vote of Convention
 Christian era abolished
 Weekly cycle replaced by decade
- Nov 7 Worship of Reason inaugurated at Convention

- Nov 10 General Council of Commune orders celebration of worship of Reason at Cathedral of Notre Dame Declaration in Council that pious books of Catholic Church "as well as the Old and New Testaments, had just expiated, in a great bonfire on the square of the Temple of Reason, all the foolery they had caused the human race to commit."
- Nov 21 Convention takes oath henceforth to acknowledge no other worship than that of Reason, Liberty, Equality, and the Republic
- Nov 23 Decree by Council that all churches and temples of all religions and cults in Paris be closed at once

3. To make merry and rejoice over them Rev 11:10

"Infidel France had silenced the reproving voice of God's two witnesses. The Word of truth lay dead in her streets, and those who hated the restrictions and requirements of God's law were jubilant. Men publicly defied the King of heaven." GC 274

F. Raised to life Rev 11:11,12

1. After three and a half days

"It was in 1793 that the decrees which abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible, passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body." GC 287

EVENTS OF 1797 -- END OF THE THREE AND A HALF YEARS

- May Council of Five Hundred appoints a committee to prepare a new law on religious worship
- June 17 Committee presents its report before the Council Camille Jordan, president of the committee, in his report says: "Religion is necessary to the happiness and prosperity of a nation. Faith in God is a better pledge of public order than the best of laws. The people's will on this subject is unanimous, constant, and irresistible.
Religion, with its immortal prospects, is the only solace of a nation in the throes of a revolution. It is the only true source of order and morality. We have created thousands of laws within the last few years. What have they done for us, but to flood this lovely empire with crime and destruction? And why? Because the law teaching how to discern between right and wrong, the law which alone lends value to all other laws, had been torn from the hearts of the people. Let all forms of belief re-create that law in the hearts, and legislators will have little else to do. The thought of proscribing all religion

from France is an impious one. Let therefore all our fellow citizens be today fully reassured; let everybody, Catholics and Protestants, consider it as the will of the legislator and the desire of the law, that they are at liberty to follow the religion of their hearts. Let me repeat to them in your name the sacred promise: ALL FORMS OF WORSHIP ARE FREE IN FRANCE."

Council by general consent agrees upon freedom of worship

2. Called up to heaven

"Since France made war upon God's two witnesses, they have been honored as never before. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. This was followed by similar organizations, with numerous branches, upon the continent of Europe. In 1816 the American Bible Society was founded." GC 287

IV. THE EARTHQUAKE AND FALL OF THE CITY Rev 11:13

A. The great earthquake

"When France publicly rejected God and set aside the Bible, wicked men and spirits of darkness exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired,--a kingdom free from the restraints of the law of God . . . But the transgression of a just and righteous law must inevitably result in misery and ruin. . . Those who had chosen the service of rebellion, were left to reap its fruits, until the land was filled with crimes too horrible for pen to trace. From devastated provinces and ruined cities a terrible cry was heard,--a cry of bitterest anguish. France was shaken as if by an earthquake." GC 286

B. Fall of a tenth part of the city Rev 16:19; 17:18,5; 18:21

"There shall be an earthquake, and a tenth part of the city shall be overturned. Mark that the earthquake, i.e., the great alteration of affairs in the land of the Papacy, must for that time happen only in the tenth part of the city that shall fall: for this shall be the effect of this earthquake.

"Now what is this tenth part of this city, which shall fall? In my opinion we cannot doubt that 'tis France. This kingdom is the most considerable part, or piece, of the ten horns, or states, which once made up the great Babylonian city. . . This tenth part of the city shall fall, with respect to the Papacy; it shall break with Rome, and the Roman religion." Peter Jurieu, The Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies, II, 264,265, London, 1687

C. Seven thousand slain

Literal Translation: "Were killed in the earthquake, names of men, thousands seven."

Young: "And killed in the earthquake were names of men--seven thousands."

D. The rest affrighted

V. THE SECOND WOE PAST, THE THIRD TO COME QUICKLY Rev 11:14

According to Rev 8:13 there were to be three woe trumpets after the end of the fourth trumpet. At the conclusion of the fifth trumpet, the first woe was past and two were yet to come (Rev 9:12). And according to Rev 11:14, after the events described in Rev 10 and 11:1-13, the second woe was past and the third was soon to come. This would indicate that the events which took place in France during the excesses of the French Revolution, 1789 to 1797, took place during the period of the sixth trumpet, and possibly bore some definite relationship to that trumpet. The follies of the French "Reign of Terror" illustrate what will take place when mankind rejects God and His two witnesses, the Old and New Testaments, and sets himself against God's law, which is the only law that can make human laws of consequence.

It is during the period of the third woe and the seventh trumpet that the world is to experience its greatest period of lawlessness, as mankind turns against God and everything that He stands for in the way of righteousness, justice and truth

IX

THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 12

II. THE PRINCIPALS IN THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

A. The woman Rev 12:1

1. The woman a symbol of the church Jer 6:2; Isa 54:5,6;
Hos 2:19,20; 2 Cor 11:2; DA 151

"The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children, are greatly in the minority." 4SP 276

"Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church." MH 356

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer." PK 725

2. The church on earth one with the church in heaven

"The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church." 6T 366

3. Clothed with the sun

- a. The sun a symbol of Christ and His righteousness
Mal 4:2; John 8:12; Luke 1:76-79; DA 463,464

"Christ. . . is the light of the sun and moon and star. . . As the sunbeams penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, so does the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon every soul." DA 464

- b. The church to put on Christ and the garments of His righteousness Rom 13:12,14; Gal 3:27; Isa 52:1; Isa 61:10; Rev 19:7,8; COL 312

- c. The church to be the light of the world Matt 5:14; Eph 5:8

4. The moon under her feet

"Humanity has in itself no light. Apart from Christ, we are like an unkindled taper, like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; we have not a single ray of brightness to shed into the darkness of the world. But when we turn toward the Sun of Right-

eousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence." MB 64

5. Upon her head a crown of twelve stars

"The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with these ministers of God, who are to represent the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are under God's control. He fills them with light. . . So with His ministers." GW 13,14

B. The child--Christ Rev 12:2; Ps 2:7-9; Acts 13:33; Isa 66:7; Matt 1:23

C. The great red dragon--Satan and his earthly agent, Rome
Rev 12:3,9. Cf Eze 29:3; 32:2; Jer 51:34; Isa 27:1; 51:9;
Ps 74:13,14

"The line of prophecy in which these symbols are found, begins with Revelation 12, with the dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth. The dragon is said to be Satan; he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era, was the Roman empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome." GC 438

"In the book of the Revelation, under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopard-like beast, and a beast with lamb-like horns, are brought to view those earthly governments which are especially engaged in trampling upon God's law and persecuting his people. Their war is carried forward to the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children are greatly in the minority." 4SP 276

The dragon as here pictured is a composite creature. It is Satan with his earthly appurtenances. Certainly Satan is not a being with multiple heads and horns and crowns. Satan was originally a heavenly being, an angel. Today he is a fallen angel. In this world he works through human agencies. By means of various earthly governments and religious powers he has sought to gain control of the world and to bring all the human race under his sway. These powers,--effective tools of the prince of evil,--are in the book of Revelation represented by beasts of prey with their multiple heads and horns.

1. The heads, horns, and crowns Rev 12:3. Cf Rev 13:1; 17:3,9,10

- a. Seven heads--major powers Rev 17:3,10; Dan 7:6,
Cf Dan 8:8,22
- b. Ten horns--minor powers Rev 17:12; Dan 7:24; 8:21,22;
Zech 1:18,19
- c. Seven crowns--emblems of rulership and royalty
2 Ki 11:12; 1 Chr 20:2; Eze 21:26,27

III. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH

A. A third part of the stars cast to earth Rev 12:4; 3T 115.
Cf Job 38:7; 2 Pet 2:4; Isa 14:13; Jude 6; Dan 8:10

"When Satan became disaffected in Heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect, and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one-third of the angels lost their innocence, their high estate, and their happy home." 5T 291

B. The dragon and the man child Rev 12:4,5

1. Endeavor to devour the child as soon as it was born Rev 12:4; Matt 2:16; GC 438
2. The birth of the child Matt 1:21-25
3. The child to rule all nations with a rod of iron Rev 12:5 Rev 2:26,27; 19:15,16; Ps 2:7-9
4. The child caught up to God and His throne John 14:28; 20:17; Heb 8:1

C. The woman flees into the wilderness for 1260 days--538-1798
Rev 12:6; 13:5-7; Dan 7:25

"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. . . And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. . . Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: '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.'" GC 54,55

D. War in heaven Rev 12:7-9

1. Michael--Christ 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 9; Dan 12:1; 10:13,21
2. That old serpent, the Devil, and Satan Gen 3:1,4; Rev 20:2
 - a. Which deceiveth the whole world

"Ever since his defection in heaven, Satan's course has been one of perpetual deception and harshness." TM 280,281

"The great deceiver has many agents ready to present any and every kind of error to ensnare souls." GC 520

"He had artfully presented his side of the question, employing sophistry and fraud to secure his objects. His power to deceive was very great. By disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood, he had gained an advantage. . .

"It was his policy to perplex with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah. . .

"Satan could use what God could not,--flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God, and had misrepresented his plan of government, claiming that God was not just in imposing laws upon the angels; that in requiring submission and obedience from his creatures, he was seeking merely the exaltation of himself. . . Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe." PP 41,42

"With the earliest history of man, Satan began his efforts to deceive our race. . .

"The only one who promised Adam life in disobedience was the great deceiver." GC 531,533

b. Cast out into the earth Rev 12:9

"When Satan was thrust out of heaven, he determined to make the earth his kingdom. When he tempted and overcame Adam and Eve, he thought that he had gained possession of this world . . . The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his." PP 69

(1) Creation of man planned before the fall of Satan

"After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image." 1SP 24

(2) Satan disaffected over the plans for the creation of man

"When God said to His Son, 'Let us make man in our image,' Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred." EW 145

(3) Heavenly council called before the creation of the earth

"Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to prevail, and became the more determined. . .

"The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before him, that in their presence he might set forth the true position of his Son, and show the relation he sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father's throne. . . The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants." PP 36

c. Angels cast out with Satan Rev 12:9; EW 146

"Satan and his sympathizers were expelled from Heaven. . .

"Angels in Heaven mourned the fate of those who had been their companions in happiness and bliss. Their loss was felt in Heaven. The Father consulted Jesus in regard to at once carrying out their purpose to make man to inhabit the earth. . .

"Satan stood in amazement at his new condition. His happiness was gone. He looked upon the angels who, with him, were once so happy, but who had been expelled from Heaven with him. . . Countenances which had reflected the image of their Maker were gloomy and despairing. . .

"Instead of greater good, they were experiencing the sad results of disobedience and disregard of law." 1ST 23,28,29

E. Satan cast down at the crucifixion of Christ Rev 12:10; PP 70

1. Now is come salvation

"Christ bowed His head and died. . . '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 God day and night.'

"Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken." DA 761

2. The accuser of the brethren Rev 12:10; Zech 3:1; 2T 106; MB 90; COL 166; 5T 286

"As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who seek the mercy and favor of God. He is 'the accuser of our brethren, . . . which accused them before our God day and night.' Over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil, and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, the controversy is repeated. Never is one received into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the enemy." PK 585

"Satan's accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God's law can he obtain power over them. His accusations arise solely from his enmity to Christ." 5T 470

"Satan exults when he can defame or wound a follower of Christ. He is the 'accuser of the brethren.' Shall Christians aid him in his work?" 5T 95

F. Victory for the children of God Rev 12:11,12

1. Satan a conquered foe John 12:31,32

2. The secret of victory

a. The blood of the Lamb 5T 471; PP 77

b. The word of their testimony EW 114

3. Love not their lives to the death

4. Rejoicing in heaven over victory Ps 96:11-13; GC 678

5. The rage of the vanquished foe

"The holy life of Abel testified against Satan's claim that it is impossible for man to keep God's law. When Cain, moved by the spirit of the wicked one, saw that he could not control Abel, he was so enraged that he destroyed his life. And wherever there are any who will stand in vindication of the righteousness of the law of God, the same spirit will be manifested against them. . . It is the rage of a vanquished foe. Every martyr of Jesus has died a conqueror." PP 77

6. Must battle against the determined opposition of the enemy
Eph 6:12; 2T 515; 3:327,407; 4:557; 5:297

"God is leading his people out from the abominations of the world, that they may keep his law; and because of this, the rage of 'the accuser of our brethren' knows no bounds. 'The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' The antitypical land of promise is just before us, and Satan is determined to destroy the people of God, and cut them off from their inheritance." PP 689

"The wrath of Satan increases as his time grows short, and his work of deceit and destruction will reach its culmination in the time of trouble." GC 623

7. Satan restricted to this earth during the thousand years

"Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Here he will be confined to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth, and see the effects of his rebellion against God's law. For a thousand years he can enjoy the fruit of the curse which he has caused. Limited alone to the earth, he will not have the privilege of ranging to other planets, to tempt and annoy those who have not fallen. . .

I heard shouts of triumph from the angels and the redeemed saints,

which sounded like ten thousand musical instruments, because they were to be no more annoyed and tempted by Satan, and because the inhabitants of other worlds were delivered from his presence and his temptations." EW 290

G. War by the dragon against the woman and her seed Rev 12:13-17;
Gen 3:15

"When Satan became fully convinced that there was no possibility of his being re-instated in the favor of God, he manifested his malice with increased hatred and fiery vehemence.

"God knew that such determined rebellion would not remain inactive. . . He would seek to destroy the happiness of Adam and Eve." LSP 30

1. The woman fled into the wilderness for a time, times, and half a time--538-1798 Rev 12:14; 13:5; 11:2,3; Dan 7:25; Matt 24:21,22

"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. . . And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. . . Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battle-field. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: 'The woman fled into the wilderness.'" GC 54,55

- a. Wings that she might fly Rev 12:14. Cf Ps 55:6,7; Jer 48:9,28
- b. A flood cast out by the serpent Rev 12:15. Cf Isa 8:7,8; Isa 59:19; Jer 46:7,8; 47:2-4
- c. The earth helped the woman Rev 12:16

2. War against the remnant Rev 12:17; GC 582-635

NEB: "At this the dragon grew furious with the woman, and went off to wage war on the rest of her offspring, that is, on those who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony to Jesus."

Weymouth: "This made the Dragon furiously angry with the woman, and he went elsewhere to make war upon her other children--those who keep God's commandments and hold fast to the testimony of Jesus."

- a. A shift in the scene of battle
- b. The characteristics of the remnant

- (1) Keep the commandments of God Rev 12:17; 14:12; John 14:15; 1 John 5:2,3; Rom 13:8-10; DA 398; 2T 105; 8:41,42,117; 5:449-451; PK 605; GC 592

"From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon

his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. . .

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God." GC 582

"In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled, as the Protestant churches unite with the world and with the papal power against commandment-keepers. The same spirit which actuated papists in ages past, will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God." 5T 449

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering." . . .

"In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words, '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.' . . .

"The wrath of Satan increases as his time grows short, and his work of deceit and destruction will reach its culmination in the time of trouble." GC 582,592,623

- (2) Have the testimony of Jesus Christ Rev 12:17.
Cf Rev 19:10; EW 143

X

THE LEOPARD-LIKE AND THE TWO-HORNED BEASTS

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 13

II. THE LEOPARD BEAST Rev 13:1-10

A. Arises from the sea Rev 13:1. Cf Dan 7:2,3; Rev 10:2; 17:1,15

B. Its complex, composite nature

1. Seven heads Rev 13:1. Cf Rev 12:3; 17:3
2. Ten horns Rev 13:1. Cf Rev 12:3; 17:3; Dan 7:7
3. Ten crowns Rev 13:1
4. Names of blasphemy Rev 13:1. Cf Rev 17:3
5. Like a leopard Rev 13:2. Cf Dan 7:6
6. Feet as a bear Rev 13:2. Cf Dan 7:5
7. Mouth as a lion Rev 13:2. Cf Dan 7:4

The parallels between the leopard beast of Rev 13:1 and the dragon of Rev 12:3 are worthy of notice. Both have seven heads and ten horns. The dragon has seven crowns upon its heads while the leopard beast has ten crowns upon his horns. The dragon imparted to the leopard beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Rev 13:2). The dragon primarily represents Satan (Rev 12:9), but it also represents pagan Rome (GC 438). The leopard beast represents papal Rome, but the papacy had many of the features of imperial Rome preceding it. To the leopard beast unusual power was given for a period of forty-two months (Rev 13:5). That same period is referred to in connection with the description of the dragon, where the woman (the church) fled into the wilderness for a thousand, two hundred and threescore days (Rev 12:6). It should be kept in mind that Satan is the basic agent of opposition to the people of God, whether this be pagan or papal Rome, or some other persecuting power.

The parallels between the leopard beast and the beasts of Dan 7 also merit attention. The bear-like features might point to the Persian influence of Mithraism and sunworship on Catholic thought and practice. The lion-like features could have come from such Babylonian influences as astrology followed by Chalaeian priests. And the leopard-like features would point to Greek influences upon Roman-Catholic theology. Every student of Roman Catholicism recognizes how profoundly it was influenced by the practices of the nations of the ancient east.

C. Receives its seat and power from the dragon Rev 13:2

"In Chapter 13 is described another beast, 'like unto a leopard,' to which the dragon gave 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.' This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once held by the ancient Roman empire." GC 439

"Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. . . The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. . .

"This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the 'man of sin' foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will." GC 49,50

"Rome especially, the capital of paganism, and the seat of all the abominations of idolatry, overflowed, as it were, with the blood of the Christians. . .

"Constantine became the defender and protector of Christianity. . .

"The cross, that had hitherto been the sign of the greatest ignominy, now became a sign of honor and victory. It glittered on the imperial crown of Constantine, and was displayed in Rome--till then the principal seat of paganism--on the pinnacle of the temple of Jupiter, the Capitol. . . In a short time paganism was completely overthrown throughout the Roman Empire, and the Christian Religion was permanently established.

"The Catholic Church had now to gain victories of another kind - namely, over her internal enemies, the heretics." Joseph Deharbe, A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion, 28-30

D. One of his heads wounded and healed Rev 13:3

"The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion, is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. . . The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798." GC 579

E. All the world wonders after the beast Rev 13:3

"After this, says the prophet, 'His deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.'" Paul states plainly that the man of sin will continue until the second advent. To the very close of time he will carry forward his work of deception. . . In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the

Roman Church." GC 579

"Under one head,--the papal power,--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate." 7T 182

F. Worship of the dragon Rev 13:4

"Satan still presents to men and women the same scene that he presented to Christ. In a wonderful manner he causes the kingdoms of the world in their glory to pass before them. These he promises to all who will fall down and worship him. Thus he seeks to bring men under his dominion.

"Satan is working to the utmost to make himself as God, and to destroy all who oppose his power. And to-day the world is bowing before him. His power is received as the power of God. The prophecy of the Revelation is being fulfilled, that 'all the world wondered after the beast.' Rev 13:3. . .

"Men cherish the attributes of the first great deceiver. They have accepted him as God, and have become imbued with his spirit." 6T 14,15

G. A mouth speaking blasphemies Rev 13:5,6; Dan 7:25; 11:36;
2 Thess 2:4

H. His power

1. To continue forty-two months--538-1798 Rev 13:5; Dan 7:25.
Cf Rev 11:2,3

"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. . . And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation." GC 54

"The forty and two months are the same as the 'time and times and the dividing of time,' three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,--the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period. . . began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798." GC 439

2. To make war with the saints and to overcome them Rev 13:7;
GC 54-119
3. Over all kindreds; tongues and nations Rev 13:7,8; GC 579

I. His doom Rev 13:9,10. Cf Dan 7:11,26; 8:25; 11:45; 2 Thess 2:8;
Rev 18:8; 19:20

"At that time (1798), the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, 'He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.'" GC 439

III. THE PATIENCE AND FAITH OF THE SAINTS Rev 13:10; 14:12

NEB: "This is where the fortitude and faithfulness of God's people have their place."

RSV: "Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints."

IV. THE TWO-HORNED BEAST Rev 13:11-17

A. Arises out of the earth Rev 13:11

"Both the appearance of this beast and the manner of its rise indicate that the nation which it represents is unlike those presented under the preceding symbols. The great kingdoms that have ruled the world were presented to the prophet Daniel as beasts of prey, rising when the 'four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.'. . . The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea, represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power.

"But the beast with lamb-like horns was seen 'coming up out of the earth.' Instead of overthrowing other powers to establish itself, the nation thus represented must arise in territory previously unoccupied, and grow up gradually and peacefully. It could not, then, arise among the crowded and struggling nationalities of the Old World, --that turbulent sea of 'peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.' It must be sought in the Western Continent. . .

"One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America." GC 439,440

B. Has two horns like a lamb Rev 13:11

"The lamb-like horns indicate youth, innocence, and gentleness, fitly representing the character of the United States when presented to the prophet as 'coming up' in 1798. . . Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity." GC 441

"Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamb-like horns, but speaking like a dragon." EGW, RH, Jan 1, 1889

C. Speaks like a dragon Rev 13:11

"The lamb-like horns and dragon voice of the symbol point to a striking contradiction between the professions and the practice of the nation thus represented. The 'speaking' of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy." GC 442

"The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. To John this persecuting power is represented as having horns like a lamb, but as speaking like a dragon." TM 117

"The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. . . Its professions are mild, and apparently Christian; but when it shall speak, it will reveal the spirit of the dragon." 5T 452

"Religious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon, and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan." 9T 229

D. The works of the dragon

1. Exercises all the power of the first beast before him Rev 13:12

"The prediction that it will speak 'as a dragon,' and exercise 'all the power of the first beast,' plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopard-like beast." GC 442

2. Causes men to worship the first beast Rev 13:12

"The statement that the beast with two horns 'causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast,' indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy." GC 442

3. Performs great wonders and miracles Rev 13:13,14

"Satan's power would increase, and some of his devoted followers would have power to work miracles, and even to bring down fire from heaven in the sight of men." EW 87

"Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God's people will not find their safety in working miracles; for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God's tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Ex 31:12-18." 9T 16

"By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men." GC 612

"It was by the display of supernatural power, in making the serpent his medium, that Satan caused the fall of Adam and Eve in Eden. Before the close of time he will work still greater wonders. So far as his power extends, he will perform actual miracles. . . In the last days he will appear in such a manner as to make men believe him to be Christ come the second time into the world. He will indeed transform himself into an angel of light." 5T 698

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing, and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ." GC 624

"Satan. . . will come personating Jesus Christ, working mighty miracles; and men will fall down and worship him as Jesus Christ. We shall be commanded to worship this being, whom the world will glorify as Christ." EGW RH Dec 18, 1888

"As Spiritualism assimilates more closely to the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of Spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. . . Through Spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith." 4SP 405,406

4. Makes an image to the beast Rev 13:14,15

"Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast.' Here is clearly presented a form of government in which the legislative power rests with the people; a most striking evidence that the United States is the nation denoted in the prophecy. . .

"The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the first beast. It is also called an image of the beast. Then to learn what the image is like, and how it is to be formed, we must study the characteristics of the beast itself,--the papacy. . .

"The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God's commandments. Says Daniel, of the little horn, the papacy, 'He shall think to change the times and the law.'. . .

"An intentional, deliberate change is presented. . . The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfils the prophecy. For this the only authority claimed is that of the church. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God.

"While the worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment,--since this is the sign

of His creative power, and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage,--the worshipers of the beast will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome. . .

"The enforcement of Sunday-keeping on the part of Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of the papacy--of the beast. . . But in the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sunday-keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image." GC 443,446,448,449

"The image is made to the first or leopard-like beast, which is the one brought to view in the third angel's message. By this first beast is represented the Roman Church, an ecclesiastical body clothed with civil power, having authority to punish all dissenters. The image to the beast represents another religious body clothed with similar power. . . When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy. Then the true church will be assailed by persecution, as were God's ancient people." 4SP 278

"The 'image to the beast' represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas." GC 445

"It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy,--the beast. . . So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast." GC 443,444

5. Endeavors to cause as many as will not worship the image to be killed Rev 13:15

"The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday, the institution of this anti-Christian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed." EGW, RH Aug 22, 1893

"Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law." 5T 472,473

"Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the New, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts.

"The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble. . .

"The wrath of Satan increases as his time grows short, and his work of deceit and destruction will reach its culmination in the time of trouble. . .

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . He claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. . .

"As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment-keepers shall withdraw the protection of government, and abandon them to those who desire their destruction, the people of God will flee from the cities and villages and associate together in companies, dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places. Many will find refuge in the strongholds of the mountains . . .

"Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment-keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. . .

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. . . It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof." GC 616,623, 624,626,631,635

6. Effort to cause all to receive the mark of the beast Rev 13:16,17

NEB: "Moreover, it caused everyone, great and small, rich and poor, slave and free, to be branded with a mark on his right hand or forehead, and no one was allowed to buy or sell unless he bore this beast's mark, either name or number."

JB: "He compelled everyone--small and great, rich and poor, slave and citizen--to be branded on the right hand or on the forehead, and made it illegal for anyone to buy or sell anything unless he had been branded with the name of the beast or with the number of its name. "

RSV: "Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead,

so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name."

a. The mark in the right hand or forehead Rev 13:16

"John was called to behold a people distinct from those who worship the beast or his image by keeping the first day of the week. The observance of this day is the mark of the beast."
TM 133

"Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mold, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth,--these are receiving the heavenly mold, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads." 5T 216

"Since those who keep God's commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.

"The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God's commandments." GC 445,446

"In the issue of the conflict, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark." 9T 16

"When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome, and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshiping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome--'the mark of the beast.' And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive 'the mark of the beast.'" GC 449

"Christians of past generations observed the first day, supposing that they were keeping the Bible Sabbath, and there are in the churches of to-day many who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. None of these have received the mark of the beast. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. The test upon this question does not come until Sunday observance

is enforced by law, and the world is enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath. Not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, will those who continue in transgression receive the mark of the beast." 4SP 281,282

"To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you lawbreakers. . . One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance." 9T 232

"The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll." 6T 17

CATHOLIC CLAIMS REGARDING SUNDAY

"Q. 1248. Are the Sabbath day and the Sunday the same?

"A. The Sabbath day and the Sunday are not the same. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and is the day which was kept holy in the old law; the Sunday is the first day of the week, and is the day which is kept holy in the new law. . .

"Q. 1250. Why does the Church command us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath?

"A. The Church commands us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead. . .

"Q. 1251. Do we keep Sunday instead of Saturday holy for any other reason?

"A. We keep Sunday instead of Saturday holy also to teach that the Old Law is not now binding upon us, but that we must keep the New Law, which takes its place." Thomas L. Kinkead, A Catechism of Christian Doctrine, p. 282

"Q. What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferable to the ancient Sabbath, which was the Saturday?

"A. We have for it the authority of the Catholic Church, and apostolical tradition.

"Q. Does the scripture any where command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?

"A. The scripture commands us to hear the Church, . . . but the scripture does not in particular mention this change of the Sabbath. . . Those who pretend to be so religious observers of the Sunday, whilst they take no notice of other festivals ordained by the same Church authority, show that they act by humour, and not by reason and religion; since Sundays and holy-days all stand upon the same foundation, viz. the ordinance of the Church. . .

"Instead of the seventh day, and other festivals appointed by the old law the Church has prescribed the Sundays and holydays to be set apart for God's worship; and these we are now obliged to keep in consequence of God's commandment, instead of the ancient Sabbath." Rev Dr. Challoner, The Catholic Christian Instructed, 209-211

"Q. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

"A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her;--she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority." Stephen Keenan, A Doctrinal Catechism, 174

"Which is the Lord's day?

"In the Old Law it was the seventh day of the week, or the Sabbath-day (day of rest), in memory of God's resting on that day, after he had finished the work of Creation in six days. In the New Law it is the first day of the week, or the Sunday

...

"What are we commanded by the First Commandment of the Church?

"By the First Commandment, we are commanded, in the first place, to keep holy the Sundays and the Holydays which the Church has instituted." P. N. Lynch. A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion, 183,210

"What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week?

"Who gave the Pope the authority to change a command of God?

"If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jew. But Catholics learn what to believe and do from the divine, infallible authority established by Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, which in Apostolic times made Sunday the day of rest to honor our Lord's Resurrection on that day, and to mark off clearly the Jew from the Christian." Bertrand L. Conway, The Question-Box Answers, 179

b. Endeavors to cause all to receive the mark Rev 13:16

"The beast with two horns. . . is to command all, 'both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' to receive 'the mark of the beast.'. . . In this homage to papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion, is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power." GC 578,579

"The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, 'both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally

be declared that they are deserving of death. On the other hand, the law of God enjoining the Creator's rest-day demands obedience, and threatens wrath against all who transgress its precepts.

"With the issue thus clearly brought before him, whoever shall trample upon God's law to obey a human enactment, receives the mark of the beast; he accepts the sign of allegiance to the power which he chooses to obey instead of God." GC 604

"When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation. . . The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death." 5T 213

"In every case the great decision is to be made whether we shall receive the mark of the beast or his image, or the seal of the living God." 6T 130

"Religious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon, and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. . . The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observances of the first day of the week." 9T 229,230

"The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." GC 588

"When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near." 5T 451

- c. Shall not buy or sell who have not the mark Rev 13:17

"In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. But to the obedient is given the promise, 'He shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall

be given him; his waters shall be sure.' By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed." DA 121,122

V. THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST--666 Rev 13:18

Knox: "Here is room for discernment; let the reader, if he has the skill, cast up the sum of the figures in the beast's name, after our human fashion, and the number will be six hundred and sixty-six."

RSV: "This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number, its number is six hundred and sixty-six."

Weymouth: "Let people of shrewd intelligence calculate the number of the Wild Beast; for it indicates a certain man, and his number is 666."

JB: "There is need for shrewdness here: if anyone is clever enough he may interpret the number of the beast: it is the number of a man, the number 666."

Just what constitutes the number of the beast is a subject that is still only dimly understood. Certain it is that the number of the beast is a number that has something to do with things human rather than divine, with this world rather than the world to come, with earth rather than heaven, with old Babylon rather than the New Jerusalem, with the man of sin rather than the Man of Righteousness.

A study of the number six in the Biblical account of creation and in the part it plays in nature, language, ancient mystic and religious lore, and other human interests, provides many details of great significance.

The number six is often employed in the form of a pair of threes, and it will be noticed that this is the case in the Biblical account of creation:

1st day LIGHT	Gen 1:3-5	4th day LIGHTS	Gen 1:14-19
2nd day HEAVENS SEAS	Gen 1:6-8	5th day Fowl of HEAVENS Creatures of SEAS	Gen 1:20-23
3rd day EARTH EARTH PLANTS	Gen 1:9-13	6th day Animals of EARTH Man to rule EARTH	Gen 1:24-31

God never does anything without a reason, and when He created the world in six days, with the first three days being analogous to the last three days, He must have had some basic reason for doing this. The reason no doubt is found in the fact that the number six composed of a pair of threes plays a prominent role throughout the world about us.

Only a few examples can here be given of the double three in nature or human activity. These include the DNA molecule with its double triplet arrangements that determine the reproduction of the basic details of all forms of life; the mathematically determined basic building block in nature which has been calculated to consist of six particles, three quarks

and three antiquarks; the six basic colors consisting of the three primary colors red, yellow and blue, and the three secondary colors of orange, green and violet; the mystic Seal of Solomon, a six-pointed star formed of two inverted triangles; the ancient sixth letter of the Greek alphabet, DIGAMMA, with the numerical value of six and composed of two GAMMAS, the third letter of the Greek alphabet with the value of three, with one GAMMA mounted above the other.

Other examples of six are found in the beehive, the snowflake, the composition of a wool fibre, the fibres in the leg muscles of frogs and the flight muscles of dragon flies, the composition of the opal which provides for its fiery hue, the geodesic dome, the Mithraic god Kronos whose nude body was entwined six times by a serpent and signified endless time, and the caduceus, the medical emblem of healing which came from ancient Babylonia where the fertility god Ningiszida was represented by two copulating serpents intertwined six times about each other.

Sex and evil play an important role in the use of the number six, sex being the Latin word for six, and hex being the Greek word for six.

The number six, and multiples thereof such as twelve, thirty-six, sixty and six hundred, played a prominent part in early Babylonia, and from there was carried throughout the world. The Babylonians employed a sexagesimal system of counting. Sixty was the number of their supreme god Anu, and later became the number of Marduk when he became the first god of the pantheon. There are sixty seconds to the minute and sixty minutes to the hour, twenty-four hours to the day, and twelve months to the year. The circle of the earth was divided into three hundred and sixty degrees.

A mystic amulet worn by Babylonian priests was as follows:

1	32	34	3	35	6
30	8	27	28	11	7
20	24	15	16	13	23
19	17	21	22	18	14
10	26	12	9	29	25
31	4	2	33	5	36

The total of this sequence of numbers from 1 to 36 in the six horizontal and six vertical columns is 666.

The full significance of the number six is far from being understood, but it is clear that it was widely adopted in religious circles. This was true of Gnosticism, Mithraism, Hinduism, and Roman Catholicism. This number is a common symbol on papal coats of arms, and is found in other religious insignia.

The number 666 has often been applied to Roman Catholicism. The Catholic bishop Irenaeus in the second half of the second century of our era identi-

fied the beast of Rev 13 as the Antichrist, and had the belief that the numerical value of the letters of his name would add up to 666.

In the period following the Reformation an interpretation was set forth that 666 stood for the title Vicarious Fili Dei, meaning "Vicar of the Son of God," which was used as one of the titles for the pope of Rome. Ascribing the numerical values of the Latin letters in this title produces the following results:

V 5	F 0	D 500
I 1	I 1	E 0
C 100	L 50	I 1
A 0	I 1	
R 0	I 1	
I 1		
U 5		
S 0		Total 666

It is also of interest to note that the total of the following letters in the Latin alphabet having numerical values works out to 6-60-600 as follows:

I ■ 1	X ■ 10	C ■ 100
V ■ 5	L ■ 50	D ■ 500
$\overline{6}$	$\overline{60}$	$\overline{600}$

A careful perusal of this theme provides indications that the number six was adopted by the evil one as an emblem for himself, in all probability because of the basic part that it plays throughout creation, and that the purpose was to set himself forth as the originator and sustainer of life, with continuous and everlasting life being achieved through the provisions of sex, without God.

XI

GOD'S FINAL MESSAGES AND THE HARVEST

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 14
- II. THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND Rev 14:1-5; 7:4-8
- A. The scene--Mount Zion, where God reigns and dwells Isa 8:18; Heb 12:22; Isa 24:23; Mic 4:7; GC 648
- B. The Father's name Rev 14:1; 22:4. Cf 1 John 3:2,3; 2 Pet 1:4 1T 59; MH 37
- C. Sing a new song Rev 14:2,3; GC 649; TM 433
- D. Virgins--pure and undefiled Rev 14:4; 2 Cor. 11:2; Ps 119:1
- E. Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth Rev 14:4. EW 19,39,40
- F. The firstfruits unto God Rev 14:4; Num 18:12,29,30,32; GC 649
- G. Without fault before the throne of God Rev 14:5

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ will cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.

"When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. . . Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be 'a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.'" GC 425

- III. THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES Rev 14:6-12; 6T 17,18
- A. Purpose--to bring about a revival and prepare a people for Christ's coming
- "The first angel's message of Revelation 14, announcing the hour of God's judgment, and calling upon men to fear and worship Him, was designed to separate the professed people of God from the corrupting influences of the world, and to arouse them to see their true condition of worldliness and backsliding. In this message, God had sent to the church a warning, which, had it been accepted, would have corrected the evils that were shutting them away from Him. . . The church would again have reached that blessed state of unity, faith, and love, which existed in apostolic days." GC 379

"It was needful that men should be awakened to their danger; that they should be roused to prepare for the solemn events connected with the close of probation. The prophet of God declares: 'The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?'. . .

"To prepare a people to stand in the day of God, a great work of reform was to be accomplished. God saw that many of His professed people were not building for eternity, and in His mercy He was about to send a message of warning to arouse them from their stupor, and lead them to make ready for the coming of the Lord.

"This warning is brought to view in Revelation 14." GC 310,311

B. Vital importance of these messages

"These messages were represented to me as an anchor to the people of God. Those who understand and receive them will be kept from being swept away by the many delusions of Satan." EW 256

"I was shown three steps,--the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.'" EW 258,259

C. Satan's efforts to cast a shadow on these messages

"Satan is constantly seeking to cast a shadow about these messages, so that the people of God shall not clearly discern their import, their time and place; but they live, and are to exert their power upon our religious experience while time shall last." 6T 18

D. The angels

1. Heavenly messengers--types of God's agents on earth Rev 1:20; 2:1; Heb 1:7,14; Gal 4:14; GC 311,312; 6T 229,286,434; 7T 51, 138-140; 8T 27

"The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages, and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth." 5T 455,456

"The three angels of Revelation 14 are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizing the work of those who proclaim the first, second, and third angels' messages." 6T 17

2. Types of the exalted character of the work

"The fact that an angel is said to be the herald of this warning, is significant. By the purity, the glory, and the power of the heavenly messenger, divine wisdom has been pleased to represent the exalted character of the work to be accomplished by the message, and the power and glory that were to attend it." GC 355

3. Warnings to which men should give ear

"When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message." GC 594

E. The message of the first angel Rev 14:6,7

1. The everlasting gospel Rev 14:6; Cf. Gal 1:6-12; Rom 1:16-18

Not a new gospel but a new phase of the everlasting gospel

2. To all the earth Rev 14:6; 8T 24-27,40; GC 355

"In every part of the earth men and women are responding to the Heaven-sent message which John the revelator prophesied would be proclaimed prior to the second coming of Christ." PK 714

"In the hour of greatest peril, the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced. In the populous cities of the land, and in the places where men have gone to the greatest lengths in speaking against the Most High, the voice of stern rebuke will be heard." PK 187

"The gospel invitation is to be given to all the world,--'to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.' The last message of warning and mercy is to lighten the whole earth with its glory. It is to reach all classes of men, rich and poor, high and low." COL 228

"The time has come, the important time when through God's messengers the scroll is being unrolled to the world. The truth comprised in the first, second, and third angels' messages must go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; it must lighten the darkness of every continent, and extend to the islands of the sea." 6T 133

3. With a loud voice Rev 14:7

"The angel's flight 'in the midst of heaven,' the 'loud voice' with which the warning is uttered, and its promulgation to all 'that dwell on the earth,'--'to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,'--give evidence of the rapidity and world-wide extent of the movement." GC 355

4. Fear God and give glory to Him Rev 14:7

5. The hour of His judgment is come Rev 14:7; 2 Cor 5:10; Acts 24:25; 17:31; Dan 7:10,13; 8:14

"In the prophecy this warning of the judgment, with its connected messages, is followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. The proclamation of the judgment is an announcement of Christ's second coming as at hand. And this proclamation is called the everlasting gospel. Thus the preaching of Christ's second coming, the announcement of its nearness, is shown to be an

essential part of the gospel message." COL 227,228

"When He comes, every case has been decided. Says Jesus, 'My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' It is this work of judgment, immediately preceding the second advent, that is announced in the first angel's message of Rev 14:7." GC 352

"The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment had come. . .

"Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the 'man of sin,' can we look for the advent of our Lord, the 'man of sin,' which is also styled the 'mystery of iniquity,' 'the son of perdition,' and 'that wicked,' represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798. . . It is this side of that time that the message of Christ's second coming is to be proclaimed.

"No such message has ever been given in past ages. . . But since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near.

"Like the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, the Advent Movement appeared in different countries of Christendom at the same time. In both Europe and America, men of faith and prayer were led to the study of the prophecies, and tracing down the inspired record, they saw convincing evidence that the end of all things was at hand." GC 356,357

6. Worship Him that made heaven and earth Rev 14:7. Cf Gen 2:2,3; Ex 20:8-11; Rom 1:18-32

F. The second angel's message Rev 14:8

1. Babylon is fallen, is fallen Rev 14:8; 1T 53,54; 7T 140; EW 245-247,273,274; TM 32-62; GC 375-390. Cf Isa 14:4; 21:9; Jer 51:8,54,55

"The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. . .

"Many of the Protestant churches are following Rome's example of iniquitous connection with 'the kings of the earth'--the state churches, by their relation to secular governments; and other denominations, by seeking the favor of the world." GC 383

"In the professedly Christian world, many turn away from the plain teachings of the Bible, and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables; and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven. Men hang with admiration upon the lips of eloquence while it teaches that the transgressor shall not die, that salvation may be secured without obedience to the law of God. If the professed followers of Christ would accept God's standard, it would bring them into unity; but so long as human wisdom is exalted above his holy word, there will be divisions and dissension. The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term "Babylon," which prophecy applies to the world-loving churches of the last days." PP 124

"The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfilment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time, they have fallen lower and lower. . . . But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination.

"The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work 'with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.'. . . Not until this condition shall be reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfilment of Rev 14:8 is yet future.

"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion." GC 389,390

2. Hath made all nations drink of the wine Rev 14:8; GC 536

"The great sin charged against Babylon is, that she 'made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world, represents the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth. Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ. . . .

"Were it not that the world is hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, multitudes would be convicted and converted by the plain, cutting truths of the word of God. But religious faith appears so confused and discordant, that the people know not what to believe as truth. The sin of the world's impenitence lies at the door of the church." GC 388,389

"The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God's holy and sanctified day. These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches, and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' It is a wrath which is created by false doctrines, and when kings and presidents drink this wine of the wrath of her fornication, they are stirred with anger against those who will not come into harmony with the false and satanic heresies which exalt the false sabbath, and lead men to trample under-foot God's memorial." TM 61,62

G. The third angel's message Rev 14:9-12

1. Light on this message came slowly

"When we began to present the light on the Sabbath question, we had no clearly defined idea of the third angel's message of Rev 14:9-12. The burden of our testimony as we came before the people was that the great second-advent movement was of God, that the first and second messages had gone forth, and that the third was to be given. We saw that the third message closed with the words: 'Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' And we as clearly saw as we now see that these prophetic words suggested a Sabbath reform; but as to what the worship of the beast mentioned in the message was, or what the image and the mark of the beast were, we had no defined position.

"God by His holy Spirit let light shine forth upon his servants, and the subject gradually opened to their minds. It required much study and anxious care to search it out, link after link. By care, anxiety, and incessant labor has the work moved on until the great truths of our message, a clear, connected, perfect whole, have been given to the world." 1T 78,79

2. Progressive development of a chain of truth

"Many who embraced the third message had not had an experience in the two former messages. Satan understood this, and his evil eye was upon them to overthrow them; but the third angel was pointing them to the most holy place, and those who had had an experience in the past messages were pointing them the way to the heavenly sanctuary. Many saw the perfect chain of truth in the angel's messages, and gladly received them in their order, and followed Jesus by faith into the heavenly sanctuary." EW 256

3. To prepare a people to stand in times of peril

"The message of the third angel is to prepare a people to stand in these days of peril. It is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and is to accomplish a work which few realize." 8T 94

4. God's last message--a message of vital importance

"The third angel of Revelation fourteen is represented as flying swiftly through the midst of heaven crying, 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Here is shown the nature of the work of the people of God. They have a message of so great importance that they are represented as flying in the presentation of it to the world. . . This is the last message. There are no more to follow. . . What a trust! What a responsibility is resting upon all to carry the words of gracious invitation."
5T 206,207

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work." GC 613

5. The message of Christ and His righteousness

"The message of Christ and His righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel. . .

"The truths of the third angel's message have been presented by some as a dry theory; but in this message is to be presented Christ the Living One. . . Through this message, the character of God in Christ is to be manifested to the world." 6T 19,20

"All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

"The uplifted Saviour is to appear in His efficacious work as the Lamb slain, sitting upon the throne, to dispense the priceless covenant blessings, the benefits He died to purchase for every soul who should believe on Him. . . The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ. . .

"For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines." TM 92,93

6. Message to be given with power to all the world

"Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to 'every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.' The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less wide-spread. It is represented in the

prophecy as being proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world." GC 450

"In every generation God has sent His servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. . . They were impelled to zealously declare the truth, and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear the warning.

"Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. . . By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. . .

"As the controversy extends into new fields, and the minds of the people are called to God's down-trodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it." GC 606,607

"Mighty miracles were wrought, the sick were healed, and signs and wonders followed the believers. God was in the work, and every saint, fearless of consequences, followed the convictions of his own conscience and united with those who were keeping all the commandments of God; and with power they sounded abroad the third message. . .

"Servants of God, endowed with power from on high, with their faces lighted up, and shining with holy consecration, went forth to proclaim the message from heaven. Souls that were scattered all through the religious bodies answered to the call, and the precious were hurried out of the doomed churches, as Lot was hurried out of Sodom before her destruction." EW 278,279

7. Worship of the beast Rev 14:9; 13:12,15

"The statement that the beast with two horns 'causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast,' indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy." GC 442

8. The mark of the beast Rev 14:9; 13:16,17

- a. The distinguishing sign of disloyalty to God TM 132,133; PP 80,81; 5T 213; 8T 117,159

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience

to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God." GC 605

9. The terrible judgment pronounced Rev 14:10,11; EW 279,280; GC 627

- a. Only upon those who knowingly reject truth

"Not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart, and tries every motive, will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Every one is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently." GC 605

- b. The crisis to come when the nations unite against God

"God keeps a reckoning with the nations. . . When the accumulated figures in heaven's record books shall mark the sum of transgression complete, wrath will come, unmixed with mercy, and then it will be seen what a tremendous thing it is to have worn out the divine patience. This crisis will be reached when the nations shall unite in making void God's law." 5T 524

"The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." 7T 141

- c. The wicked to be completely consumed. Ps 37:9,10,20; Mal 4:1-3; Nah 1:9,10; Oba 15,16. Cf Jude 7; Jonah 2:6; Ex 21:6; 1 Sam 1:22,28

"The figurative expressions here--'fire,' 'brimstone,' 'smoke'--are terrible ones, drawn from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and only such figures will avail to set forth the destructive and devouring effect of holy wrath upon a guilty soul. . . It does not affirm the absolute endlessness of the punishment. Since the word 'age' has a plural, it plainly is not necessarily infinite. For no such word could have a plural. Infinity cannot even be doubled, much less be multiplied indefinitely. Further, no finite multiple of a finite term can possibly reach infinity. So that to affirm the absolute unendingness of

this punishment would be to go beyond the text. . . Objection: 'But this phrase is the very strongest which is employed in the Word of God to denote absolute unendingness.' We reply, No. It is a fearfully strong expression for an indefinitely prolonged period; but there are stronger expressions; e.g. 'Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all the ages' (Ps. cxlv. 13); 'To him be glory. . . through all the generations of the age of the ages' (Eph. iii. 21); 'My salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished' (Isa. li. 6); 'Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life,' etc. (Heb. vii. 16). The strongest expressions, which declare absolute unendingness, are reserved in Scripture for the good alone. Even when we grant all this, however, the outlook for the wicked is one of unspeakable gloom; of a night with no revealed morn beyond it." Rev. C. Clemance, The Pulpit Commentary, Revelation, 354,355

10. The characteristics of the true children of God Rev 14:12;
5T 525; 7T 150; PK 300

RSV: "Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Knox: "This is the test which the saints endured, keeping true to God's commandment, and the faith of Jesus."

Weymouth: "Here is an opportunity for endurance on the part of the saints who carefully keep His commandments and the faith of Jesus."

JB: "This is why there must be constancy in the saints who keep the commandments of God and faith in Jesus."

NEB: "Here the fortitude of God's people has its place--in keeping God's commands and remaining loyal to Jesus."

- a. The patience of the saints Rev 14:12
- b. They that keep the commandments of God Rev 14:12;
GC 437,438,607; EW 254,255; 6T 144; 8T 197; TM 132,133,234,235

"After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Since those who keep God's commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast." GC 445,446

"The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment, since this is the sign of God's creative power and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial and to exalt the

institution of Rome. In the issue of the conflict, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark." 9T 16

"I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world, to keep the commandments of God." 1T 77

"Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God." 5T 472, 473

- c. The faith of Jesus Rev 14:12; Rom 1:17; 3:22; 9:30-32; Isa 51:7

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'" EGW, RH Apr 1, 1890

"We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make, are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. . . Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined.

"He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure." EGW, RH July 1, 1890

"Christ has become our sacrifice and surety. He has become sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Through faith in His name, He imputes into us His righteousness, and it becomes a living principle in our life." EGW, RH July 12, 1892

IV. THE BLESSED DEAD IN CHRIST Rev 14:13; MH 230. Cf Ps 116:15; Rom 8:38,39

V. CHRIST'S SECOND COMING AND THE FINAL HARVEST Rev 14:14-20

- A. The reaping of the wheat--the righteous Rev 14:14-16
1. The return of Jesus as the reaper Rev 14:14; EW 35,286,287
 2. The harvest of the earth ripe Rev 14:15; Matt 13:39; Joel 3:13
"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man."
TM 506
 3. The harvest reaped Rev 14:16 Cf Matt 25:34
- B. The harvest of the vine--the wicked Rev 14:17-20
1. Another angel with a sickle Rev 14:7
 2. The other angel with power over fire Rev 14:18 Cf Rev 8:5
Eze 10:2; 9:1-10; Rev 15:6-8
 3. The vine cast into the winepress of the wrath of God
Rev 14:19,20; 16:1-21

XII

THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 15, 16
- II. TWO CONTRASTING SCENES Rev 15:1-4
- A. Seven angels with the seven last plagues Rev 15:1
- B. The sea of glass and the victorious throng Rev 15:2-4;
GC 648-652; EW 16,17; 8T 43,44

1. Visions of victory at the hour of darkness

"In the darkest days of her long conflict with evil, the church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to look beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the warfare having been accomplished, the redeemed will enter into possession of the promised land." PK 722

"While John was shown the last great struggles of the church with earthly powers, he was also permitted to behold the final victory and deliverance of the faithful. He saw the church brought into deadly conflict with the beast and his image, and the worship of that beast enforced on pain of death. But looking beyond the smoke and din of battle, he beheld a company upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having, instead of the mark of the beast, the 'Father's name written in their foreheads.' And again he saw 'them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image.'" 5T 752

2. The song of Moses and the Lamb Rev 15:3,4; TM 433; GC 668-671;
PP 79,288,289; Ed 308,309; 7T 28

a. The wicked join with the righteous in acknowledging God's justice Phil 2:9-11

"In the judgment of the universe, God will stand clear of the blame for the existence or continuance of evil. It will be demonstrated that the divine decrees are not accessory to sin. There was no defect in God's government, no cause for disaffection. When the thoughts of all hearts shall be revealed, both the loyal and the rebellious will unite in declaring, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?. . . for Thy judgments are made manifest.'" DA 58

"As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. They see in His hands the tables of the divine law, the statutes which they have despised and transgressed. They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved; and as the wave of melody sweeps over the multitudes without the city, all with one voice exclaim, 'Great and marvel-

ous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty, Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints'; and falling prostrate, they worship the Prince of life. . .

"Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for heaven. . . The reproach which he has endeavored to cast upon Jehovah rests wholly upon himself. And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence. . .

"With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.'" GC 668-671

III. THE TEMPLE AND THE PLAGUES Rev 15:5-8

A. The temple opened Rev 15:5. EW 36,37,279-281; TM 446

"It was impossible for the plagues to be poured out while Jesus officiated in the sanctuary; but as His work there is finished, and His intercession closes, there is nothing to stay the wrath of God, and it breaks with fury upon the shelterless head of the guilty sinner." EW 280

"The commencement of that time of trouble,'. . . does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out." EW 85,86

B. The seven angels with the seven last plagues Rev 15:6

a. One of the living creatures gives them the vials of the wrath of God Rev 15:7; GC 614; EW 52,280

Whatever the conditions in this world may be, and whatever may be the thoughts or the actions of men, there never is a time when God is not in supreme control, exercised through His messengers of mercy or wrath. This was seen in the case of the four horses of life (white), warning (red), judgment (black), and death (pale), of Rev 6; each of which was under the control of one of the four living creatures (Rev 6:1,3,5,7). So here, when the seven last plagues are to be poured out upon a world that has rejected the last call and mercy of God, one of the four heavenly messengers is in command: "Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven bowls filled with the wrath of God" (Rev 15:7, Phillips).

"The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere." GC 614

C. The wrath of God Isa 13:9-11; Jer 30:23,24; Rev 15:7; GC 627,628;
5T 212,524

D. The temple filled with smoke Rev 15:8; Cf Isa 6:1,4,5;
Ex 19:16,18; Ps 18:7-9

IV. THE POURING OUT OF THE VIALS OF THE WRATH OF GOD Rev 16

A. Divine directions to the angels of death Rev 16:1

B. Punishment an act strange to God Isa 28:21

"To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.' The Lord is 'merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.' Yet He will 'by no means clear the guilty.' 'The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.' By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice. The nation with which He bears long, and which He will not smite until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity in God's account, will finally drink the cup of wrath unmixed with mercy." GC 627

C. The withdrawal of the Spirit of God and the removal of restraint from the forces of evil

"It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God's mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejecters of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. . . The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan." GC 36

"The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude." 9T 11

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. . . The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. . . Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble." GC 614

"Soon God will show that He is indeed the living God. He will say to the angels: 'No longer combat Satan in his efforts to destroy. Let

him work out his malignity upon the children of disobedience; for the cup of their iniquity is full.'" EGW, RH July 17, 1901

"This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it." 7T 141

"Satan delights in war; for it excites the worst passions of the soul, and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another. . .

"Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. When he was suffered to afflict Job, how quickly flocks and herds, servants, houses, children, were swept away, one trouble succeeding another as in a moment. It is God that shields His creatures, and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would,--He will withdraw His blessings from the earth, and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law. . . Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. . .

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hail-storms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. 'The earth mourneth and fadeth away.' 'the haughty people. . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.'

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors." GC 589,590

"As the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed." GC 608

- D. The plagues not universal GC 628
- E. Similar to the plagues of Egypt GC 627,628 Cf PP 257-272.
- F. The righteous not free from suffering but protected by God
Isa 26:20,21; 33:14-16; 43:1-3; Ps 46:1-11; 91:1-10; GC 629 9T 17

G. The plagues to follow national Sunday legislation 5T 524

"The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity." 7T 141

"There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. He is the representative of Satan. . . And the Christian world has sanctioned his efforts by adopting this child of the papacy,--the Sunday institution. They have nourished it and will continue to nourish it, until Protestantism shall give the hand of fellowship to the Roman power. Then there will be a law against the Sabbath of God's creation, and then it is that God will do a strange work in the earth.

H. The seven plagues

In connection with the trumpets and the seven last plagues it was noticed that the sequence is the same in both, as follows:

	<u>Trumpet</u>	<u>Plague</u>
1. Earth	Rev 8:7	Rev 16:2
2. Sea	" 8:8	" 16:3
3. Rivers and fountains of waters	" 8:10	" 16:4
4. Sun	" 8:12	" 16:8
5. Darkness	" 9:2	" 16:10
6. Great River Euphrates	" 9:14	" 16:12
7. Lightnings, voices, earthquake, hail	" 11:19	" 16:18,21

In looking over this list, it is not always immediately clear whether the item listed is literal or symbolic, or both. Careful study is necessary to determine, if possible, just what is true in any particular case.

1. The first plague--a grievous sore on those having the mark of the beast and worshipping his image Rev 16:2 Cf Rev 13:11-17

The Bible declares that "judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet 4:17). In New Testament times, after the rejection of Christ, judgments began with Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, followed by judgments on the Roman world, and then much wider judgments in Europe, Asia, and Africa. In the Old Testament Jeremiah gives a list of "all the nations" that would be given to drink of the cup of God's wrath, and he begins his list with "Jerusalem and the cities of Judah," and then goes on with such powers as Egypt, Edom, Tyre, Sidon, Elam, and closes his list with Sheshach-- Babylon. Jer 25:17-26; 51:41 See also Eze 9:6; Zeph 1:2-2:15

So the list of the seven last plagues might be expected to begin with some area especially devoted to God and upholding the principles of His kingdom.

There is every indication that the plagues will commence with the United States. The first plague will fall upon the "earth," and those smitten will be the men "which had the mark of the beast" and "which worshipped his image" (Rev 16:2). In Rev 13:11-17 the United States is symbolized by the lamb-like animal that comes out of the "earth", and it makes an image to the beast and causes men to receive the mark of the beast.

The Spirit of Prophecy makes it clear that when the United States passes a national Sunday law, the measure of this nation's apostasy will be full, and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin.

"The greatest and most favored nation upon the earth is the United States. A gracious Providence has shielded this country, and poured upon her the choicest of Heaven's blessings. . . But these gifts have been repaid by ingratitude and forgetfulness of God. The Infinite One keeps a reckoning with the nations, and their guilt is proportioned to the light rejected. A fearful record now stands in the register of Heaven against our land; but the crime which shall fill up the measure of her iniquity is that of making void the law of God." 4 SP 398

"When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin." EGW, RH Dec 18, 1888

"Every century of profligacy has treasured up wrath against the day of wrath; and when the time comes, and the iniquity is full, then God will do His strange work. It will be found a terrible thing to have worn out the divine patience, for the wrath of God will fall so signally and strongly that it is represented as being unmixed with mercy; and the very earth will be desolated. It is at the time of national apostasy, when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers of the land will rank themselves on the side of the man of sin--it is then that the measure of guilt is full; the national apostasy is the signal for national ruin." EGW GCB Apr 13, 1891

"When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular churches to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution; when the state shall use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church--then will Protestant America have formed an image to the papacy, and there will be national apostasy which will end only in national ruin." EGW ST Mar 22, 1910

"The people of the United States have been a favored people; but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and "national apostasy" will be registered in the books of heaven. The result of this apostasy will be national ruin." EGW RH May 2, 1893

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near. . .

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return." 5T 451

2. The second plague--the sea becomes as blood Rev 16:3

When the United States passes a national Sunday law, her example will be followed by the nations of the Old World, and they too will suffer in the coming judgments.

"As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand, will make them objects of universal execration. . . Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the New, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts." GC 615,616

"It has been shown that the United States is the power represented by the beast with lamb-like horns, and that this prophecy will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special acknowledgment of her supremacy. But in this homage to papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion, is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. . . In both the Old and the New World the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution." GC 579

"Protestantism shall give the hand of fellowship to the Roman power. Then there will be a law against the Sabbath of God's creation, and then is it that God "will do a strange work in the earth." . . God keeps a record with the nations; the figures are swelling against them in the books of heaven; and when it shall have become a law that the transgression of the first day of the week shall be met with punishment, then their cup will be full." EGW RH Mar 9, 1886

In GC 628 is found the following very brief statement in regard to the second plague: "The sea 'became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.'" This is not sufficient to justify any substantial conclusions. But after a Sunday law is

passed in the United States, the countries of Europe will follow her example, and it is only to be expected that there too early judgments from God will fall. Europe may be the great sea of humanity which will suffer from the devastation of the second plague.

3. The third plague--the rivers and fountains of waters become blood Rev 16:4-7

Rivers and fountains of waters normally are sources of life and vitality. Their turning into blood indicates a basic change, where a spring of life becomes befouled and the result is death.

The passing of Sunday legislation will be confined not only to the Old World and the New, but the influences there generated will go throughout the world and will produce measures in behalf of the first day of the week and against those who keep holy the Sabbath of the Lord. The result will be mighty judgments against the oppressors of the people of God as Heaven undertakes the vindication of those who honor His name.

"All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation. The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world." EGW ST May 6, 1897

"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, 'both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death." GC 604

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great conflict, in which all the world will act a part." EGW ST Mar 22, 1910

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath - (Sunday), - the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." EGW GCB I 1893

"Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." 6T 395

"The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy by honoring Sunday, the institution of this anti-Christian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed." EGW RH Aug 22, 1893

"Intolerance and oppression. . . have prevailed in past ages. Human councils then assumed the prerogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic power liberty of conscience; and imprisonment, exile, and death followed, for those who opposed their dictates. . . There is a prospect before us of a continued struggle, at the risk of imprisonment, loss of property, and even of life itself, to defend the law of God, which is made void by the laws of men."
ST 712

Concerning the third plague the Spirit of Prophecy says: "And 'the rivers and fountains of waters. . . became blood.' Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel declares: 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit, and were seeking to do the same work, with these murderers of the prophets."
GC 628

During the third plague there will undoubtedly be widespread persecution of the people of God, but God on His part will permit unusually severe judgments as He intervenes in behalf of His people. Although the saints are severely tried, it has been made clear by God's messenger that the Lord will not permit His people at this time to suffer martyrdom for their faith: "The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. . . If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness." GC 634

4. The fourth plague--the sun scorches men with fire Rev 16:8,9

According to the Spirit of Prophecy the language of this plague is to have a literal application, "Power is given to the sun 'to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.' The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: 'The land mourneth; because the harvest of the field is perished.' 'All the trees of the field are withered. . . The rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.' 'The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.'"(Joel 1:10-12, 17-20; Amos 8:3) GC 628

5. The fifth plague--upon the seat of the beast, his kingdom filled with darkness Rev 16:10,11. Cf Zech 14:12; Rev 13:1-10; Dan 11:45

NEB: "The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast; and its kingdom was plunged in darkness."

JB: "The fifth angel emptied his bowl over the throne of the beast and its whole empire was plunged into darkness."

The beast here referred to is the beast of Rev 13:1-10, papal Rome. Prophecy foretells that during the climactic events of the last days the papacy is to take a leading part in world affairs: "The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion, is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. '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.'. . . Paul states plainly that the man of sin will continue until the second advent. To the very close of time he will carry forward his work of deception. And the revelator declares, also referring to the papacy, 'All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life.' In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution." GC 579

"The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation for a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and to undo all that Protestantism has done." 4SP 382

But prophecy also foretells a transfer of the seat of the papacy at the very close of time: "He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain" (Dan 11:45). Jerusalem is the glorious holy mountain (Zech 8:3; Joel 3:17). As hostile powers overrun the present seat of papal power in Italy, it may well be that there will be a transfer of papal headquarters from Rome to Jerusalem during the outpouring of the fifth vial of Rev 16:10

6. The sixth plague, the river Euphrates dried up. A prelude to Armageddon Rev 16:12-16

- a. The great river Euphrates--the river of Babylon Rev 16:12

Babylon owed its existence to the Euphrates river. This was the source of its life and its prosperity. The river brought the city its trade and wealth, its water for homes and fields. Without the Euphrates Babylon could not exist. The pouring out of the sixth vial upon the Euphrates presages modern Babylon's imminent doom, which comes under the seventh vial.

- b. The drying up of the waters of Babylon

The fall of ancient literal Babylon was achieved by the drying up of the literal Euphrates. God had foretold the drying up of the waters of Babylon, and Cyrus brought about the fall of the city by diverting the waters of the Euphrates and making his entrance into the city through the dry channel. Jer 50:38; 51:36,37; Isa 44:26; 45:1

The fall of modern spiritual Babylon will be accomplished by the drying up of a symbolic Euphrates that is its mainstay. In Rev 18 the downfall of spiritual Babylon is graphically depicted, with the weeping and wailing of the merchant princes who had been its main support (Rev 18:9-19). Modern Babylon constitutes a great conglomeration of religious and secular powers of every hue. "Heresies, and the rejection of the truth, convert the church into Babylon. Kings, merchants, rulers, and religious teachers are all in corrupt harmony." 2SM 68

In James 5:1-5 is foretold the weeping and howling of the last-day prosperous inhabitants of earth at the loss of their corrupted riches.

"Satan is busily at work in our crowded cities, His work is to be seen in the confusion, the strife and discord between labor and capital, and the hypocrisy that has come into the churches . . . Step by step, the world is reaching the conditions that existed in the days of Noah. . . The world, who act as though there were no God, absorbed in selfish pursuits, will soon experience destruction, and shall not escape. . . The whole world appears to be in the march to death." EV 26

Under the sixth trumpet, which was a type of the sixth plague, the four angels which had been bound at the Euphrates were to be loosed, and were to be permitted to wreak their destruction upon large masses of men (Rev 9:14-18). This took place when the Ottoman Turks were given their release from the Euphrates regions whence they came, and swept across the Bosphorus into Europe and established themselves at the Danube. The papal forces that had seized Jerusalem during the crusades were swept out, and the eastern Greeks lost control of Constantinople. A corrupt Christianity had lost its power to cope with the Moslem hordes.

Under the forth-coming sixth vial we may look for the decimation of the forces of modern apostate Christianity under the savage onslaughts of a concourse of anti-Christian powers bent upon their destruction. All this is a continuance of the operations under the fifth vial which was poured out upon the seat of the beast and saw the papal headquarters transferred from Rome to Jerusalem.

A drying up of capitalistic effluents would strike at the heart of hierocratic controls and would prepare the way for a final struggle with communistic contenders that would end only in common ruin.

- c. Babylon to be made desolate and a wilderness. Jer 50:39,40; 51:26,29,37,43; Rev 18:2-4,19; 17:16
- d. The way of the kings of the east to be prepared Rev 16:12

A survey of the sixth vial reveals it to be the prelude to Armageddon, with demonic forces going out to the whole world in the endeavor to take over control, but with God still on His throne. The powers of darkness will make savage attacks against the forces of light, and the princes of evil will be arrayed in their last great struggle against the rulers of Heaven. Christ and Satan will be the leaders in this final battle.

The east is often set forth in God's word as a center of the forces of evil. In the striking prophecy of the last days in Isa 2:1-21, God tells us that He has forsaken His professed people, "the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines" (Isa 2:6). "The Lord has rejected you because you welcome foreigners from the East who practice magic and communicate with evil spirits, as the Philistines do." LB. "Thou hast abandoned Thy people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with influences from the East, and they are soothsayers like the Philistines." NASB. Spiritualistic activity is set forth as one of the outstanding features of the sixth plague. Rev 16:13,14.

In Eze 8:16 a description is given of men at the house of God who had turned away from Him and had "their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east." These were worshipers of Satan.

In ancient eastern idolatry the sun was the most striking emblem employed by the evil one as an emblem of himself. This was true in such nations as Assyria, Egypt and Babylon. The literal translation of Rev 16:12 would be "Kings from the Sun-rising." Satan and his cohorts may be looked upon as among these kings of the east whose way for the last great struggle is being prepared at the time of the sixth plague.

But the primary "King of the East" is none other than Jesus Himself. It is He who created the sun and gave light and life to the world. When He returns it will be from the east (GC 640). Ezekiel describes his own experience when he was brought to the house of God, to "the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory" (Eze 43:1,2).

Satan as king of the east is nothing but a base imposter. At the time of the sixth plague he has set himself up in the specious likeness of Christ as ruler of the world. The hour of the last great battle is almost at hand when he will be unmasked and dethroned, and Christ will rule as earth's rightful king.

In the delineation of the sixth plague both Christ and Satan are depicted. Christ addresses His followers: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth" (Rev 16:15). And the "spirits of devils" are mentioned as playing a leading role at this time, "which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev 16:14). So a primary feature of the sixth plague is that it constitutes the prologue to Armageddon when Jesus goes forth as "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS," with the armies of heaven in the final battle against the rulers of darkness (Rev 19:11-16).

e. Preparations for the battle of the great day of God Almighty
Rev 16:13-16

- (1) Unclean spirits out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet Rev 16:13 Cf Rev 16:19

"Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world, and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium."
4SP 406

- (2) The spirits of devils, working miracles Rev 16:14

"Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden, 'Ye shall not surely die.' . . . Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of Spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: 'I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.'" GC 561,562

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing, and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation

of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come." GC 624

- (3) To go forth to the kings of the whole world Rev 16:14

"Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion." GC 562

"All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of Satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon." EGW Letter 79, 1900

"Under one head,--the papal power,--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate. While he seeks to unite his agents in warring against the truth, he will work to divide and scatter its advocates." 7T 182

- (4) Armageddon--the battle of the great day of God Almighty
Rev 16:14-16; Zech 12:8-11; 14:2; Hab 3:12; Joel 3:2,9-14;
Eze 38

- (a) The culmination of the battle begun by Satan in heaven

"The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven." 7T 141

"There are only two parties in our world, those who are loyal to God, and those who stand under the banner of the prince of darkness. Satan and his angels will soon come down with power and signs and lying wonders. . .

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean, and white. John writes:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.'" EGW Ms 172, 1899

"The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven." GC 624

"The enmity of Satan against good will be manifested more and more as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion; and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe." TM 465

"Satan is busily laying his plans for the last mighty conflict, when all will take sides. . .

"Satan is working to the utmost to make himself as God, and to destroy all who oppose his power."
6T 14

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one. . . Now all have made their decision; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God." GC 656

"Satan as a powerful general has taken the field, and in this last remnant of time, he is working through all conceivable methods to close the door against light that God would have come to His people. He is sweeping the whole world into his ranks." EGW, RH Dec 24, 1889

"A power from beneath is leading men to war against Heaven. Human beings have confederated with satanic agencies to make void the law of God." 9T 43

(b) The battle against the law of God

"By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world. This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, 'He will 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.'
. . .

"The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. . . All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes." DA 763

(c) Sunday exaltation the last act in the drama

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception,

Satan himself will personate Christ. . . Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. . . In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered: he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion." GC 624

In the second chapter of Isaiah and the fourth Chapter of Micah is a prophecy of certain significant events that will take place "in the last days" (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1). This is a time of great iniquity among the professed people of God, when the Lord has forsaken His people, "the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers" (Isa 2:6). Evidently they are deeply involved in spiritualism. This is a time when "many nations are gathered against. . . Zion," a multitudinous group who "know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel" (Mic 4:11,12).

At this time there will be a great exaltation of a pseudo-spiritual power at Jerusalem, "the mountain of the Lord's house" (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1), where a grand call will be issued by the many nations to "go up to the mountain of the Lord," "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2). Universal peace is promised the world, for "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3). Utopian blessings are promised the world (Mic 4:4), and all mankind will join together in a great fraternal religion and "all people will walk every one in the name of his god" (Mic 4:5).

This, however, is the time when God says, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down," when "the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty" and "upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, . . and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa 2:11,12,14,17). All this takes place in the great hour of the wrath of God when "they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa 2:19).

This is a striking prophecy of the time here under discussion during the sixth plague, when "as the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ." The law he sets forth is his own law, having claimed to have changed the law of God and having substituted the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday. "By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world." DA 763

"The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth." 7T 141

It should be noticed that this prediction in the Spirit of Prophecy in 7T 141, is the same prediction made by the prophet of God in Isa 2:19. That is the chapter in which God foretold the grand effort to be made in behalf of the exaltation of "the mountain of the Lord's house" "in the top of the mountains," "in the last days," where the pronouncement would be made that the law would go forth and "the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" and that universal peace would ensue. What place would be more suitable than Jerusalem--the city where God planned to establish His earthly throne and where He will finally establish His eternal throne --for Satan to set up his throne when he comes to the earth to personate Christ? And what more fitting place for the papacy to have its throne at this last great hour of crisis when she puts forth her final efforts "to regain control of the world" (4 SP 382)?

(d) Papal leadership of the forces of error

"Under one head,--the papal power,--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate." 7T 182

"There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. He is the representative of Satan. . . Here is Satan's right-hand man ready to carry on the work that Satan commenced in heaven." EGW RH Mar 9, 1886

(e) The armies of heaven to take the field
Rev 19:11-21; Zech 14:1,2,12; Joel 2:11; 3:11,16;
Jer 25:29-32; Ps 2:7-9; Zeph 3:8

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven." 6T 406

(f) The battle soon to be fought

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings preparing to step down from the throne and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield--the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed." EGW RH May 13, 1902

- (g) A blessing on those who watch for His coming
Rev 16:15
- (h) The nations gathered for Armageddon Rev 16:16

While the evidence is incontestable that the battle of Armageddon will be primarily a spiritual battle, a conflict between the forces of good and evil, between the armies of Christ and those of Satan, there is evidence also that it will be a battle in which mighty armies of men will engage in a final death struggle. Armageddon will be a battle as real as any that has ever taken place upon the earth, only much more extensive and much more severe. At that time every restraint will be removed, all the winds of strife will be allowed to blow, and armies of wicked men will engage in the most desperate struggle that this world has ever seen. The gathering for Armageddon will take place under the sixth plague, but it will be under the seventh plague that the battle reaches its climax. The end of the battle will see the entire world a desolate wilderness.

"The nations are angry, and the time of the dead has come, that they should be judged. Events are changing to bring about the day of God, which hasteth greatly. Only a moment of time, as it were, yet remains. But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle." 6T 14

"The nations of the world are eager for conflict: but they are held in check by the angels. When this restraining power is removed, there will come a time of trouble and anguish. . . All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of Satanic

agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon." EGW Letter 79, 1900

7. The seventh plague--Babylon smitten, Heaven's final judgments on the earth, and the end of this age of sin Rev 16:17-21 Cf Ps 46:1-7; GC 635-644

a. The seventh vial, poured into the air Rev 16:17.
Cf 2 Pet 3:10

b. The voice from the temple, "It is done" Rev 16:17

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. . . It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof.

"The people of God--some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains--still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen. . .

"It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up, and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, 'It is done.'" GC 635, 636

c. Voices, thunders, lightnings, and an earthquake
Rev 16:18; Joel 2:10,11; 3:15,16; Jer 25:30,31; Isa 13:10,13; 24:1,19-23; 34:4; 42:13; Eze 38:19,20; Hab 3:10; Ps 144:5,6
PP 109,110

"Soon I heard the voice of God which shook the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down, and fell on every side." 1T 184

"I saw that God will in a wonderful manner preserve his people through the time of trouble. . . The decree will go forth that they must disregard the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and honor the first day, or lose their lives; but they will not yield, and trample under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, and honor an institution of papacy. Satan's host and wicked men will surround them, and exult over them, because there will

seem to be no way of escape for them. But in the midst of their revelry and triumph, there is heard peal upon peal of the loudest thunder. The heavens have gathered blackness, and are illuminated by the blazing light and terrible glory from heaven, as God utters his voice from his holy habitation.

"The foundations of the earth shake; buildings totter and fall with a terrible crash. The sea boils like a pot, and the whole earth is in terrible commotion. The captivity of the righteous is turned, and with sweet and solemn whisperings they say to one another, 'We are delivered. It is the voice of God.' With solemn awe they listen to the words of the voice. The wicked hear, but understand not the words of the voice of God. . . Those who were so eager to destroy the saints cannot endure the glory resting upon the delivered ones, and they fall like dead men to the earth." 1T 353,354

"That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, 'such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.' The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking." GC 637

"December 16, 1848, the Lord gave me a view of the shaking of the powers of the heavens. I saw that when the Lord said 'heaven,' in giving the signs recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, He meant heaven, and when He said 'earth' He meant earth. The powers of heaven are the sun, moon, and stars. They rule in the heavens. The powers of the earth are those that rule on the earth. The powers of heaven will be shaken at the voice of God. Then the sun, moon, and stars will be moved out of their places. They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God." EW 41

"There was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law.

"The sky opened and shut and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling

through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. . . . When the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image." EW 285,286

- d. Great Babylon receives the fierceness of the wrath of God
Rev 16:19; 17:5,16-18; 18:5-24; Isa 13:1-13; Zech 14:13;
Eze 38:12; 9:6; Jer 25:34; 50:24,25; 51:25; GC 637,653-661

"After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other." EW 290

"There appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. . . . The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire. . . . God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth.

"It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements. . . .

"The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sabbath, and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. . . .

"Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. . . . And 'the armies which were in heaven follow Him.'" GC 639-641

"Babylon. . . has filled up the measure of her iniquity; her time has come; she is ripe for destruction.

"When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. . . .

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. . . . The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. . . .

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one. . . Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. . .

"Now the angel of death goes forth, represented in Ezekiel's vision by the men with the slaughtering weapons. . . The work of destruction begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall. . .

"In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth,--priests, rulers, and people."
GC 653-657

- e. Islands and mountains disappear Rev 16:20; Ps 46:1-3;
Eze 38:20; Nah 1:3-6

"Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the Great has come in remembrance before God."
GC 637

"The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place." GC 641,642

- f. Great hail from heaven Rev 16:21; Isa 28:2,17; 30:30;
Eze 13:11-14; 38:22

- g. The battle of Armageddon will be fought under the sixth vial. It will end in the mutual destruction of all the wicked. "I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them, and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother" (Hag 2:12). "I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God; every man's sword shall be against his brother" (Eze 38:21). "After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another" (EW 290). "The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction. . . The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. . . 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor.' In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth" (GC 655-657). The attack of Moab, Ammon, and Edom upon Jehoshaphat, in which God wrought a glorious victory for His people by allowing their enemies to destroy each other (2 Chr 20:1-29) is a prototype of Armageddon.

XIII

THE WOMAN AND THE SCARLET-COLOURED BEAST

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 17
- II. A MESSAGE OF JUDGMENTS
- A. The angel who spoke with John--one of the angels with the seven vials Rev 17:1. Cf Rev 16:17,19; 17:5
- B. The scene revealed
1. Judgment upon the harlot Rev 17:1,16
 2. Judgment upon the beast Rev 17:8,11
 3. Judgment upon the seven heads Rev 17:10
 4. Judgment upon the ten horns Rev 17:14
- III. THE SCENE OF THE VISION
- A. John carried into the wilderness Rev 17:3
1. Greek term: ereemos
 - a. Examples of the use of the root ereemos

IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

Rev 17:16	shall make her <u>desolate</u>
Rev 18:17	so great riches is come to <u>nought</u>
Rev 18:19	in one hour is she made <u>desolate</u>
Matt 24:15	the abomination of <u>desolation</u>
Mark 13:14	the abomination of <u>desolation</u>
Luke 21:20	the <u>desolation</u> thereof is nigh
Luke 13:35	your house is left unto you <u>desolate</u>
Acts 1:20	Let his habitation <u>be desolate</u>

IN THE SEPTUAGINT OLD TESTAMENT

Ps 69:25	Let their habitation <u>be made desolate</u>
Dan 8:13	the transgression of <u>desolation</u>
Dan 9:27	the abomination of <u>desolations</u>
Isa 14:17	made the world as a <u>wilderness</u>
Jer 4:7	to make thy land <u>desolate</u>
Jer 4:26	the fruitful place was a <u>wilderness</u>
Jer 4:27	the whole land shall be <u>desolate</u>
 2. The world a wilderness of desolation after the seven last plagues and the coming of Christ Jer 4:23-27; Rev 20:3

"The wrath of God in the seven last plagues had been visited upon

the inhabitants of the earth. . . Dead bodies were from one end of it to the other.

"The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. . . Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God's law." EW 289,290

"Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.

"The revelator foretells the banishment of Satan, and the condition of chaos and desolation to which the earth is to be reduced. . .

"He has 'made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof.'" GC 658,659

IV. THE POWERS DEPICTED

A. The harlot--unfaithful to God, corrupted in religious faith Jer 3:20; Eze 16:8,15,32,34; Hos 2:2,5,8,13; Isa 1:21

"In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as a woman,--a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church." GC 381

1. Her corrupt union with the powers of earth

a. Seated upon many waters Rev 17:1

(1) Waters: peoples, nations, and tongues Rev 17:15

b. Seated upon the beast Rev 17:3

c. Fornication with the kings of the earth Rev 17:2; 18:3

2. The inhabitants of the earth made drunk with the wine of her fornication Rev 17:2; 14:8; 18:3; Jer 51:7; GC 536,537

"Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines." TM 61

3. Her gorgeous external array

a. Arrayed in purple and scarlet Rev 17:4; 18:16; GC 382

"There can be no doubt but that much of the splendid ceremonial by which the Church of Rome knows so well how to fascinate the impressionable races of southern Europe, owes its origin to an amalgamation, or an imitation of the most familiar forms of the Pagan Ritual. The marvellous masterpieces of ancient sculpture and painting; the purple robes, gleaming with gold and jewels, worn by the officiating priests, the long triumphal

trains, winding their way through festive streets to the temples of the immortal Gods; the varied pageantry which age after age had charmed the more refined votaries of a sensuous faith, and subdued the superstitious imaginations of the vulgar, naturally suggested, or as some say, necessitated, the pomp of Catholic worship." John G. Sheppard, The Fall of Rome, 669

- b. Decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls Rev 17:4; 18:16; Dan 11:38
- 4. A golden cup in her hand, full of abominations Rev 17:4; Jer 51:7
- 5. The name upon her forehead Rev 17:5. Cf Rev 14:1; Rev 22:4; Jer 3:2,3
 - a. MYSTERY Rev 17:5; 2 Thess 2:7
 - b. BABYLON THE GREAT Rev 17:5; 14:8; 16:19; 18:2,10,21
 - c. MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF EARTH Rev 17:5

Ancient Babylon, a center for the corruption of the world

"Apostasy soon led to division. Those who desired to forget their Creator, and to cast off the restraint of his law. . . decided to separate from the worshipers of God. Accordingly they journeyed to the plain of Shinar, on the banks of the river Euphrates. . .

"Here they decided to build a city. . . These Babel-builders determined to keep their community united in one body, and to found a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth. Thus their city would become the metropolis of a universal empire. . .

"The whole undertaking was designed to exalt still further the pride of its projectors, and to turn the minds of future generations away from God, and lead them into idolatry. . .

"The men of Babel had determined to establish a government that should be independent of God. . . Had they gone on unchecked, they would have demoralized the world in its infancy. . .

"From time to time the unseen hand that holds the scepter of government is stretched out to restrain iniquity. . .

"The schemes of the Babel-builders ended in shame and defeat. The monument to their pride became the memorial of their folly. Yet men are continually pursuing the same course." PP 118,119, 123

"The mother country of 'astral mythology' is to be sought, not on the banks of the Nile, but on those of the Euphrates. . .

"That Babylon was the mother of astronomy, star-worship, and astrology, that thence these sciences and these beliefs spread

over the world, is a fact already told us by the ancients." Franz Cumont, Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans, 2,4

"Sumerian religion. . . was completely adopted by the Accadians, and through the later Babylonian and Assyrian kingdoms this extreme type of polytheism, rich in mythology and theological speculation, influenced the religious beliefs of nearly every Semitic race in Western Asia. . . When we come to deal with the mythology and theology of the Northern and Western Semitic races, we shall see that Babylonia is the source from which they absorbed all their fundamental ideas." Stephen H. Langdon, The Mythology of All Races--Semitic, V, 6,7

6. Drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs Rev 17:6; Rev 13:7; 18:24; Dan 7:21
7. Causes John to wonder Rev 17:6
8. Reigns over the kings of the earth Rev 17:18

B. The Beast

1. Scarlet in color Rev 17:3 Cf Rev 12:3
2. Full of names of blasphemy Rev 17:3
3. Seven heads Rev 17:3 Cf Rev 12:3; 13:1; Dan 7:6
4. Ten horns Rev 17:3; Cf Rev 12:3; 13:1; Dan 7:7,24

V. THE MYSTERY OF THE BEAST AND THE WOMAN EXPLAINED Rev 17:7-18

A. A beast with seven heads

1. The seven-headed monster in ancient mythology

"The dragon theme may be classed as almost universal in mythology. . .

"The Ras Shamra texts. . . record Canaanite myths of the period from 1700 to 1400 B.C. A section of one text tells of the fight of Anath and the dragon. At one point Anath shouts:

'I have destroyed the Sea-Dragon. . .
I have destroyed the winding serpent,
Shalyat of the seven heads,
I have destroyed the underworld dragon,
beloved of El.'

In another of the texts ('Baal and the Waters'), we learn of the seven-headed Lotan, the very name from which the word 'Leviathan' in the Old Testament is derived. . . Two words which describe Lotan and Leviathan are identical in two languages. They are brh, usually translated 'swift' or 'gliding,' and qltn, usually translated 'crooked' or 'tortuous.'

"A cylinder seal found in Tell Asmar in Mesopotamia shows a seven-headed dragon being subdued by two deities. . . This is the type of monster which raged against the prevailing gods in Canaanite mythology, the Leviathan to which the Old Testament alludes." Howard Wallace, "Leviathan and the Beast in Revelation," The Biblical Archaeologist, 1948, No 3, 61-63

2. Leviathan and the Beast in the Bible

"The Leviathan concept underlies the usage of the Beast in Revelation. The longest passage concerning Leviathan in the Old Testament is the forty-first chapter of Job. . .

"We know now that Leviathan is a seven headed serpent connected with water. This knowledge has come from the background material furnished to us by the Ras Shamra texts. . .

"Summing up what we learn of Leviathan in Job 41:

(1) Verses 1-11 indicate that he is a mighty creature which no man can harness. . . (2) Verses 12-32 are a description of the monster; his very form strikes terror into men. . . (3) In verses 33-34 we find that he is king of all the sons of pride.

"A second passage concerning Leviathan is found in Job 3:8

'Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are ready to rouse up Leviathan.' . . .

"When tied in with the next passage, it indicates that Leviathan is conceived as having fought with and been conquered by God.

"A third passage, which indicates that Leviathan has more than one head, is Psalm 74:14. . .

"The important idea is that God formed these monsters and was strong enough to destroy them. . .

"A fourth Leviathan passage is Psalm 104:26. . .

"The last, and perhaps crucial, Leviathan passage in the Old Testament is Isaiah 27:1. The writer is speaking of the day when Israel will be delivered from all her enemies. She will be redeemed by Yahweh. The forces of evil are personified in the serpent, Leviathan. . .

"It must be noted that several Old Testament words are basically related to Leviathan. One is tehom, a word designating primeval chaos. While it is not personified, it is mentioned in Job 41:31,32 as being the dwelling place of Leviathan. . . Yam, 'sea,' is more than a mere body of water in many passages; it is an active force, probably reflecting the old myth of the struggle between order and chaos. . . Leviathan dwells in the sea. Rahab, a sea monster, can be equated with Leviathan in several O.T. passages (Job 9:13; 26:12; Isa 51:9; Ps 89:10). . .

"Drakon, 'dragon,' is the usual Septuagint rendering of Leviathan. Only once is Leviathan translated ketos, 'sea-monster' (Job 3:8). From Rev 13:1 on, the beast and the dragon are used interchangeably, as are Leviathan and Rahab and Tannin in the O.T. It may also be noted that abyssos is the Septuagint rendering of tehom, the watery deep. . .

"The war in heaven between the dragon and Michael and his angels (Rev 12:7-12). . . is an echo of the war in which Tiamat and her hordes were defeated by Marduk and the gods in the Babylonian Creation Story, and in which Baal of Canaanite lore fought against the rebellious waters. Yahweh destroyed Leviathan in the dim past. . . The primeval struggle between Yahweh and the powers of chaos is transformed in the Christian context into a struggle between God and Satan. . .

"The last part of chapter 19 and the first part of chapter 20 picture the over-throw of the beast and his armies. 'The dragon, that ancient serpent who is the Devil and Satan' in Rev 20:2 is bound and thrown into the bottomless pit. The abyssos and its relation to tehom is again indicative of the whole Leviathan strain, in which Leviathan is the representation of the restless forces of chaos. . .

"Leviathan. . . in Isaiah 27:1 and subsequent Apocryphal and Rabbinical writings blossoms out into a magnificent and terrible symbol of evil and disorder. Leviathan is the source for the usage of the beast, therion and the dragon, drakon, in the Revelation to John. In this N.T. apocalypse, the conflict between good and evil is pictured in intense form, and the figures of the terrible beast and the red dragon go down to defeat in the cataclysmic battle which results in a new heaven and a new earth." Ibid.

B. A beast that was, is not, shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition Rev 17:8

JB: "The beast you have seen once was and now is not; he is yet to come from the Abyss, but only to go to his destruction."

NEB: "The beast you have seen is he who once was alive, and is alive no longer, but has yet to ascend out of the abyss before going to perdition."

These words are spoken of Satan from the standpoint of the thousand years. Prior to that time he was very much alive and active, during the thousand years he "is not," but after the thousand years he will renew his activities against God and His people, but only to go into perdition.

1. The bottomless pit--the world desolate during the thousand years Rev 20:1
2. Satan and his kingdom--totally helpless during the thousand years Rev 20:2
3. Satan's release after the thousand years Rev 20:3

4. Satan's final perdition Rev 20:10
5. Those not written in the book of life to wonder Rev 17:8
Cf Rev 13:3

C. The seven heads of the beast

1. Seven mountains on which the woman sitteth Rev 17:9
 - a. Mountain--a power or kingdom Jer 51:24,25; Dan 2:35,44;
Isa 13:4

2. Seven kings Rev 17:10 Cf Dan 7:17,23

NEB: "The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They represent also seven kings."

Moffatt: "Also, they are seven kings."

Weymouth: "And they are seven kings."

3. The seven heads to be successive, existing one at a time Rev 17:10
4. Satan's endeavor to establish himself as ruler of the world

"After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. . . Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world." DA 114,115

"The Babel-builders had indulged the spirit of murmuring against God. . . But while they murmured against God as arbitrary and severe, they were accepting the rule of the cruelest of tyrants. Satan was seeking to bring contempt upon the sacrificial offerings that prefigured the death of Christ.

"The men of Babel had determined to establish a government that should be independent of God. . . Their confederacy was founded in rebellion; a kingdom established for self-exaltation, but in which God was to have no rule or honor. Had this confederacy been permitted, a mighty power would have borne sway to banish righteousness--and with it peace, happiness, and security--from the earth." PP 120,123

5. The downfall of evil governments by divine decree

Babylon Gen 11:6-9; Isa 14:4,11-17; Dan 5:18-21,26-28;
Jer 51:24-26,29

Egypt Ex 7:5; 14:27; Jer 46:25; Eze 29:3,9

Assyria Isa 14:24-27; Nah 3:1,7,18,19

Medo-Persia Dan 8:7,20

Greece Dan 8:8,21,22

Pagan Rome Dan 2:33,41

Papal Rome and its satellites Dan 7:11,24-26; 2 Thess 2:7-9;
Rev 18:10,21; 19:19,20

"The disciples of Christ were directed to look above all the power and dominion of evil, unto the Lord their God, whose kingdom ruleth over all. . .

"The programme of coming events is in the hands of our Maker. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of His church, in His own charge." MB 174,175

6. Five are fallen--Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Medo-Persia, Greece
Rev 17:10
7. One is--Pagan Rome Rev 17:10
8. One is not yet come--Papal Rome Rev 17:10
 - a. Must continue a short space Rev 17:10 Cf Ps 37:10;
Heb 10:37; Hag 2:6; John 16:16 Rev 1:1; 22:12

D. The eighth king Rev 17:11

NEB: "As for the beast that once was alive and is alive no longer, he is an eighth--and yet he is one of the seven, and he is going to perdition."

1. To go into perdition

"At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. . . As He descends in terrific majesty, He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. . .

"As the wicked went into their graves, so they come forth, with the same enmity to Christ, and the same spirit of rebellion. . .

"Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy . . . He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world. . .

"Saith the Lord: ' . . . I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. . . Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.' . . .

"In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch,--Satan the root, his followers the branches. . .

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended." GC 662,663,672,673

E. The ten horns Rev 17:12

1. Are ten kings Rev 17:12
2. Have received no kingdom as yet Rev 17:12
3. Receive power as kings one hour with beast Rev 17:12
4. Have one mind Rev 17:13

"The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the Papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved. . . 'These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.'

"There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces. . .

"In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue." EGW Ms 24, 1891

"The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. . . Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world, and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium." GC 588,589

"They are represented in God's word as being bound in bundles to be burned. Satan is uniting his forces for perdition." 6T 242

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones." 9T 11

"With the ungodly there will be a deceptive harmony that but partially conceals a perpetual discord. In their opposition to the will and the truth of God they are united." 5T 101

5. Give their power and strength unto the beast Rev 17:13

JB: "They are all of one mind in putting their strength and their powers at the beast's disposal."

Knox: "All of them have a single policy; they surrender to the beast the power and the dominion which is theirs."

"Satan is standing ready, burning with zeal to inspire the whole confederacy of satanic agencies, that he may cause them to unite with evil men, and bring upon the believers of truth speedy and severe suffering." 9T 242

"The Lord's restraining power is being withdrawn from the earth, and Satan is seeking to stir up the various elements in the religious world, leading men to place themselves under the training of the great deceiver. . . Already the inhabitants of the earth are marshalling under the leading of the prince of darkness, and this is but the beginning of the end." 8T 49

"Satan as a powerful general has taken the field. . . He is sweeping the whole world into his ranks, and the few who are faithful to God's requirements are the only ones who can ever withstand him. . . Go to God for yourselves, . . . that when the wonderful miracle-working power of Satan shall be displayed, and the enemy shall come as an angel of light, you may distinguish between the genuine work of God and the imitative work of the powers of darkness." EGW RH Extra, Dec 24, 1889

6. Shall make war with the Lamb Rev 17:14 Cf Rev 16:14; 19:19

"The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven." 7T 141

"The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven." GC 624

7. The Lamb shall overcome them Rev 17:14; 19:20,21
- a. He is Lord of lords and King of kings Rev 17:14; 19:16
 - b. Those with Him, called, chosen, and faithful Rev 17:14
8. The waters where the harlot sitteth--peoples and nations Rev 17:15
9. The ten horns to hate the harlot Rev 17:16
- a. To make her desolate and naked Rev 17:16 Cf Jer 50:3,9,13, 23,38-41; 51:25,26,29,48,49; Rev 16:12,19
10. God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will Rev 17:17
Cf Isa 10:5-7,15; Jer 46:25,26

- F. The woman--the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth Rev 17:18; 16:19; 14:8; 18:10,18

XIV

THE FALL OF BABYLON THE GREAT

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 18:1-19:4
- II. THE WORLD'S FINAL MESSAGE OF WARNING

"Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Rev 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work." GC 390

"What terrible scenes will take place when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth! Then the words of Rev 18:1-3 will be fulfilled.' The whole of the eighteenth chapter of Revelation is a warning of what is coming on the earth. . . Scenes will take place the fearfulness of which we cannot imagine.'" LS 412

In the eighteenth chapter of Revelation is set forth one of the most solemn messages found in the word of God. Here is the last message of warning ever to be proclaimed to a doomed and dying world. The word goes forth that the hour of Babylon's final doom has come. For six thousand years the great controversy has been going on between good and evil, but this is the end. Sin has finally reached its ultimate limits, and the world's iniquity has at length mounted to the very portals of heaven, to be remembered by God.

Throughout the centuries, Babylon has been growing ever larger and stronger, more defiant of heaven, more intense in its hatred of righteousness, and more bitter in its struggle against God and the children of God. From a little hamlet on the Euphrates, Babylon developed into a city and a nation, a universal empire of gold and then iron, and ultimately a "gigantic system of false religion," "a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will." GC 50 The next step is immediately ahead, a great power of evil embracing the world and all its inhabitants,--all except a last small remnant who remain faithful to God.

Back in the days when history was only beginning, Babylon began with Babel, a tower of pride erected in defiance of heaven. "Great Babylon" was then only a dream,--a scheme of evil in the mind of Satan whereby the world was to be seduced in its infancy, a city that was to grow into a state which was finally to encompass the world and every man within it, to enslave the inhabitants of earth under the bondage of sin, and make Satan the effectual ruler of a vast world empire, divorced of righteousness, and snatched away forever from God.

The village of Babel grew into the city of Babylon, and Babylon grew into a nation and an empire ruled over by kings proudly bearing the title, "King of Kings," and "King of the Universe." Even in its infancy, when Hammurabi began his rule, the proud proclamation was made that it was the great gods "who pronounced the lofty name of Babylon," and established it

an "everlasting kingdom whose foundations were firm as heaven and earth." The Babylon of Hammurabi ultimately developed into the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar, who determined that the head of gold should become the entire image of gold, an empire of the world, to endure to the end of time. But Babylon on the Euphrates met its doom, and the next Babylon had its seat on the Tiber and the seven hills of Rome,--the next hoped-for "eternal city." As the scheme of evil continued to unfold itself and Babylon continued to grow, it came to encompass not only pagans but Christians, --papists, and ultimately protestants as well.

Revelation eighteen is dealing with earth's final Babylon, --papal, protestant, and pagan, --a Babylon that has well-nigh attained the world limits planned for it by the prince of evil in daring defiance of the true Ruler of heaven and earth.

But regardless of the plans of Satan and the purposes of evil men, it is the happy privilege of each true child of God to look forward to the victory of righteousness, not sin; to a glorious deliverance from Babylon and a turning of the captivity of the children of God; to the establishment of Jerusalem not as the center of the man of sin but the throne of God; to the utter ruin of modern Babylon and all who have allied themselves therewith, and the coming down of the New Jerusalem and its establishment as the truly eternal city; to a drying up of the sin-polluted Euphrates and a flowing forth of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God."

Looked at in this light, Revelation eighteen becomes a message of vital importance, --timely, stirring, cheering, and true, --a message as sound and dependable as the eternal kingdom of God.

III. AN ANGEL WITH GREAT POWER AND GLORY Rev 18:1

A. The Latter Rain, as the Work of Salvation is Closing

"While the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."
EW 85,86

"The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain, and prepares it for the sickle. . . The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of Man."
TM 506

"The angel who unites the proclamation of the third angel's message, is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent

and unwonted power is here foretold. . .

"The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost. As the 'former rain' was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the up-springing of the precious seed, so the 'latter rain' will be given at its close, for the ripening of the harvest. . .

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. . .

"Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, the signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. . . Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."

GC 611,612

"The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost bounds of the inhabited world. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Believers were re-converted. . . One interest prevailed. . .

"These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant." COL 120,121

"In the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. . .

"Near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest." AA 55

B. The Loud Cry of the Third Angel's Message

"I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere. . . The work of this angel

comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet." EW 277

"The message of the third angel is to prepare a people to stand in these days of peril. It is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and is to accomplish a work which few realize." 8T 94

"The warning of the third angel. . . is represented in the prophecy as being proclaimed with a loud voice, . . . and it will command the attention of the world." GC 450

C. A Larger Work

"We are to throw aside our narrow, selfish plans, remembering that we have a work of the largest magnitude and highest importance. In doing this work we are sounding the first, second, and third angels' messages, and are thus being prepared for the coming of that other angel from heaven who is to lighten the earth with his glory." 6T 406

"The message loses none of its force in the angel's onward flight; for John sees it increasing in strength and power until the whole earth is lightened with its glory. . . Soon it will go with a loud voice, and the earth will be lightened with its glory. Are we preparing for this great outpouring of the Spirit of God?" 5T 383

"Our watchword is to be, Onward, ever onward. . . Our burden for the 'regions beyond' can never be laid down until the whole earth shall be lightened with the glory of the Lord. . .

"Scarcely a thousandth part of the work is being done that ought to be done in missionary fields." 6T 29

"The Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning." SpT, Series A, No 6; 59

D. The Message to be Given with Power

"The third angel's message is to be given with power. The power of the proclamation of the first and second messages is to be intensified in the third. In the Revelation John says of the heavenly messenger who unites with the third angel, 'I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power.'" 6T 60

"As foretold in the eighteenth of Revelation, the third angel's message is to be proclaimed with great power by those who give the final warning against the beast and his image.

"This is the message given by God to be sounded forth in the loud cry of the third angel." 8T 118

E. The Work of the Holy Spirit Throughout the Earth

"In the future, the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to men." 9T 40

"Light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be soon flashing everywhere." EGW RH Oct 13, 1904

F. Multitudes to Receive the Light

"Jesus commissioned a mighty angel to descend and warn the inhabitants of the earth to prepare for His second appearing. . . His mission was to lighten the earth with his glory and warn man of the coming wrath of God. Multitudes received the light." EW 245

"God will soon do great things for us. . . More than one thousand will be converted in a day." EGW RH Nov 10, 1885

"The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the day of Pentecost." EGW RH June 29, 1905

G. God Will Use Simple Means and Humble Instruments

"There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." TM 300

"As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them." GC 606

H. Largely Through the Publishing Work

"In a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power, and who lightens the earth with his glory." 7T 140

I. The Message of Christ's Righteousness

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel." 6T 19

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel

has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth." EGW RH Nov 22, 1892

J. Unity Among the People of God

"The people of God will draw together, and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease. . .

"The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord." 6T 401

K. A Work of Preparation on the Part of God's People

"If God's people make no efforts on their part, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it." 1T 619

L. Loud Cry May Not Be Recognized By Some

"Unless those who can help in----are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas." TM 300

IV. THE FINAL FALL AND OVERTHROW OF BABYLON Rev 18:2-24

A. Babylon the Great is Fallen Rev 18:2 Cf Rev 14:8; Jer 51:8; Isa 14:4,12

"The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry." EW 277

"The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term 'Babylon,' which prophecy applies to the world-loving churches of the last days." PP 124

B. Babylon is Become the Habitation of Devils Rev 18:2, Cf Isa 13:19-22

"A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth, the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. . . As the teachings of Spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and

the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity, A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches." GC 603,604

"The sins of the popular churches are white-washed over. Many of the members indulge in the grossest vices, and are steeped in iniquity. Babylon is fallen, and has become the cage of every foul and hateful bird! The most revolting sins of the age find shelter beneath the cloak of Christianity." 4T 13

"The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of Spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power,--all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven." GC 606,607

C. All Nations Have Drunk of the Wine of the Wrath of Her Fornication
Rev 18:3 Cf Rev 14:8; Jer 25:15; 51:7

"Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God's holy and sanctified day. These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches, and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' It is a wrath which is created by false doctrines, and when kings and presidents drink this wine of the wrath of her fornication, they are stirred with anger against those who will not come into harmony with the false and satanic heresies which exalt the false sabbath." TM 61

"Many are filled with great wrath. Ministers and people united with the vile, and stoutly resisted the light shed by the mighty angel." EW 245,246

"By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. . . In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven. As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears, and quiet the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men, and demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord,' the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan, and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it.

"As the controversy extends into new fields, and the minds of the people are called to God's downtrodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will

put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light, lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and in this work, papists and Protestants unite." GC 606,607

- D. God's People Called Out of Babylon Rev 18:4, Cf Gen 19:17,22; Isa 48:20; Jer 50:8; 51:6,45; Zech 2:6,7; 2 Cor 6:14-18. PP 167

"The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work 'with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;' and they that 'received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,' will be left to receive 'strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.' Not until this condition shall be reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfilment of Rev 14:8 is yet future.

"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. . .

"Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Rev 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world." GC 389,390

"God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgements, these faithful ones must be called out, that they 'partake not of her sins, and receive not of her plagues.' Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory, and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard, 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth." GC 604

"All in the world are not lawless and sinful. God has many thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. There are God-fearing men and women in the fallen churches. If this were not so, we would not be given the message to bear : 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. . . Come out of her, My people.' Rev 18:2,4. Many of the honest in heart are gasping for a breath of life from heaven. They will recognize the gospel when it is brought to them in the beauty and simplicity with which it is presented in God's word." 9T 110,111

"No longer have the hosts of evil power to keep the church captive. . . To spiritual Israel is given the message, 'Come out of her, My people.' . . . As the captive exiles heeded the message, 'Flee out of the midst of Babylon,' and were restored to the land of promise, so those who fear God to-day are heeding the message to withdraw from spiritual Babylon, and soon they are to stand as trophies of divine grace in the earth made new, the heavenly Canaan." PK 715

"To-day, as in the days of Elijah, the line of demarcation between God's commandment-keeping people and the worshipers of false gods is clearly drawn. . . The message for to-day is: 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. . . Come out of her, My people.'" PK 188

- E. The Sins of Babylon Have Reached Unto Heaven Rev 18:5 Cf Rev 16:19; Jer 51:9; Gen 18:20

"With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While his mercy is tendered, with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of his wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases." 5T 208

- F. Babylon to be Rewarded as She Rewarded Others Rev 18:6,7 Cf Ps 137:8; Jer 50:15; 51:24,49

"Men who claim to be Christians may now defraud and oppress the poor; they may rob the widow and the fatherless; they may indulge their Satanic hatred because they can not control the consciences of God's people; but for all this God will bring them into judgment. . . They may now indulge in false accusations, they may deride those whom God has appointed to do His work, they may consign His believing ones to prison, to the chain-gang, to banishment, to death; but for every pang of anguish, every tear shed, they must answer. God will reward them double for their sins. . .

"By human tribunals the children of God have been adjudged the vilest of criminals. But the day is near when 'God is judge Himself.' Then the decisions of earth shall be reversed." COL 178-180

"To God's people, the captivity of Satan will bring gladness and rejoicing. Says the prophet: ' . . . Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon (here representing Satan), and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! . . . The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked.'" GC 660

"The cries of the oppressed have reached unto heaven, and angels stand amazed at the untold, agonizing sufferings which man, formed in the image of his Maker, causes his fellow man. . . God's anger will not cease until He has caused this land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of His fury, until He has rewarded unto Babylon double." EW 276

- G. Hath Glorified Herself Rev 18:7 Cf Isa 47:10, Dan 4:30; Eze 27:25; 28:2,12,17

- H. Lived Deliciously Rev 18:7; Isa 47:1,8

- I. A Lady, Not to See Widowhood or Sorrow Rev 18:7; Cf Isa 47:5,7,8 Zeph 2:15

"Perpetuity, or duration till the end of time, is one of the most striking marks of the Church. . . The indestructibility of the Catholic Church is truly marvellous, and well calculated to excite the admiration of every reflecting mind. . .

"Children of the Church, fear nothing, happen what will to her. Christ is with her, and therefore she cannot sink. . . Has she not gone steadily on her course amid storm and sunshine? The fulfillment of the past is the best security for the future.

"Amid the continual changes in human institutions, she is the one institution that never changes. Amid the universal ruins of earthly monuments, she is the one monument that stands proudly pre-eminent. . . Amid the general destruction of kingdoms, her kingdom is never destroyed." Cardinal Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, 72,73,83,84

J. Her Plagues to Come Suddenly

1. In one day Rev 18:8

"Fallen angels upon earth form confederations with evil men. In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law of God will be fully made void in the nations of our world. Rebellion against God's holy law will be fully ripe. But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But Omnipotence will interpose, and to the apostate churches that unite in the exaltation of Satan, the sentence will go forth, 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine.'" TM 62

2. In one hour Rev 18:10,17,19 Cf Rev 17:12

K. To be Burnt With Fire Rev 18:8,9,18 Cf Rev 17:16; Isa 13:19; Eze 28:18

L. Strong is God Who Judgeth Her Rev 18:8 Cf Jer 50:33,34

M. Lamentations of Kings and Merchants of Earth Rev 18:9-17 Cf 6:15-17; Jer 51:8; Eze 26:16,17; 27:30-32; Isa 2:20; 47:15

"When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. . . The rich prided themselves upon their superiority to those who were less favored; but they had obtained their riches by violation of the law of God. . . They had sought to exalt themselves, and to obtain the homage of their fellow-creatures. . . They have sold their souls for earthly riches and enjoyments, and have not sought to become rich toward God. The result is, their lives are a failure; their pleasures are now turned to gall, their treasures to corruption. The gain of a lifetime is swept away in a moment. The rich bemoan the destruction of their grand houses, the scattering of their gold and silver. . .

"The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow-men, but because God has conquered. They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness." GC 654

1. Have committed fornication with the harlot Rev 18:9, 3; 17:2,
Cf Isa 23:17
2. Have lived in pleasure with her Rev 18:9
3. Witnesses of Babylon's doom Rev 18:9,10,18

"The world sees the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion. . .

"Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. . .

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. . . And they turn upon the false shepherds. . . The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. . .

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress . . . The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. . .

"Now the angel of death goes forth. . . The work of destruction begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall. . .

"In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth,--priests, rulers, and people." GC 654-657

"The ministers did not escape the wrath of God. Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people." EW 282

4. Mercantile and monetary activities Rev 18:11-15,3,23 Cf Isa 2:7; 23:2,3,8,11; Eze 27:3,12-17,33,34; Jer 51:13
5. Weep because an end has come to their merchandising Rev 18:11
6. Gold, silver, precious stones, pearls Rev 18:12,16 Cf Rev 17:4; Dan 11:38,43; Isa 2:7,20; 14:4; Joel 3:5
7. Fine linen, purple, scarlet Rev 18:16; 17:4 Cf Jer 4:30; Eze 27:7,16
8. Horses, chariots Rev 18:13 Cf Dan 11:40; Isa 2:7; Jer 4:13,29; 51:21; Mic 5:10
9. Souls of men Rev 18:13 Cf Eze 27:13

10. Ships, shipmasters, sailors Rev 18:17,19 Cf Dan 11:40;
Isa 2:16; 23:2,14; Eze 27:9,26,29
11. What city like this great city! Rev 18:18 Cf Eze 27:32
12. Cast dust on their heads and weep Rev 18:19 Cf Eze 27:30
- N. Great Babylon Made Desolate Rev 18:19 Cf Isa 13:9,22;
14:4,17; 24:3-6; Jer 25:9,11; 50:13,23; 51:29,43
- O. Heaven and the Saints to rejoice at Babylon's Fall Rev 18:20
Cf Jer 51:48; Ps 137:8
- P. Cast Into the Sea Like a Millstone Rev 18:21; Jer 51:63,64
- Q. Babylon's Final End Rev 18:21; Cf Jer 51:64; Eze 26:14,17,21;
27:32,36; 28:18,19; Nah 1:8,9
- R. Voices of Music and Rejoicing no More to be Heard Rev 18:22,23
Cf Isa 24:7-11; Jer 7:34; 25:10; Eze 26:13
- S. All Nations Deceived by her Sorceries Rev 18:23 Cf Isa 47:9,12,13;
2:6; Mic 5:12
- T. The Blood of Prophets and Saints Found in her Rev 18:24 Cf Rev 13:7;
17:6; Jer 51:49; Dan 7:25; Matt 23:31-35
- V. THE CHORUS OF PRAISE Rev 19:1-4
- A. Praise to God Because Harlot Has Been Judged Rev 19:1,2 Cf Rev 16:5-7;
5:13; 6:10
- B. The Smoke of Her Burning Rev 19:3 Cf Rev 14:11; 18:9,18; Isa 34:10
- C. The Twenty-four Elders and Four Living Creatures Worship God
Rev 19:4 Cf Rev 5:14; 11:16-18

XV

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB AND EARTH'S FINAL BATTLE

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 19:5-21

II. A CHORUS OF PRAISE Rev 19:5-7

A. The call for all God's servants to praise Him Rev 19:5

B. The Great multitude gives praise to God Rev 19:6,7

1. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth Rev 19:6 Cf Rev 11:15,17
DA 48,151; COL 421; PK 721

"One of the ministers of vengeance declares, . . . 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou has judged thus.' . . . When the last vial of God's wrath is poured out, they return and lay their emptied vials at the feet of the Lord.

"And the next scene is recorded, 'After these things. . . I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.' They sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. . .

"When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption." TM 432,433

"In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch,--Satan the root, his followers the branches. . .

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. . . A shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe. 'The voice of a great multitude'. . . is heard, saying, 'Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'" GC 673

2. The marriage of the Lamb is come Rev 19:7

III. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB Rev 19:8,9

A. Jesus the Lamb of God John 1:36

B. The church, the bride Isa 54:5,6; 2 Cor 11:2

1. Arrayed in fine linen Rev 19:8; Isa 61:10 COL 310,311

C. The coming union between Christ and His people

"In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the

wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb." DA 151

"In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory--Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory." TM 18,19

"Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also the symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.'" MH 356

D. Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb
Rev 19:9

The Call to be Given to All

"The Lord's solemn, sacred message of warning must be proclaimed in the most difficult fields and in the most sinful cities. . . To every one is to be given the last call to the marriage supper of the Lamb." 7T 54

An Earnest Work

"Let there be far more wrestling with God for the salvation of souls. Work disinterestedly, determinedly, with a spirit never to let go. Compel souls to come in to the marriage supper of the Lamb." 6T 66

The Last Call to the Gospel Feast

"We are to give to men the last call to the gospel feast, the last invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Thousands of places that have not heard the call are yet to hear it. Many who have not given the message are yet to proclaim it." 6T 412

IV. THE ANGEL AND THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS Rev 19:10 Cf 1 Pet 1:10,11;
2 Pet 1:21; 2 Sam 23:2; Jer 1:9; Luke 1:68,70

NEB: "Those who bear testimony to Jesus are inspired like the prophets"

NAB: "The prophet spirit proves itself by witnessing to Jesus"

Knox: "It is the truth concerning Jesus that inspires all prophecy"

Phillips: "This witness to Jesus inspires all prophecy"

JB: "The witness Jesus gave is the same as the spirit of prophecy"

Moffatt: "For the testimony borne by Jesus is the breath of all prophecy"

"It was Christ that spoke to his people through the prophets. The apostle

Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets 'prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. 'The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'" PP 366,367

V. THE HOLY WAR--ARMAGEDDON AND THE DEFEAT OF THE HOSTS OF EVIL
Rev 19:11-21

A. Christ riding forth with the armies of heaven Rev 19:11-16

1. Riding upon a white horse Rev 19:11 Cf Rev 16:2

"Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. . . Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a 'man of sorrows,' to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead." GC 640,641

2. Faithful and True Rev 19:11; 3:14

3. In righteousness judging and making war Rev 19:11 Cf Isa 11:4

4. His eyes like a flame of fire Rev 19:12; 1:14; 2:18

5. Many crowns Rev 19:12 Cf Rev 6:2

"I saw Jesus lay off His priestly attire and clothe Himself with His most kingly robes. Upon His head were many crowns, a crown within a crown." EW 281

"At the close of the one thousand years, Jesus, with the angels and all the saints, leaves the Holy City. . .

"The saints used their wings and mounted to the top of the wall of the city. Jesus was also with them; His crown looked brilliant and glorious. It was a crown within a crown, seven in number." EW 53,54

6. A name which no man knoweth but He Himself Rev 19:12 Cf Rev 2:17

7. Clothed with a vesture dipped in blood Rev 19:13 Cf Isa 63:1-4

8. The Word of God Rev 19:13; John 1:1; 1 John 5:7

9. Followed by the armies of heaven Rev 19:14 Cf Jude 14,15;
Matt 25:31

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field." EGW Ms 175, 1890

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white. . . (Revelation 19:11-21 quoted)." EGW Ms 172, 1899

"And 'the armies which were in heaven follow Him.' With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms,-- 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.' No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor. . . As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life." GC 641

10. A sharp sword to smite the nations Rev 19:15,21 Cf Heb 4:12; Isa 11:4; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 1:16; Ps 149:2-9
11. To rule the nations with a rod of iron Rev 19:15 Cf Rev 2:26,27; 12:5; Ps 2:7-9; Dan 2:44; 1 Cor 15:24,25
12. Treading the winepress of the wrath of God Rev 19:15 Cf Rev 14:18-20; Isa 63:2-4
13. King of kings and Lord of lords Rev 19:16 Cf Rev 17:14; 1 Tim 6:15; Dan 2:47

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven." 6T 406

"Soon appeared the great white cloud, upon which sat the Son of Man. . . A retinue of holy angels, with bright, glittering crowns upon their heads, escorted Him on His way. . . Upon His vesture and thigh was a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. . . The earth trembled before Him, the heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." EW 286,287

B. The birds and the supper of God Rev 19:17-21 Cf Isa 34:1-11; Rev 17:16

1. The birds called to feast on the slain Rev 19:17,18 Cf Eze 39:17; Matt 24:28
2. The Beast and the kings of the earth make war against Christ Rev 19:19 Cf Rev 16:14,16; 17:13,14; Jer 25:26-33

"We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. . . The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield-- the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed." EGW RH, May 13, 1902

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one. . . Now all have made their decision; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. . . Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. 'The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;' 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.'" GC 656

3. The beast and false prophet cast into the lake of fire
Rev 19:20 Cf 2 Thess 2:8; 1:7,8; Dan 7:11; Rev 16:13; 13:12-14;
GC 672,673

"When the flood of waters was at its height upon the earth, it had the appearance of a boundless lake of water. When God finally purifies the earth, it will appear like a boundless lake of fire."
3 SG 87

"In Noah's day, philosophers declared that it was impossible for the world to be destroyed by water; so now there are men of science who endeavor to show that the world cannot be destroyed by fire. . . But the God of nature, the maker and controller of her laws, can use the works of his hands to serve his own purpose. . .

"'As it was in the days of Noah,' 'even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.' 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up.'" PP 103,104

"He who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder. When He shall come to the earth again, He will shake 'not the earth only, but also heaven.' 'The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage.' 'The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;' 'the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.'" DA 780

4. The remnant slain by the sword Rev 19:21,15

"The inhabitants of earth had suffered the wrath of God in the seven last plagues. They had gnawed their tongues for pain and had cursed God. The false shepherds were signal objects of JEHOVAH'S wrath. Their eyes had consumed away in their holes, and their tongues in their mouths, while they stood upon their feet. After the saints were delivered by the voice of God, the rage of the wicked multitude was turned upon each other. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of the earth to the other." 1 SG 211

"When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. . .

"The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion. . .

"The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed . . .

"Now the angel of death goes forth, represented in Ezekiel's vision by the men with the slaughtering weapons. . .

"In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth. . . 'And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth.'

"At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth,--consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His glory. Christ takes His people to the city of God, and the earth is emptied of its inhabitants." GC 654,656,657

5. The fowls filled with their flesh Rev 19:21,17,18

XVI

THE MILLENNIUM

I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 20

II. THE BEGINNING OF THE THOUSAND YEARS

A. An angel come down from heaven

1. Jesus the Archangel 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 9
2. Jesus the ultimate victor in the conflict with Satan
1 Cor 15:24-28; Matt 12:28,29; Gen 3:15; Isa 14:4,5

"Those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory. . .

"Demons acknowledge the deity of Christ, and tremble before His power. . .

"Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a 'man of sorrows,' to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth. . .

"The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. . .

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one. . .

"At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth,--consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His glory... .

"Now the event takes place, foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the day of atonement. . . Then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord; and in presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel.' . . . And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.

"The revelator foretells the banishment of Satan, and the condition of chaos and desolation to which the earth is to be reduced; and he declares that this condition will exist for a thousand years. After presenting the scenes of the Lord's second coming and the destruction of the wicked, the prophecy continues: 'I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.'" GC 637,638,641,656-658

3. Has the key to the bottomless pit Rev 20:1 Cf Rev 1:18; 9:1

4. A great chain in His hand Rev 20:1 Cf 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6
- B. Satan is bound Rev 20:2
- C. Summary of events to take place at the beginning of the thousand years
1. Battle of the great day of God Almighty Rev 16:14,16; 17:14; 19:11-16
 2. Judgment upon wicked Babylon Rev 16:19; 17:16; 18:21
 3. Second coming of Christ Rev 20:1; 1 Thess 4:15
 4. Resurrection of the righteous dead 1 Thess 4:16; John 5:28,29 6:40; 1 Cor 15:51,52; Eze 37:12-14; Acts 24:15
 5. Translation of the righteous living 1 Thess 4:17; 1 Cor 15:52-54; Matt 24:31; Ps 50:4,5
 6. Destruction of the wicked living 2 Thess 1:7-9; 2:8; Luke 17:26-30; Jer 25:30-33; Rev 6:15-17; Isa 11:4; 13:9; 66:14-16
 7. The earth changed into a desolate wilderness Rev 16:18-21; 2 Pet 3:7,10; Ps 50:3,4; Jer 4:23-27; Isa 13:9-13; 14:17; Eze 38:19-22
 8. Satan bound in the earth Rev 20:2,3

III. THE THOUSAND YEARS

- A. Satan remains bound for a thousand years Rev 20:2
1. The dragon Rev 12:3,9; Isa 27:1
 2. That old serpent Rev 12:9; Gen 3:1,4,13,15; Isa 27:1
 3. The devil Rev 12:9; 1 Pet 5:8
- B. Satan in the bottomless pit Rev 20:3; Cf Gen 1:2; Jer 4:23-27; Jer 4:23-27; Isa 14:4-20; 24:1-6,19-23

"That the expression 'bottomless pit' represents the earth in a state of confusion and darkness, is evident from other scriptures. Concerning the condition of the earth 'in the beginning,' the Bible record says that it 'was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.' Prophecy teaches that it will be brought back, partially at least, to this condition. Looking forward to the great day of God, the prophet Jeremiah declares: 'I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. . . I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down.'" GC 658,659

"The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved

out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted, and were strewn over the land. Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God's law." EW 290

C. Satan not to deceive the nations till the thousand years are finished Rev 20:3

"Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds, to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen. It is in this sense that he is bound: there are none remaining, upon whom he can exercise his power. He is wholly cut off from the work of deception and ruin which for so many centuries has been his sole delight. . .

"For a thousand years, Satan will wander to and fro in the desolate earth, to behold the results of his rebellion against the law of God. During this time his sufferings are intense." GC 659,660

D. The judgment of the wicked Rev 20:4; 1 Cor 4:5

1. Carried on by the righteous Rev 20:4,6; Dan 7:22; 1 Cor 6:2,3

"During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection, the judgment of the wicked takes place. . . At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God. . . In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute-book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out, according to their works; and it is recorded against their names in the book of death." GC 660,661

E. Summary of Conditions during the thousand years

1. The righteous all alive, in heaven Rev 20:4,6; 1 Thess 4:17

2. The wicked all dead, over all the earth Rev 20:5; Jer 25:33

3. The earth desolate Jer 4:23-27

4. Satan confined to the prison-house of this world Rev 20:2,3

5. The judgment of the wicked going on in heaven Rev 20:4;
1 Cor 6:2,3

IV. THE END OF THE THOUSAND YEARS Rev 20:5-15

A. The resurrection of the wicked Rev 20:5 Cf John 5:28,29;
Acts 24:15; Isa 24:22

"At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed, and attended by

a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty, He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. . .

"As the wicked went into their graves, so they come forth, with the same enmity to Christ, and the same spirit of rebellion. . .

"Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, whence, after His resurrection, He ascended, and where angels repeated the promise of His return. . . As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the holy city." GC 662,663

"At the close of the one thousand years, Jesus, with the angels and all the saints, leaves the Holy City, and while He is descending to the earth with them, the wicked dead are raised. . . It is at the close of the one thousand years that Jesus stands upon the Mount of Olives, and the mount parts asunder and becomes a mighty plain. Those who flee at that time are the wicked, who have just been raised. Then the Holy City comes down and settles on the plain." EW 53

B. Satan loosed from his prison Rev 20:7

C. Satan goes out to deceive the nations, Gog and Magog Rev 20:8
Cf Eze 38:2-4

"Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. . . as the wicked dead are raised, and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner. . . With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead, and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city, and regain his throne and his kingdom." GC 663

D. The attack upon the city Rev 20:9 Cf Eze 38:16; 39:2-4;
Zech 12:8,9; 14:3

"At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on. . . Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle. . . By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city, and make ready for the onset." GC 664

E. The coronation of Jesus Rev 20:11 Cf Rev 15:3,4; Phil 2:9-11;
Zech 14:9

"Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. . .

"In the presence of the assembled inhabitants of earth and heaven the final coronation of the Son of God takes place." GC 665,666

F. Sentence of judgment pronounced Rev 20:12,13

"And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government, and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed his people. . .

"As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. . .

"Above the throne is revealed the cross; and like a panoramic view appear the scenes of Adam's temptation and fall, and the successive steps in the great plan of redemption. . .

"Satan, his angels, and his subjects have no power to turn from the picture of their own work. Each actor recalls the part which he performed. . .

"The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God, on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. . .

"It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. . . All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. . .

"As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. . . They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved. . .

"As Satan looks upon his kingdom, the fruit of his toil, he sees only failure and ruin. . . Again and again, in the progress of the great controversy, he has been defeated, and compelled to yield. . .

"He is the object of universal abhorrence.

"Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for heaven . . . And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence. . .

"With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.'" GC 666-671

G. Devoured by fire from heaven Rev 20:9 Cf Eze 28:6-8,16-19;
Isa 9:5; Ps 11:6; 37:9,10,20; 2 Thess 1:7-9

"Notwithstanding that Satan has been constrained to acknowledge God's justice, and to bow to the supremacy of Christ, his character remains unchanged. . . The time has come for a last desperate struggle against the King of heaven. He rushes into the midst of his subjects, and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury, and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into

rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. . . Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception, and with the fury of demons they turn upon them. . .

"Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven." GC 671,672

- H. The lake of fire Rev 20:10,14,15 Cf Isa 34:2,8-10; Mal 4:1;
2 Pet 3:10

"The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. The earth's surface seems one molten mass,--a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men." GC 672,673

- I. According to their works Rev 20:12,13; Rom 2:6

"Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished 'according to their deeds.' The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. His punishment is to be far greater than that of those whom he has deceived. After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch,--Satan the root, his followers the branches. . .

"The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away." GC 673,674

- J. Summary of events to take place at the close of the thousand years

1. Jesus and the saints descend to the earth Zech 14:4
2. Resurrection of the wicked Rev 20:5
3. Descent of the New Jerusalem Rev 21:2,10
4. Satan released from his prison Rev 20:7
5. Satan resumes his efforts to deceive and lead Rev 20:8
6. Satan begins the attack on the holy city Rev 20:9
7. The final coronation of Jesus Rev 20:11; Zech 14:9
8. All the righteous and wicked acclaim Jesus as just Rev 15:3,4;
Phil 2:9-11
9. Sentence pronounced against the wicked Rev 20:12,13

10. The wicked turn against Satan GC 672
11. Destruction of Satan and the wicked Rev 20:9,10,14,15
12. Purification of the earth 2 Pet 3:7,10-13; Isa 34:4

XVII

THE NEW EARTH

- I. LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 21, 22
- II. JOHN SEES A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH Rev 21:1-4
- A. The first passed away Rev 21:1 Cf Rev 20:11; Isa 65:17
- B. No more sea Rev 21:1
- C. The New Jerusalem
1. Comes down from God out of heaven Rev 21:2

"Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, and as his feet touch the mountain, it parts asunder, and becomes a vast plain. Then the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of Heaven."
4SP 477
 2. Prepared as a bride for her husband Rev 21:2 Cf Rev 19:7-9

"The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' . . . Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of days in heaven, 'dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; He will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings, and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to 'sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,' at His table in His kingdom, to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb." GC 426,427

"I saw that while Jesus was in the most holy place He would be married to the New Jerusalem; and after His work should be accomplished in the holiest, He would descend to the earth in kingly power and take to Himself the precious ones who had patiently waited His return." EW 251
- D. The tabernacle of God is with men Rev 21:3 Cf Lev 26:11,12; Ex 25:8; 29:43-46; 1 Ki 6:11-13; 2 Cor 6:16; Ps 76:2; Eze 37:26-28
- E. God shall wipe away all tears Rev 21:4; 7:17; Isa 25:8
- F. No more death Rev 21:4; 20:14; 1 Cor 15:26,54; Isa 25:8
- G. No sorrow, crying, or pain Rev 21:4; Isa 25:8; 35:10; 61:3; 65:18,19
GC 676; EW 288,289; MB 33
- III. JESUS COMPLETES HIS WORK OF SALVATION Rev 21:5-8

A. He that sat upon the throne--Jesus Rev 21:5 Cf Rev 20:11

B. All things made new Rev 21:5 Cf 2 Cor 5:17

C. It is done Rev 21:6

1. Jesus on the cross, "It is finished." John 19:30

2. Close of probation

"It will soon be said in heaven, 'It is done.' 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still.' . . . When this fiat goes forth, every case will have been decided." CT 418

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. . . Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands, and with a loud voice says, 'It is done.' . . Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people, and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up." GC 613,614

3. Seventh vial and the second coming of Jesus Rev 16:17

4. The earth made new Rev 21:6

"The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love." GC 678

D. The Alpha and Omega Rev 21:6; 1:8; 22:13 Cf Isa 41:4; 44:6; 48:12

E. To give to those who thirst of the fountain of the water of life
Rev 21:6; 22:17 Cf John 4:10; 7:37. 6T 51; 8T 211; PP 412,413;
DA 454; 7T 226

"'I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.' This promise is only to those that thirst. None but those who feel their need of the water of life, and seek it at the loss of all things else, will be supplied." GC 540

F. The overcomer to inherit all things Rev 21:7 Cf Rev 2:7,11,17,26;
3:5,12,21

G. All evil to be shut out of His kingdom Rev 21:8,27; 22:15
Cf Rev 22:14; Isa 60:21; 2 Pet 3:13,14; 2T 630; 4T 336

IV. THE NEW JERUSALEM Rev 21:9-22:5

A. The wife of the Lamb Rev 21:9,2; 19:7-9

"The heavenly city is Christ's Bride, not on account of what makes it a city, but on account of the sanctified and glorified ones who inhabit it. Without the saints, whose home and residence it is, it would not be the Lamb's Wife . . . You cannot have a living city without people to inhabit it. . . And whilst this holy Jerusalem is the Bride and Wife of Christ with reference to its holy occupants, it is still those occupants as disposed and arranged in that city. So that the city as a city, as well as its people as a people, even the whole taken together, is embraced in what the angel calls 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife.'" J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse, III, 402,403

- B. The holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God Rev 21:10
Cf 1T 67,68; EW 17,18,291; GC 662,663
- C. Bright with the glory of God Rev 21:11
- D. Twelve gates Rev 21:12,13,21. EW 18,291
- E. Twelve foundations Rev 21:14,19,20
- F. The wall Rev 21:14-18
- G. The street as pure gold Rev 21:21
- H. No temple in the city Rev 21:22. GC 676 Cf EW 19; 1T 68,69
- I. No need of sun or moon Rev 21:23; 22:5; Isa 24:23; 60:19,20

"The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the holy city with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day." GC 676

"All, all who keep the commandments of God, will enter in through the gates into the city and have right to the tree of life and ever be in the presence of the lovely Jesus, whose countenance shines brighter than the sun at noonday." EW 51

"All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a constant tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. . . The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven-fold greater than it is now." 8T 42

- J. The nations to walk in the light of it Rev 21:24
- K. No night there Rev 21:25

"In the city of God 'there shall be no night.' None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close." GC 676

- L. The glory and honour of the nations to be brought into it Rev 21:26
- M. Nothing that defileth to enter in Rev 21:27; 22:14,15; Isa 35:8; 52:1; 60:21. PK 84; AA 76
- N. The river of life Rev 22:1; Ps 46:4; Zech 14:8; Joel 3:18; Eze 47:1; Gen 2:10
- O. The tree of life Rev 22:2; 2:7; Gen 2:9. PP 47; 6T 393; 7T 195; 8T 33,288; 9T 135,136,168; MH 66,122,173,199; EW 17,289; Ed 302
Cf Eze 47:12
- P. No more curse Rev 22:3; Zech 14:11,12; Nah 1:9 Cf Gen 3:14-19; Deut 28:15-68
- Q. The throne of God and of the Lamb in it Rev 22:3 Cf Eze 48:35
- R. God's servants
1. To serve Him Rev 22:3 Ed 307
 2. To see His face Rev 22:4. MH 421; 8T 268
 3. God's name to be in their foreheads Rev 22:4
MH 182; Ed 125; 6T 348
 4. To reign for ever and ever Rev 22:5; Rev 3:21; Dan 7:27; Rom 5:17; 2 Tim 2:12

V. EPILOGUE Rev 22:6-21

- A. The nature of John's message Rev 22:6,7
1. Faithful and true Rev 22:6; 19:9
 2. Prophetic revelation of things shortly to be done Rev 22:6; 1:1
 3. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy
Rev 22:7; 1:3
- B. John and the angel Rev 22:8,9
1. John falls down to worship the angel Rev 22:8 Cf Rev 19:10
 2. The angel a fellowservant of John Rev 22:9; 19:10

"Of Gabriel the Saviour speaks in the Revelation, saying that 'He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John.' And to John the angel declared, 'I am a fellowservant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets.' Wonderful thought--that the angel who stands next in honor to the Son of God is the one chosen to open the purposes of God to sinful men." DA 99

"The countenance of the angel grew radiant with joy and was exceeding glorious, as he showed John the final triumph of the church of God.

As the apostle beheld the final deliverance of the church, he was carried away with the glory of the scene and with deep reverence and awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. The heavenly messenger instantly raised him up and gently reproofed him, saying 'See thou do it not.' . . . The angel then showed John the heavenly city with all its splendor and dazzling glory, and he, enraptured and overwhelmed, and forgetful of the former reproof of the angel, again fell to worship at his feet. Again the gentle reproof was given." EW 230,231

- C. The message of Revelation not to be sealed Rev 22:10 Cf Dan 8:26
1. For the time is at hand Rev 22:10 6T 130
- D. The close of probation Rev 22:11. PP 201; GC 490,491,613; MH 454; EW 48,71,281,282; 1T 484; 2T 190,191,355,401; 4T 387; 5T 380
- E. The return of Jesus Rev 22:12
1. Jesus to return quickly Rev 22:12,7,20
 2. His reward with Him Rev 22:12; Isa 40:10
GC 352,422,490; COL 310
- F. The Alpha and Omega Rev 22:13; 1:8; Isa 41:4; 48:12
- G. Blessed are they that do His commandments Rev 22:14 GC 466
- Some manuscripts read, "Blessed are those who wash their robes"
1. That they may enter into the city Rev 22:14;
PP 207,208; 5T 693; TM 133
 2. For the evil are without Rev 22:15
- H. Jesus sent His angel to testify these things Rev 22:16
6T 58; TM 253; GW 405
1. The root and offspring of David Rev 22:16 Cf Rev 5:5
 2. The bright and morning star Rev 22:16; 2:28; Num 24:17;
2 Pet 1:19
- I. The invitation to come Rev 22:17. 4T 580; 5T 207; 6T 20,86,314; 9T 43; SC 32; COL 325; CT 371; DA 822; AA 110
- J. Not to add or detract from this message Rev 22:18,19 Cf Deut 4:2; Prov 30:5,6; GC 268
- K. Even so, come, Lord Jesus Rev 22:20 Cf 2 Tim 4:8
- L. The apostolic benediction Rev 22:21; Rom 16:20; 2 Thess 3:18

