

Revelation Book Two

Jesus Christ

The Slain Lamb



B. R. Hicks

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by B. R. Hicks

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B. R. HICKS

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PREFACE

The Book of Revelation is a profitable and precious prophecy. Through the years it has been the support of the faith of God's people and the direction of their hope. The beautiful disclosures of God which have come to light through the study of this book, could never have been unearthed by the carnal reasonings of finite human understanding. The deep things of God found in the Book of Revelation are known and revealed by the Spirit of God to those who hunger and thirst for the divine wisdom and understanding of Jesus Christ.

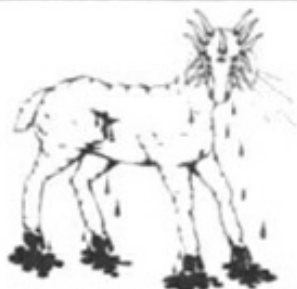
As Jesus Christ is unveiled by John, the apostle, the faculties of one's soul become enlightened with the holy mysteries of God's divine plan for the ages. God's wise design and purpose of the Book of Revelation is to fill the hearts and minds of His children with a deep spiritual understanding of His glorious resurrected Son, Jesus Christ.

The Book of Revelation belongs to the very highest realm of spiritual understanding and knowledge of the entire Word of God -the head realm of the spiritual stature of the Word of God. If we are faithful to feed on the sincere milk of the Word of God throughout the Bible, our spiritual understanding will grow to the extent that we are finally prepared for the strong meat of God's mature Word which is found in the Book of Revelation.

The last book of the New Testament is like a trumpet, calling our attention to things which must shortly come to pass and things which must be hereafter.

There are four great pictures of Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation: (1) as the Resurrected King, (2) as the Slain Lamb, (3) as the Son of Man Sitting on a White Cloud, and (4) as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS Coming on the White Horse.

JESUS CHRIST
THE KING OF KINGS
AND
LORD OF LORDS
ON A WHITE HORSE



JESUS CHRIST
THE SLAIN LAMB



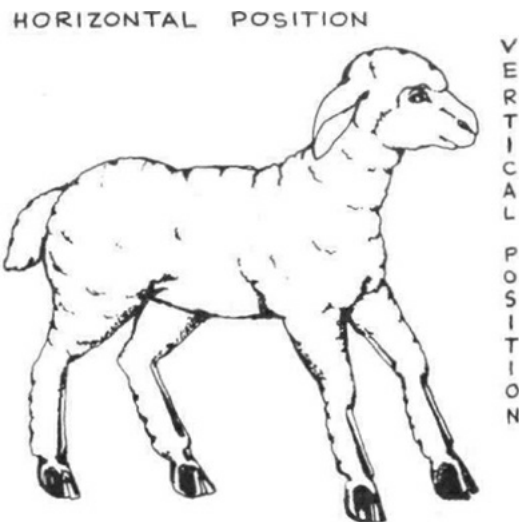
JESUS CHRIST
THE SON OF MAN ON A WHITE CLOUD



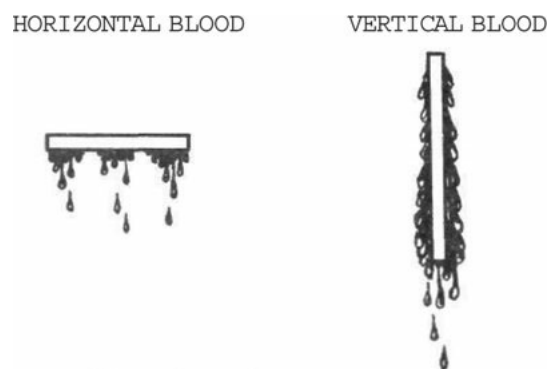
JESUS CHRIST
THE RESURRECTED KING

In Book One, *Jesus Christ the Resurrected King*, we dealt with the first great picture of Jesus Christ, showing the priestly and prophetic ministries ascribed to His Kingship. The second presentation of Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation is that of the Slain LAMB. In the Greek the word used for *LAMB* is a diminutive term expressing endearment. Thus the name LAMB signifies the endeared relationship which the now glorified Jesus Christ shares with the Father and with us as the result of His being sacrificed as the precious Lamb of God on Calvary's Cross. Jesus Christ, as the sacrificial Lamb, innocently and patiently went to death to expiate sin. No wonder He is now the exalted, endeared darling of the universe.

As we study Jesus Christ as a Lamb, we see many comparisons between a natural lamb and Jesus Christ as a spiritual Lamb. A lamb's body, contrary to a man's body, assumes two positions. A four-footed animal maintains a horizontal position with its body, while its four legs stand in a vertical position.



That was why a natural lamb was qualified to fulfill the will of God as a sacrifice. His body goes in the horizontal and the vertical position, the two directions of God's will. This same principle was displayed on Calvary's Cross when the Crucified Lamb was slain for the sins of the world, for His Blood was shed in the horizontal position and in the vertical position.



These two positions make up the Cross.

LAMB'S BLOOD



Because the Blood of the Lamb was shed in these two positions, proper provision was made for our human wills to be cleansed, which enables us to do the will of God through the power of His Blood. In some circumstances of life, it is God's will for us to assume the horizontal position of surrender and obedience. Then how comforting and consoling it is to know that Jesus Christ provided His precious Blood to cleanse our wills from the pride that rebels against our taking a place of humility, surrender, and obedience. Jesus Christ has made a way whereby we can walk in the will of God even though it leads through the way of suffering and surrender.

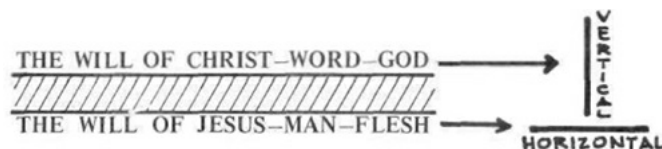
At other times circumstances may call for us to assume the vertical position of authority and commanding power, and this can be God's will too. If this is the situation, we have the comfort and consolation of the efficacious Blood of the Lamb with its power to cleanse our wills from the pride that makes us shrink and rebel against our taking a stand for the right and true. Yes, the vertical Blood of the Lamb gives us power to do the will of God when it is necessary to boldly stand in power and authority for the truth.

When He was slain, the Crucified Lamb ministered in the positions of humility and authority. Likewise, the resurrected, exalted Lamb ministers in the position of humility and the position of authority, which proves that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

There is a deep true sense in which humility and authority are found in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb. The Lamb of God was both human and divine. *Jesus* was the name of the human side of Jesus Christ. It was the man, Jesus, who assumed the position of surrender, humility and obedience, or the horizontal side.

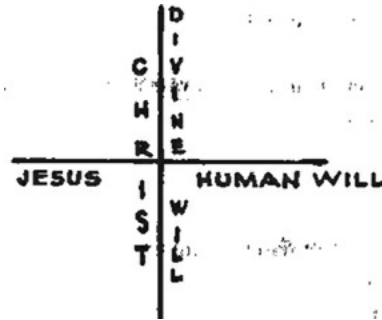
And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: (Luke 1:31,32).

Christ was the name of the divine side of Jesus Christ. It was the Christ who stood in the position of authority and commanding power, or the vertical side. In the tenth chapter of I Corinthians, verse four, we read that *Christ* was the *Rock*. Deuteronomy 32:4 tells us that the *Rock* was a *God of truth*; therefore, the Christ is the Word, the truth. John 1:1 says that the Word was God. These Scriptures confirm that Christ was the divine side, or the Word side, of the Lamb. He is a *God-Lamb*. The man, Jesus, kept Himself in complete subjection and obedience to the Christ, the Word. During the earthly journey of the Lamb, the will of Jesus was always subject to the will of the Christ (the Word, the God that was in Him).



Jesus maintained a oneness of relationship, or marriage union, of His human will with the divine will of the God-Lamb. Even Calvary's Cross did not destroy this union. As Jesus Christ hung on the Cross we see how Jesus' human will took the place of surrender to the authority of Christ's will, keeping the union of the two wills intact. Had Jesus' will ever stood up in the authoritative position, He would never have made it to the Cross. The Cross is

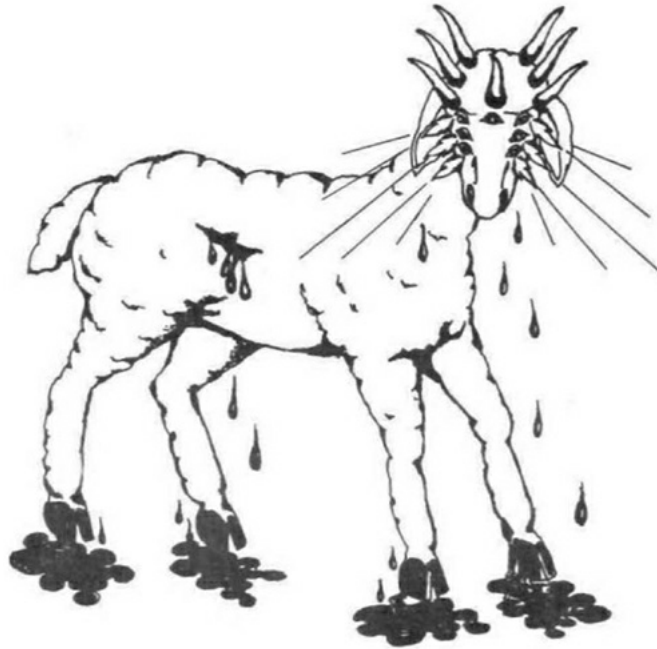
our proof that Jesus never broke His union with the Christ.



Because of the earthly surrender and obedience of Jesus, He now has an eternal union with the Christ. Jesus, the man, has been eternally deified and glorified. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

The Lamb is more than just the man Jesus. He is more than Christ the Word. He is a union of both. He is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. When John looked into the midst of the Throne of God, he saw the Lamb, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This is where our study begins.

-The Author



**JESUS CHRIST
THE SLAIN LAMB**

Revelation Book Two

Jesus Christ

*The
Slain Lamb*

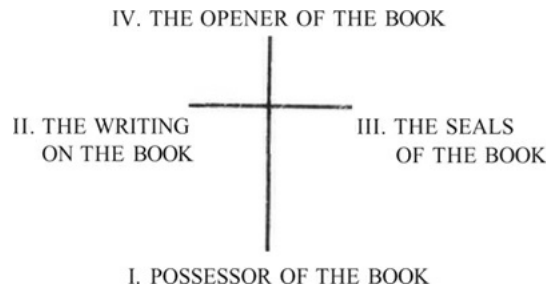
CHAPTER ONE

THE LAMB IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE

In chapter four of Revelation a door was opened into heaven, and John was invited to come up higher in order to view the wheel of governmental power and authority in heaven. The Throne of God was the hub of the wheel; the four and twenty elders composed the rim of the wheel; and the four living creatures made up the spokes of the wheel. John's view of this scene was to prepare him for the revelation of Jesus Christ, the LAMB, in the *midst* of the Throne of God.

The Lamb is the very shaft, or axle, of the whole wheel of God's governmental operation in heaven and in earth. The fifth chapter of Revelation opens with God seated on the Throne, holding a sealed book in His right hand.

The study of the following stature of truth will help us to understand the mysteries concerning the Lamb and the sealed book which God held.



I. THE POSSESSOR OF THE BOOK

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals (Revelation 5:1).

Prior to this, the apostle had seen the great God, the Governor of all things, upon His Throne. Now John is favored with a sight of His governmental plans which are written down in a book that He holds, shut up and seated in His hand. The original draft and plans of the book were laid up in the eternal cabinet of God's mind. But in His eternal mercy, God transcribed His plans into a book in order to share with us the things necessary to enlighten our understanding about His divine plan for the ages. God holds this book in His right hand to establish His authority over the book as He declares the authority of the book.

The presence of the book in His right hand shows His readiness and determination to execute all the content of His counsels and purposes recorded in the book. John's interest is greatly stirred as he is made aware of the writings both within and without. He notices, however, that the book is sealed with seven seals. This tells with what inscrutable secrecy the counsels and plans of God are laid. They are indeed impenetrable by the eye and intellect of human beings. These seven seals also show that God's book of counsels is divided into seven parts. Each part has its own particular seal. When the seal is opened, it uncovers the specific events delegated to it. These seven seals are not loosened simultaneously. They are successively introduced by God until the whole mystery is finished. The message of the book is revealed when the seals are loosened. God is the possessor of the book and will say who is to open the book, and when it is to be opened.

II. THE WRITING ON THE BOOK

The book had the Word of God inscribed within it and on the backside. The writing on the outside was not a complete mystery, for anyone in heaven could read, at least in part, what was written there. The writing on the backside of the book will be fulfilled and revealed during Christ's millennial reign on earth, which is called the time of the Kingdom of Heaven. The writing on the inside will be unfolded in eternity when He rules the universes out of the New City. His universal reign in the Perfect Age, or in eternity, is called the time of the Kingdom of God. God **will** reveal all of the mysteries that are written on the backside and on the inside of this book. The outward writings have to do with the mysteries pertaining to the millennial reign of Christ, whereas the inward writings are the

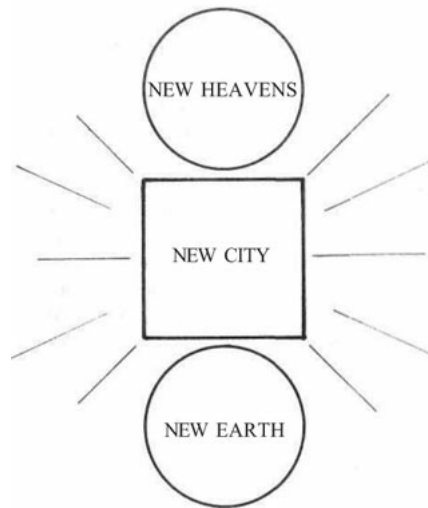
mysteries that will be revealed only to the Bride in the New Jerusalem during the time of the Kingdom of God.

(See drawing on following page)

Mysteries *Without* Revealed in the Kingdom of Heaven
EARTHLY REIGN



Mysteries *Within* Revealed in the Kingdom of God
UNIVERSAL REIGN



III. THE SEALS OF THE BOOK

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and lo loose the seats thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon (Revelation 5:2-4).

John heard a proclamation made concerning this sealed book. The crier was a strong angel who lifted his voice to shout "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" This was a cry of a champion, who challenges all creatures concerning the strength of their wisdom to open the counsels of God. The angel cried with a loud voice so that every creature might hear and receive the challenge. Imagine the anguish which must have gripped John's heart when he realized that there was no one anywhere who was worthy. No one in heaven or earth stood forth to accept the challenge and assume the task. Although they were clothed with beauty, power and glory, and filled with knowledge and wisdom, none of the holy angels dared to undertake the task. None of the wisest and best men of earth were capable enough to undertake the task. The challenge was unaccepted by the fallen angels and by the souls under the earth. No man was worthy—not in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth. It is little wonder, then, that John wept. He stood in the midst of a fantastic scene, such as the eyes of men had never seen before, and now there seemed to be no one with power to open the seals. John's heart broke with yearning to know the Word of God that was written within and without the book. John had seen a vision of Him that sat on the Throne and it made him desirous to know God's mind and will. Those who have seen God in the Spirit are always desirous to see and know more. Those who have looked upon His glory desire also to know His will.

All seven seals have to be broken before this book can be read within and without. These seven seals depict what will take place literally on the earth during and immediately after the tribulation period. As each seal is broken,

a new phase of experience is loosened upon the earth and its inhabitants.

The literal fulfillment of the seven seals is of primary importance. Yet they carry a spiritual application that has personal meaning to each of us in our everyday life. II Timothy 3:16,17 says that all Scripture contains doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness and is profitable for the man of God. Since all Scripture is profitable to the man of God, we are concerned with the personal, spiritual message of this portion of Scripture as well as its literal meaning. This portion of God's Word will discover pictures of truth that will reprove and correct fleshly natures and attitudes in us which are unlike Jesus Christ.

Spiritually speaking, these seven seals portray those things of the flesh that need to be loosened within us before the book, with its mysteries, can be opened to us. These fleshly *seals* are loosened as we go through our individual tribulations. Jesus promised overcoming power, saying; "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Many Christians fail to lay hold of the promised power because they refuse to offer any newly loosened fleshly nature to the Lord for crucifixion. Through the process of self-denial and crucifixion we grow to the head realm, to spiritual maturity in the nature of Jesus Christ. It is here that we experience His ruling and reigning power in our lives.

If we desire to know Him in a oneness of relationship, in spiritual marriage union, then these seals must be broken within us. Only the Lamb, Jesus Christ, can open them and cause us to see.

We shall study the seven seals in detail when we come to chapter six of Revelation. At this point we wish simply to list them. These are the seven seals:

A. White Horse	Self-righteous spirit-carries Antichrist spirit of rebellious defiance against the headship and authority of Christ.
B. Red Horse	Spirit of anger which supports the warring spirit.
C. Black Horse	Spirit of carnal reasoning which bears famine upon its back.
D. Pale Horse	Spirit of jealousy which ushers in Death and Hell.
E. Souls Under Altar	Martyred spirit of self-pity.
F. Earthquake	The trembling, fearful, moveable, changeable spirit of flesh.
G. Silence	Fleshly dumb, tongue-tied spirit that is speechless at the headship of the Lord .

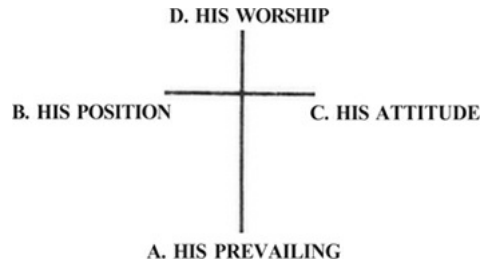
IV. THE OPENER OF THE BOOK

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof (Revelation 5:5).

John was comforted and encouraged with hope that there was One who had prevailed to open the book. One of the elders unveils to John the truth that the Lion out of the tribe of Judah is worthy to open the book. The Lion and the Lamb are one and the same, and we have clearly explained in the introduction to our study who the Lamb is. Both the Lion and the Lamb maintain the same positions—both had a humble will which could lay in the horizontal position of humility and both had a will of authority and commanding power which could stand upright in the vertical position.

The man Jesus had a lion and a lamb nature, and Christ had a lion and a lamb nature. Through the power of the Cross, the Lion-Lamb prevailed to open the book.

Let us consider the stature of the One who was worthy to open the book.



A. HIS PREVAILING

...the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book,...(Revelation 5:5).

The word *prevail* means to subdue, to conquer, to overcome, to prevail, to get the victory. The Lion-Lamb has prevailed in two ways: first as the man Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah with the human will which was filled with a holy hatred for sin, and secondly, as the Christ, the Root of David, with the divine **will** which was filled with a living substance of power and authority.

1. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah

The Lion-Lamb is worthy to open the seals because He has prevailed and overcome. As the Lion-Lamb, the man with holy **hatred** against sin, the man Jesus never yielded to sin. In one respect. He was like Adam the first, who was created pure and innocent, yet was given the power of choice. Likewise JESUS, the man, was pure, holy, and without sin, yet He had a choice to either maintain the marriage relationship between His human will and the divine will of the Christ that was in Him, or to reject that union and place His human will in authority above the divine will of the Christ. Jesus prevailed as the Lion-Lamb, the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, out of humanity, by keeping His human will in the horizontal position of humility, surrender and obedience. Therefore, He is able to also prevail against the pride and rebellion in our human wills and bring us into surrender and obedience to the divine will in our hearts and lives.

A lion speaks of the royal power and strength of God's holy hatred against sin. When the Lamb of God went to the Cross, He had, as it were, the nature of a lion to devour and overcome. The Lamb of God was a mighty lion, devouring and overcoming sin, death and hell, and the grave.

As the Lion-Lamb out of the tribe of Judah, He has prevailed for all mankind. We are without excuse. We can never tell God that our sin is too great, our wicked hearts too evil, our fleshly nature too strong for us to overcome. When Jesus went to the Cross, He prevailed over sin and provided His precious, powerful Blood to wash away proud, deceitful rebellion from our human wills and bring them into a horizontal position of humility, surrender, and obedience that will allow our human wills to be joined or married to His divine will. He sent the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire to burn up the wood, hay, and stubble of the carnal works of our human wills. After the fire of the Holy Ghost burns away our carnal works, our wills can be joined to the works of His holy will. Jesus gave us the Waters of His Name, Death, and Life so that our wills might be like a watered garden, fresh, alive and fruitful in His humility, surrender and obedience. This enables us to go on for God and grow up into spiritual maturity. Jesus died to save us unto the uttermost. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). This means that He is able to bring us to the top of a spiritually mature stature.

2. The Root of David

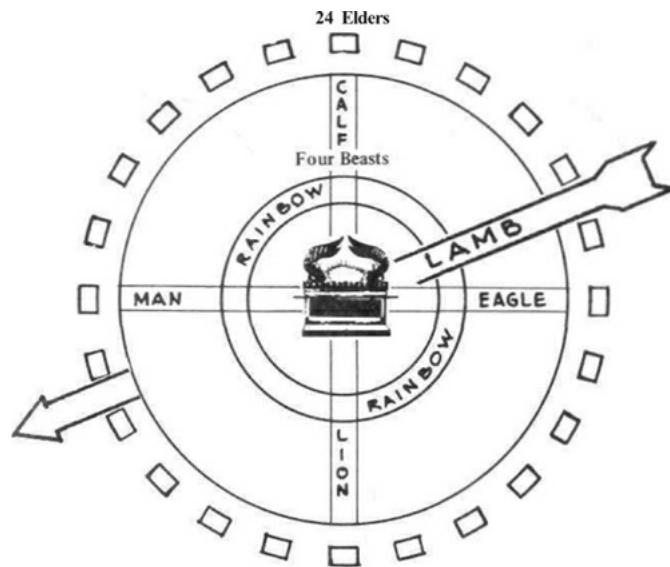
Before King David was ever born, Christ the Word, existed as the Root of David. In other words, He prevailed as the Root-Lamb because He was the Root-Word, which was filled with the living substance of power and authority. This Root-Lamb has prevailed over the proud frailties and weaknesses of the human will and can cause it to stand for the truth in a vertical position of power and authority. Christ was the Root that caused King David to come into existence. As the Root-Word, Christ is the living Word that existed in eternity and feeds all His offsprings or branches with His life. The Lamb prevailed in that strange union of the human, the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, who held the horizontal position, and the divine, the Root-Word incarnate, who held the vertical position. Through

the power of the Cross, the Lamb redeemed the world from its sin and loosened the mysteries of God's secret, sealed book. Likewise in our lives, when God sees the horizontal surrender and humility of Jesus and the vertical power of authority of Christ in our hearts, then He will also open the secrets of His Word to us and feed us with His secret, hidden manna.

B. HIS POSITION

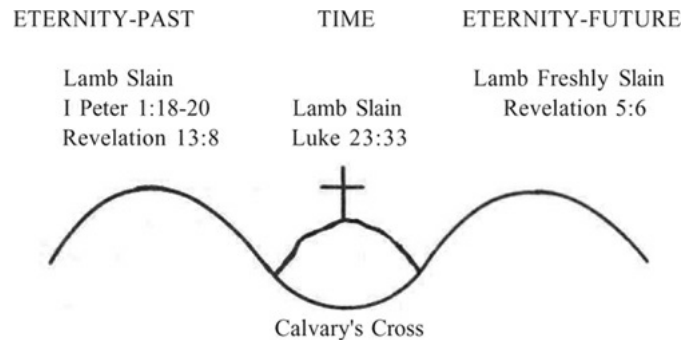
And I beheld, and, lo, in *the midst of the throne* and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth (Revelation 5:6).

The Lamb who opens the book holds a unique position in heaven. Because of His prevailing power over sin, the Lamb holds the centermost position in relation to the Throne of God; He is in the midst of the Throne. He is, as it were, the directing shaft of God's governmental wheel seen in heaven. In the middle of the Throne, which is likened to the hub of the wheel, is the Lamb. The four beasts comprise the spokes of the wheel. The four and twenty elders make up the rim of the wheel.

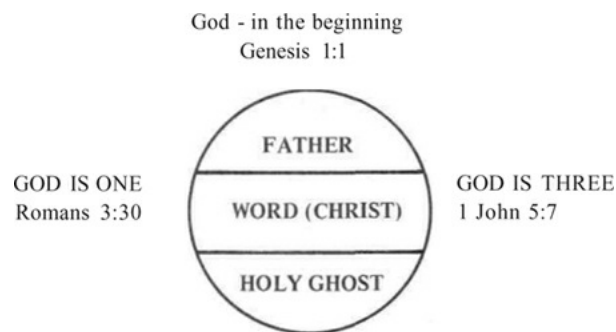


GOD'S GOVERNMENTAL WHEEL IN HEAVEN

The Lamb holds the centermost position in the heavenly wheel, and He does it as a freshly slain Lamb that has horizontal Blood and vertical Blood. In other words, He has established the horizontal and vertical positions of the Blood as living, fresh experiences throughout eternity. We should pause here to consider further this matter of the Lamb being slain. The Lamb was slain in Eternity Past. He was revealed in the period called Time to be slain again. Then He went back to Eternity to be revealed as a freshly slain Lamb.



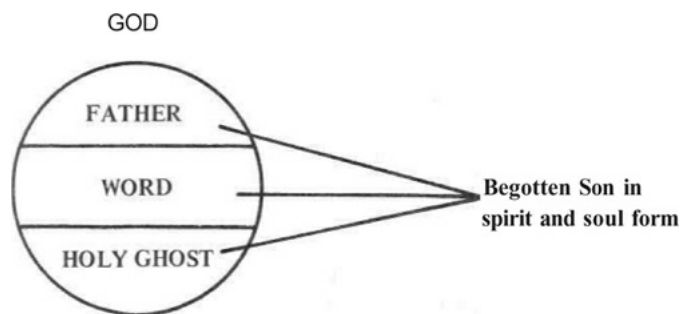
While tracing the history of the Lamb through the Word of God, let us remember that the divine side is the Christ, the Word, and that the human side is Jesus, the Son. The Word of God says that in the beginning was God. From other Scriptures we learn that God is one, and that God is three.



Christ, the divine side of the Lamb, was slain *before* the foundation of the world.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you (I Peter 1:18-20).

This slaying occurred before God brought forth His only begotten Son, Jesus. In other words, God offered His Word (His part of the Lamb, His part of the Blood and the life of the Word) for a sacrifice for man before man was even created. Before time, God ordained the Blood of the Christ as the sacrifice for sin. After holding an ordination service to ordain His Word, the Christ, for sacrifice, God then brought forth His only begotten Son in spirit and soul form.



For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? (Hebrews 1:5).

God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts 13:33).

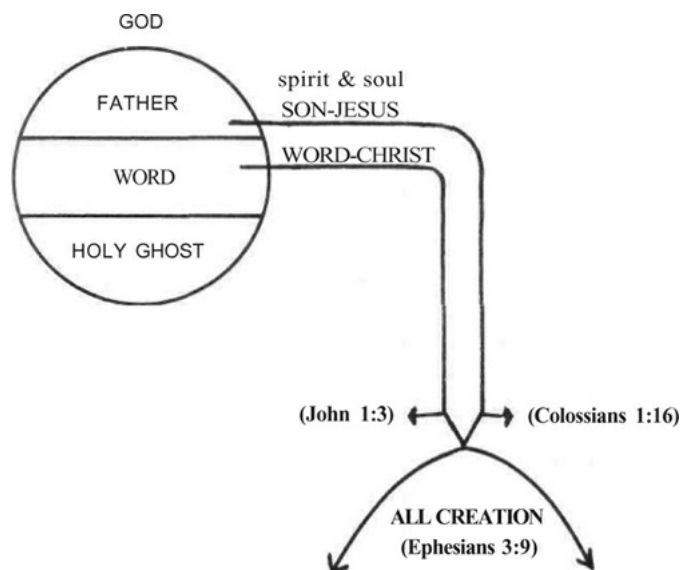
The word *begotten* means the only one of its kind. Jesus is the **only** one of His kind. Jesus was begotten in the image of the invisible God. He was the first born of *every* creature. He was *before* all things.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist (Colossians 1:15-17).

Before anything was created in heaven or in earth, Jesus was brought forth in spirit and soul form. He was brought up, or trained up, by His Father and was daily His Father's delight.

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened (he fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: (Proverbs 8:22-30).

At this point of the Son's existence, He had not received a visible body. Therefore, He shared the body of His Father's glory. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). Jesus abode in spirit and soul form in heaven with His Father until the time of His visible incarnation in a fleshly body. In the meantime, the Son, in joint union with the Word (the Christ), created all things.



All things were made by him [the Word]; and without him was not any thing made that was made (John 1:3).

For by him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: (Colossians **1:16**).

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: (Ephesians 3:9).

In John 1:3, we find that the Word (Christ) made all things. Colossians 1:16 states that the Son created all things. This does not constitute a contradiction. The union of the two Scriptures is seen in Ephesians 3:9: “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus [the Son] Christ [the Word].”

We have already seen that the part of the Lamb known as Christ, the Word, was slain *before* the foundation of the world. The part of the Lamb known as Jesus, the Son, was slain later —*from* the foundation of the world. “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [Antichrist], whose names are not written in the book of life *of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Revelation 13:8). Surely the Father revealed His plan to His Son, because His Son, offered up His will and was slain in His will from the foundation of the world. Thus we see the pre-existence of the union of the Word and the Son in the Lamb back in eternity. Then the Son and the Word came and took on a body of flesh to be offered for a sacrifice in Time. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). This body was sacrificed in Time at Calvary’s Cross: “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left” (Luke 23:33).

In the New Testament, the Gospels record the details of the literal death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross. The Cross speaks of the surrender, the suffering, and the shame that Jesus experienced there when He died vicariously for sinful man. The Cross also speaks of victory, because His death fulfilled and completed the great redemptive plan which was purposed in the Godhead in Eternity Past.

In Future Eternity, the Lamb appears as freshly slain, not in actuality, but as a testimonial slaying. His position in the midst of the Throne hears witness again of the Blood that flowed out of His wounds. The horizontal and the vertical Blood of the freshly slain Lamb establishes the basis of His worthiness to open the sealed book.

Because He always kept His human will in unity with the horizontal and the vertical positions of the divine will of the Christ, the Lamb, the man Jesus has been counted worthy to be made omnipotent and omniscient. He has been deified and made omnipresent—the union is an eternal one. He is the Lion-Lamb.

We see the omnipotent aspect of the Lamb’s nature revealed in His seven horns. In Scripture the number seven is the number of completion. The Lamb’s seven horns speak of His complete defensive and aggressive power. The Lamb has perfect power to execute the will of God on the defensive side and on the aggressive side.

In the natural realm, the Lion is the king of the beasts. He lets nothing stand in his way. He has power to attack, subdue, and kill. Our Lion, the Lamb of God, has the same power in the spiritual realm. He has power to attack, subdue, and devour sin. The Lion is from the tribe of Judah. Since the *name Judah* means praise, we know that the Lion-Lamb has the nature and the power to praise the Lord at all times. Praise is a mighty force to use when the Devil comes against us to hinder us in this spiritual race. If we will begin to praise the Lord in the midst of the battle, the Lion nature of our Lamb will arise with great power—power to defend the spiritual ground that we have already conquered and aggressive power to rush out and lay hold of new territory. The Lamb’s Blood has power to devour sinful attitudes of the flesh and to war against the Devil. It has power to defend and protect our surrenders and consecrations, and it enables us to gain new depths and heights in God. When we plead the Blood of the Lamb, we are actually pleading the blood of the *Lion*. Hallelujah!

The omniscience of the Lamb is seen in His seven eyes. The Word of God clearly shows that the Lamb’s eyes are identical with the seven lamps of fire that are seen in Revelation 4:5, burning before the Throne of God.

And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and *seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God* sent forth into all the earth (Revelation 5:6).

...and there were *seven lamps of fire* burning before the throne, *which are the seven Spirits of God* (Revelation 4:5).

These two Scriptures show that the Lamb possessed the seven eyes of the seven Spirits of God. From this we know, then, that He possessed the Spirit without measure. All perfection of light, and life, and power belongs to Him. He is perfectly capable of teaching and ruling all parts of the earth. The Lamb has complete sight and discernment. He has perfect wisdom to understand all of the will of God. He also possesses the wisdom to perform God's will in the most effectual manner.

When we plead the Blood of the Lamb, we plead His discernment. His eyesight, which enables us to see clearly the things in our lives that are unlike Jesus Christ. How precious is our Lamb. How faithful He is to give us light. We cannot confess something until we see it. This is the reason that many Christians frequently apply the Blood of the Lamb in a general sense instead of pinpointing specific sins or failures. We can run this spiritual race more quickly if we will learn to apply the Blood to the particular fleshly attitude that Jesus reveals when He looks into our hearts. Beloved, the seven eyes of the Lamb are powerful enough to impart light and wisdom to our darkened understanding and to help us to be sincere and honest before the Lord in all the situations and circumstances of life.

C. HIS ATTITUDE

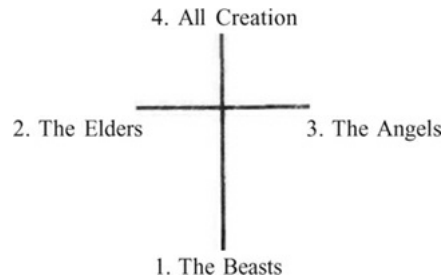
And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne (Revelation 5:7).

The Lamb took the book from the right hand of God the Father, not by violence or deceit, but because He prevailed by maintaining the horizontal and vertical positions of the Blood which acted as a roaring lion against sin. The Lamb prevailed through His merit and worthiness, by the authority and appointment of His Father. Since the Lamb had proved His worthiness by being willing to walk in either the horizontal or in the vertical position to do the will of the Father, God very willingly and justly committed the book of His eternal counsels into the hands of the Lamb. The Lamb gladly took the book from His Father's hand because He delights to reveal and do the will of the Father. How precious it is to know that if we follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, in the horizontal position of humility or in the vertical position of authority, we too will be counted worthy to receive the secret Word from the hand of the Father.

D. HIS WORSHIP

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I be held, and I he and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever (Revelation 5:8-14).

Universal joy filled heaven and earth when the Lamb received the book. All creation applauded and adored Jesus Christ. When the Lamb took the book, all in heaven, all in earth, all under the earth, all in the sea praised the Lamb. Every living creature, regardless of his place of abode, joined together in a great swelling chorus of praise and worship to the Lamb, who alone was worthy. We have a stature of those who were seen worshipping the Lamb at this time.



1. The Beasts

The four beasts and the four and twenty elders are people who have been redeemed “by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” The beasts and the twenty-four elders, symbolic in number, help to comprise the group numbered as “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Revelation 5:11).¹ Both groups are active in leading the worship and praise before the Throne of God.

2. The Elders

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints (Revelation 5:8).

Again and again in the Scriptures, we are commanded to worship the Lord and sing His praises with the harp (Psalm 150:3). A literal harp can be used to praise God, but there is also a spiritual harp—the harp of humility. While very few people can play the literal harp, this need not limit our worship. We all can learn how to worship Him on the harp of humility. Later in the book we shall see that the Bride of Christ is most proficient on the harp of humility. In chapter five, the four beasts and four and twenty elders also possessed the harps of humility. They brought their harps, along with their golden vials, as they offered adoration and worship before the Throne. The harps were the instruments for making melody with their praise.

The golden vials were filled with odors (fragrance) which are the prayers or praises of the saints. The vials were the instruments for making their praise fragrant before the Throne. The incense, offered at the Golden Altar in the Mosaic Tabernacle, is a type of the Name, or Nature, of Jesus. The vials of the beasts and the elders were filled with odors. We know from this that their prayers were filled with the fragrance of the Name of Jesus Christ. Beloved, Jesus Christ can shape our hearts into harps of humility and fill them with the sweet incense of His Name. Then our praise and prayer go up as an acceptable sacrifice before His Throne. The beasts and elders sang a new song to acknowledge the infinite fitness and worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ to execute the counsels and purposes of God by opening the sealed book. They said “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof.” The Lamb was indeed sufficient for the work and deserved the honor. They proclaimed that the sufferings which He had endured for them had purchased this great degree of honor and exaltation. They acknowledged that the horizontal Blood and the vertical Blood of the Cross had purchased this high elevation of position for the Lamb.

LAMB'S BLOOD



“Thou wast slain.” They gave honor to the fruits of His sufferings. The Lamb, Jesus Christ, had redeemed His people from the bondage of sin, guilt, death and Satan. He had redeemed them to God. He had liberated them to serve and worship Him.

The fruits of the Lamb’s sufferings had purchased power to highly exalt His servants and bring them to high honor and preferment. He had made them kings and priests. As kings they learned first to rule over their own spirits and wills. This gave them the power and authority to overcome the world and the old enemy, fallen Lucifer. The Lamb had made them priests and had given them special access to Himself to offer up praise and prayer. They had liberty to offer spiritual sacrifices before His Throne. The fruits of the suffering of the Lamb also purchased for them the privilege of reigning on the new earth.

3. The Angels

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing (Revelation 5:11,12).

The beautiful praise and worship that was started by the beasts and elders soon spread to the angelic realm. This reveals to us the power we have to cause others to praise and pray when we use what the Lamb has placed within our hearts. The company of angels who praised God was innumerable. The angels did not need a saviour, because they had never sinned against their Creator. Yet they rejoiced in the redemption and salvation that they saw visited on sinners. The angels agreed with the redeemed and acknowledged the merits of the slain Lamb. They declared that He was worthy of the highest of all exaltation. He was sufficient for His office, and He had proven faithful in it. Therefore they acknowledged that He was worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing.

4. All Creation

The beasts and elders began the great spiritual concert of adoration which spread to the angels. The melody was soon picked up by all the saved people on the earth and the redeemed in heaven and earth. The anthem swelled until it included the unsaved on earth and under the earth (in hell), and those in the sea (bottomless pit). All creation rang with the high praises to God who sat on the Throne and to the Redeemer, the Lamb.

Remember the loosening of the seals takes place just before the tribulation period. Since *every* creature is said to join in this praise, then we know that God will visit every creature on earth with a witness of praise and joy to the Lamb before the Antichrist comes to take the throne. The same ones who give praise to the Lamb will turn around and receive the Antichrist and give their worship to him. Therefore, the Lamb is justified in pouring out His wrath and judgments in the tribulation period upon these fickle ones. They had said “Blessing, honor, glory and power be unto the *One* sitting on the throne and to the *Lamb forever*.” In a short time, they turn from praising God and the Lamb and give homage and obeisance to the Antichrist.

Finally the universal anthem of praise ends with an *Amen* from the beasts; the elders fall down in prostration, as they did in the beginning, before the Eternal and Everlasting God. We have seen the sealed, secret book passed with great solemnity and ceremony from the hand of God to the hand of the Lamb. This ceremony shows that the secret mysteries of God’s Word rest upon the horizontal and vertical positions of the Lamb.

In summary, we have seen that the Possessor of the book is the Lamb, Jesus Christ. The writings of the book included the mysteries written on the backside and the mysteries written on the inside of the book. The mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, the millennial reign, were written on the backside; whereas the mysteries relating to the Kingdom of God, the eternal, universal reign, were written within the book. Each of the seals of the book must be loosened before the mysteries are revealed. The Opener of the book, the Slain Lamb, did so by the authority of His prevailing power, His position, His attitude in taking the book and His worship, which included the beasts, the elders, the angels, and all creation.

B. R. Hicks, *Revelation Book I, Jesus Christ the Resurrected King*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1973).

CHAPTER TWO

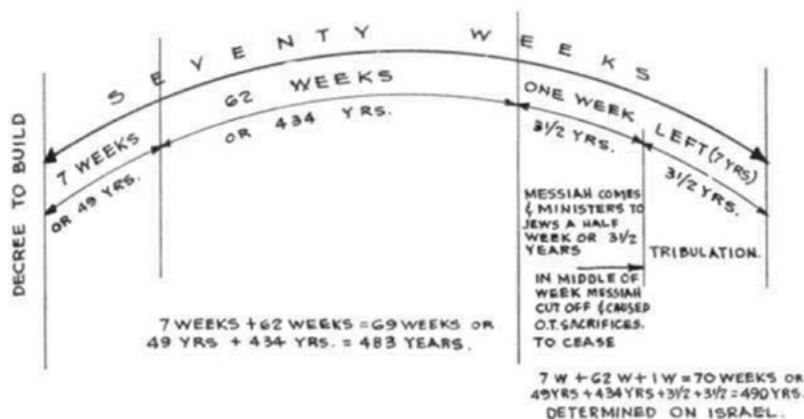
THE LAMB OPENS THE SEALS (Revelation 6:1-17)

The scenes in chapter six are a revelation of the judgments that will transpire on the earth during the three and one half year tribulation period and immediately after the tribulation period.

The length of the tribulation period is a very controversial subject. The confusion stems from misinterpretation of the Scripture in Daniel concerning the seventy weeks determined upon the nation of Israel. Although this portion of the Word of God is studied in detail in chapter nine of this book, we shall pause here to show the Scriptural authority for the three and one half year tribulation period.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times (Daniel 9:24,25).

Now, in the revelation of the vision, the Angel Gabriel begins to divide the seventy weeks. Remember, Daniel was in Babylon reading the prophecy of Jeremiah when this revelation was given unto him. Notice how much experience and stature Daniel had before God used him in this great prophetic way. From the going forth of the commandment to restore Jerusalem and the Temple there, up until the time of Jesus Christ, is a prophetic period of time called "seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." When Messiah the Prince was born (Jesus Christ) this closed the period of seven plus sixty-two, totaling 69 weeks. This leaves us with the 70th prophetic week, and in the middle of this last week, Messiah was cut off and rejected. Think what deliberate effort was put forth by the nation of Israel when she chose to reject Jesus Christ.



And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined (Daniel 9:26).

This verse has nothing to do with the Antichrist whatsoever, but relates to the coming of Titus (the prince) that brought Jerusalem to a complete and utter destruction in the year 70 A.D, This was Jerusalem's judgment for her rejection of Jesus Christ.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (Daniel 9:27).

The sacrifices shall cease in the middle of the week or at the close of the first three and one half years. This was fulfilled when Jesus Christ offered Himself as the Lamb of God upon the Cross. When He died, there was no need for oblations and sacrifices to be offered any longer; no need for the type and shadow when the anti-type had come. Jesus Christ was the only one, according to God's book and in the sight of God, who caused the Old Testament sacrifices to cease.

Even when Antiochus Epiphanes took over Jerusalem, he did not cause the sacrifices to cease, except for a season, although he polluted and desecrated the Temple of God with his unclean sacrifices unto his god Jupiter. The sacrifices did not cease even then, for later the Lord restored them again to the Jews.

When Jesus Christ died upon the Cross, the veil in the Temple was rent in twain. But rejecting her Messiah, Israel repaired the veil and continued to bring their sacrificial animals with their blood into the Temple. What an abomination in the sight of God! They rejected God's Lamb. This was a greater offense than that of Antiochus Epiphanes. If God judged Antiochus Epiphanes for treading under foot the blood of animals which God had ordained as types and shadows, how much greater He judged the nation of Israel for treading under foot the precious Blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, and counting it as an unholy thing.

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:11-14),

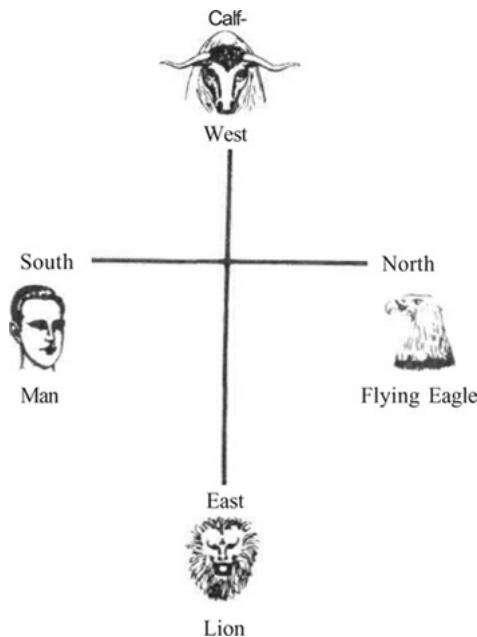
But Israel feasted and played on, little believing that God's judgment would soon be upon them. The judgment came through the person of Titus. Holding seige on Jerusalem, they were soon famine stricken to the point, as history tells us, of eating even their own children in order to survive. But the Holy City was utterly destroyed, and to this day, Israel does not have a Holy City; she does not have a Brazen Altar; she does not have any sacrifices offered before Jehovah God. This being true, it is also impossible then, that the appearance of the Antichrist shall take away the sacrifices, for they do not exist today. Clearly then, it had to be Jesus Christ on the Cross (the fulfillment of the type) that caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel,

So then Jesus ministered for three and one half years, and when He died, the sacrifices ceased, for THE sacrifice had been made. There was a remnant that remained from His ministry in that three and one half year period with whom He made a covenant, namely the 120 in the upper room. Now we are left with the last half of the 70th week of Daniel, and three and one half years in which God will deal in particular with the nation of Israel. In between these three and one half year periods of the last week, or the 70th week, comes the church age, the dispensation of grace in which God deals particularly with the Gentiles. Remember, the 70 weeks of Daniel's prophecy relate to God's special dealings with His chosen people, the Jews.

There is confusion concerning the length of time designated for the tribulation. Shortly after the Antichrist comes on the scene, the seven seals are opened and great tribulation is loosened upon the earth. The first judgment is seen in the form of a white horse; the second appears as a red horse; the third as a black horse; and the fourth as a pale horse. Then the opening of the fifth seal shows the martyred souls under the altar. When the sixth seal opens a great earthquake shakes the earth, causing an even greater shaking in the heavens. The sun turns black, the moon turns to blood, and the stars fall from heaven. These events occur during the rule of the Antichrist on the earth. At the time of the opening of the seventh and last seal complete silence reigns in heaven.

One of the keys that helps unlock the mysteries of the Book of Revelation is the knowledge that the visions alternate between heaven and earth. The opening of the seals takes place *in heaven*. As the Lamb opens the first four

seals of judgment, there is an accompanying ministry performed by one of each of the four beasts in turn when he invites John to “Come and see.” Revelation 4:7 gives the order of the four beasts: first a lion, second a calf, third a man, and fourth a flying eagle.



The beasts and their positions in spiritual stature were consistent with the order established in the Mosaic Tabernacle.²

The Lamb opened the first seal, but it was the beast with the lion nature that came forth to proclaim “Come and See.” The lion nature is found in the foot realm of spiritual stature, and it reveals the holy hatred with which God wars against sin. We can never grow spiritually without a godly hatred, a holy hatred, against the sin of self-righteousness and rebellious defiance that dwells in our carnal hearts.

The opening of the second seal is accompanied by the beast that had the calf nature of self-control. As we study further, we will see why the beast from the head realm was active in revealing the red horse and its rider. Later, we will observe the third seal as it is accompanied by the ministry of the third beast, which bore the likeness of a man. This third beast gained merciful, compassionate wisdom as he stayed under the rays of the Golden Candlestick. The fourth beast was like a flying eagle, whose keen eyesight spoke of discernment, and whose wings revealed his swiftness to obey the command of God. These attributes qualified him to accompany the opening of the fourth seal.

With this explanation of the four beasts’ ministries, let us proceed to study the opening of the first seal.

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see (Revelation 6:1).

When Jesus Christ, the Lamb, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root-Word, opens the first seal, He begins the great work of executing God’s divine judgment and wrath upon the earth. The earthly journey of the Lamb was a dispensation of humility suffering. The Lamb never opened His mouth to defend Himself; He was submissive to the hands of His captors. Never once did He rebel, nor did He cry out in protest over His unjust treatment. But it is different now. The Lamb of God stands in the midst of God’s Throne in humility exaltation. He has been declared the only One worthy to open these judgment seals. The Lamb of God, the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, has Hon claws of judgment and lion teeth of wrath to devour the earth during the tribulation period.

With the breaking of the first seal, John heard the noise of mighty thunder. This noise manifested the Lion nature of the Lamb. The first of the four beasts who were positioned around the Throne had the stature of the Lion nature developed within him. Therefore, he gave a thunderous roar as the Lamb loosened the seal.

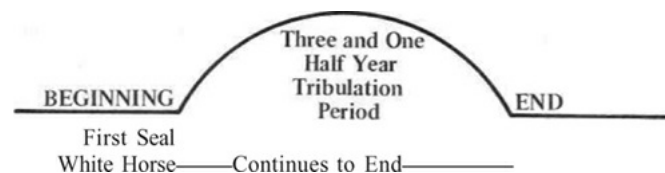
Why did the roar sound like thunder? Thunder is a symbol of union. In the natural realm, lightning comes to separate. When the clouds roll back together, there is a new union, which is always witnessed by the loud thunder

clap. The same principle applies in the spiritual realm. On this occasion, the thunder of union announced the release of Antichrist in the earth. The Antichrist was a man in union with the full stature of fallen Lucifer. The thunderous noise filled all of Heaven, announcing the fact that the first seal was broken, sending forth Antichrist into the earth. The Antichrist is none other than Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Christ. Judas Iscariot is said to be *the son of perdition* (John 17:12). Antichrist is said to be this very person— *the son of perdition*: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, *the son of perdition*,” (II Thessalonians 2:3). The Antichrist is released from the bottomless pit, the sea. At this time he is given power over the inhabitants of the earth. The Antichrist’s power is more than fleshly power and authority, for he is a man in union with fallen Lucifer’s full stature of evil and wickedness. Antichrist is the great imitator. His union with fallen Lucifer allows him to bear the image and likeness of Lucifer just as Jesus Christ came in the image and likeness of His Heavenly Father. Antichrist has seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 13:1) just as the great red Dragon (highest realm of fallen Lucifer) has seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 12:3). The great tribulation has begun.

The hand of the Lamb dispenses these judgments upon the earth. His hand still bears the testimonial wounds of His vicarious death for sinful mankind.. These wounded, bleeding hands of the Lamb have power to minister blessing through the humility suffering, or to minister judgment and wrath through the humility exaltation. Humility has power, but this power is two-sided—blessing and judgment. Humility suffering can become the blessing side of humility. If rightly received, humility suffering will form the glorious jasper dress of the Bride. However, if humility suffering is rejected, then the judgment side, humility exaltation, will bring us into judgment. On this occasion we see the judgment side of humility exaltation demonstrated as the Lamb loosens the seven seals upon the earth.

I. THE FIRST SEAL - Opened at Beginning of Tribulation

And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer (Revelation 6:2).



The rider upon the white horse is the Antichrist, himself. Some teach that it is the gospel going forth. Others believe it is the Lord Jesus Christ. Neither can be true, for this one comes with a bow in his hand. Jesus Christ is always seen with a sharp two-edged sword coming out of his mouth. Further proof that the rider is the Antichrist is seen in the thought that a bow is useless without an arrow. The Devil is the one who uses an arrow. “...Ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Ephesians 6:16). In fact, the word *bow* means a dart, an arrow, a missile. The fiery darts have always characterized the warfare of our spiritual enemy, whereas, Jesus Christ always uses the sharp two-edged sword of His Word, “And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength” (Revelation 1:16).



FIRST SEAL
WHITE HORSE OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS
CARRIES THE
ANTICHRIST SPIRIT OF REBELLIOUS DEFIANCE

The use of one of our keys of knowledge is helpful here. The key "...things which must shortly come to pass..." (Revelation 1:1;4:1), also disannuls the possibility that this could be Christ. When John received this revelation, Jesus Christ had already conquered the world, the flesh and the Devil. He had already been glorified and crowned. He already stood exalted in the midst of the Throne of God. The rider of the white horse is not given a crown until the time of his appearing. Although Antichrist's reign is a short one, a mere three and a half years, he will sit on the throne in the temple of God in Old Jerusalem and demand to be worshipped as God.

The crown that is given to the Antichrist imparts power to his words. All who receive his words must receive *him* as king and must be his loyal and obedient subjects. The crown of the Antichrist is his emblem of victory over the earth during the tribulation period, "...and he went forth conquering, and to conquer," When Antichrist goes forth, he makes war against all his enemies. His enemies are all those who oppose his reign. They will be the Christians who miss the Rapture of the Wedding Party. As soon as they realize that they have been left behind, they take a stand for Jesus Christ and say that this man is the Antichrist. The Antichrist wars until he conquers the minds and souls of the people in general. His conquering power is so strong that he is able to overcome some of the saints. This spirit of conquest was no stranger to John, for he had already recognized the spirit of the Antichrist at work in the world.

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth

the Son hath the Father also (1 John 2:18-23).

Some people say that the Antichrist is a Communist, but this is not possible. Certainly the spirit of Communism is propelled by a spirit of ambition, a desire to conquer the world, but ambition to conquer has been a characteristic of men and nations down through the ages. A dedicated Communist is an atheist-one who says "There is no God." Instead of denying the reality of God, the Antichrist claims to *be* Christ, the Messiah that God promised to Israel. Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, came in His Father's Name, but Israel rejected Him. When the Antichrist comes in his own name, Israel will accept the great imitator as her God.

Spiritually speaking, the antichrist spirit is the spirit of rebellious defiance against the headship of Christ. The antichrist spirit presumptuously usurps the rightful place of Christ. *Antichrist* means against Christ. This spirit asserts its own authority in place of the authority of Jesus Christ. The antichrist spirit manifests itself in many forms, even among Christians. Our old nature, self, (which really is antichrist in nature) wants authority and control. Self habitually refuses to come under subjection and obedience to the Word and the Spirit of God. This seal must be loosened in our flesh. We must see it in its ugliness and full enmity against Christ before we can press on into a oneness of relationship with Jesus Christ.

Notice that the Antichrist comes riding upon a white horse. White speaks of purity and righteousness. The white horse of the Antichrist is not the purity and righteousness of the holy Lamb of God. To the contrary, the Antichrist rides confidently upon the back of the horse of self-righteousness. Nothing about Self is righteous or pure or holy. Self is carnal. It is wicked and depraved. It is at enmity against God. Self-righteousness causes the heart to say "I am worthy of more than what Jesus is giving to me."

Beloved, Jesus Christ, the holy, pure, sinless Lamb of God, humbled Himself and rode into Jerusalem upon the back of a borrowed donkey. Yet the Antichrist proudly promotes himself to ride upon a white horse. Jesus Christ humbled Himself to zealously defend His Father's house against the corruption of the commercially minded money changers. The Antichrist fearlessly sits in the holy Temple and declares himself to be God. He will demand worship from the whole world.

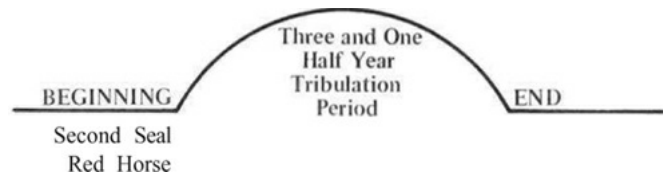
Great is the power of the Antichrist. He will bring many under the authority of his rebellious defiance. He will deceive many with his white horse, his appearance of purity and righteousness. The deceitfulness of the Antichrist is not new. Jesus spoke of false Christs. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24). These false Christs were the forerunners of the Antichrist.

The precious horizontal and vertical Blood of Jesus Christ, the Fire of the Holy Ghost, and the Waters of His Name, Death, and Life will prevail against the Antichrist of rebellious defiance in us. The Lamb of God will conquer the Antichrist's horse of self-righteousness in us if we yield to Him. Our self-righteousness murmurs and complains against the headship of Jesus Christ in our lives. When Jesus Christ, who is the Head over all things, allows suffering and heartaches to come our way, then our antichrist spirit of self-righteousness rises up against the headship of the Lamb. Self-righteousness makes us feel that God is unfair and that other human beings are unjust. This was Job's problem. He made God unrighteous and himself righteous. We need to trade our self-righteousness for the righteousness of the Son of God. Tribulation exposes the wood, hay, and stubble of the works of our self-righteousness. We can recognize our fleshly works through our murmuring, fretting, and complaining against the headship of the Lamb in our lives. When the Lord shows us our fleshly works of self-righteousness, we should be grateful for the opportunity we then have to allow the Fire of the Holy Ghost to burn and consume them.

We are studying a panoramic view of things which transpire on the earth during and immediately following the three and one half year tribulation period. We have seen the ministry of the first living creature (beast) in connection with the loosening of the first seal. The living creature cried "Come and see...a white horse...he that sat on him had a bow and a crown...went forth conquering, and to conquer."

II. THE SECOND SEAL - Opened at Beginning of Tribulation

And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword (Revelation 6:3,4).



The next three seals show the desolate prospects facing those who have refused and abased God's Lamb by receiving the Antichrist, God sends terrible judgments upon those who have rejected His covenant of the Lamb and made light of it.



SECOND SEAL
RED HORSE OF FLESHLY ANGER
CARRIES THE
SPIRIT OF WARFARE

The Lamb opens the second seal, and the second beast invites John to come and see the red horse, the horse of fleshly anger. The rider of the red horse signifies the spirit of war. As soon as the Antichrist makes his appearance, then the second seal is opened and the red horse of fleshly anger with the spirit of warfare upon his back is loosened upon the earth. The warring spirit will take all peace from the earth. The inhabitants of the earth will kill one another. Chaos will reign and suffering will be intense. Those who will not submit to God's Christ, God's Lamb, must expect to be cut asunder by the sword of divine justice. The sword of war is a dreadful judgment. It takes away peace, one of the greatest blessings from the earth.

The Antichrist comes in the full stature of fallen Lucifer, therefore his warfare will be head realm warfare. This is why the calf-like beast is used in connection with the announcement of the red horse. The Antichrist will use the very height of his wickedness and power against the saints and against the truth. The calf-like beast from the head realm of spiritual stature gives the invitation "Come and see." John was about to view the height of the Devil's warfare.

There is a head realm warfare on the side of the Antichrist and on the Lord's side. The world has never seen such a warfare between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness as will be seen during the tribulation period. We fight a spiritual battle now, but there will be both literal and spiritual warfare on the earth. Everyone will be forced to take sides. Each individual will have to choose between accepting the mark of the beast and taking sides with him, or refusing his mark. Some of those who refuse the mark will be martyred; others will flee into hiding

until the tribulation is past. There will be no protracted period for deciding; man will be forced into a quick decision. In this dispensation of grace, men *toy* with the idea of the eternal destiny of their souls. They put off their decisions and live for today. But this will not be so in the tribulation period. The decision will be swift and decisive and eternal.

The spirit of fleshly anger carries the warring spirit upon its back. Anyone who has ever encountered this spirit in other people can testify that it takes great self-control to overcome the blazing heat and raging fire that reaches out from anger to unfold everything to itself. Those who fail to exercise control over their own anger soon find themselves enflamed with the spirit of war. Imagine, then, the tremendous anger and warfare that is exhibited by the red horse and his rider, who is especially anointed with warring power.

We shall take a quick look at the warfare of the Antichrist. The Book of Revelation reveals the manner in which he will carry out this warfare,

A. WAR WITH THE SAINTS IN REVELATION THIRTEEN

Some saints will miss the Rapture and enter into the tribulation period. How else can it be given unto the Antichrist to make war with them and even overcome them (Revelation 13:7)? The Antichrist overcomes the saints in two ways: (1) by destroying their bodies with physical death (these are saved spiritually and some of these will be resurrected at the end of the tribulation), (2) by destroying their spirits and souls with spiritual death. The saints who accept the Antichrist as the Messiah will be overcome by spiritual death. These are destined to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Careless, carnal Christians will not be raptured. Those who are unprepared for His sudden coming will be left behind to go into the tribulation period. Some believers will endure the onslaught of the Antichrist and will overcome his image, his mark, and the number of his name (Revelation 15:2). These tribulation overcomers will be privileged to rule and reign with the Bride and Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, during the millennial reign of one thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:4-6).

Today is the day of salvation! NOW is the time to set our spiritual house in order. His secret coming is at hand. The Rapture of the overcoming saints is the next thing on God's program. His time clock is ready to strike the midnight hour. Once it has struck, it is too late to get ready. The parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25) vividly reveals this truth. The five foolish virgins went to buy oil for their vessels because their lamps had gone out. When they returned, the door to the bridal chamber was shut. The Bridegroom had come, and the marriage party was gone. How fearful and desperate are the words — TOO LATE. Now is the time, beloved, to do business with God and cleanse ourselves daily in His precious Blood. We need to deal daily with our fleshly nature and to fill our souls with His precious Word. This is our safeguard in this day of religious confusion and doctrines of devils and seducing spirits. We need to be prayed up lest the day of the Lord's appearing come upon us unaware. We know not the day nor the hour, but we are the children of light, and as such, we know the season of His coming. Watch and pray for the time is at hand.

B. THE TEN KINGS IN REVELATION SEVENTEEN

These ten kings will be given power for one hour with the Antichrist during the tribulation period. They will be joined together with the Antichrist to battle in the great and terrible war of Armageddon.

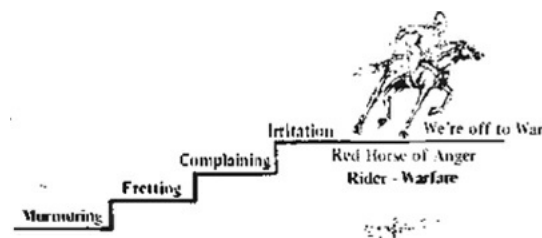
C. THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN JESUS CHRIST AND THE ANTICHRIST IN REVELATION NINETEEN

The Antichrist is not stopped until Jesus Christ, Himself, returns with His Bride in the full stature of the Word of power, and of glory to fight the battle of Armageddon, thus conflict between the Antichrist and Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus Christ is, of course, the mighty victor. The beast, or the Antichrist, with the false prophet and the Dragon are cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20).

Christians are even now being assailed by the Devil, for we are part of the most vicious death struggle of time and eternity. We contend with a most tenacious enemy. Since we are in the last days before the final battle, there are new classes of demons and spirits of the wicked being loosened upon the earth. Each sinner's death loosens another wicked spirit which increases the number of spirits that war against Christians. This is no small warfare. We must not underestimate our enemy. In spite of its many negative aspects, this warfare can still work together for our good.

If we continue faithful in the fight, the battle is ours. After being tested and tried, we will come forth as pure gold. It is much better to fight NOW rather than be party to the anguish and viciousness of the warfare during the tribulation. Fight now and be counted worthy to escape the tribulation!

We can make an even more personal application here. The red horse is a symbol of anger. In fact, it is the same word as red dragon, meaning a flame and a fire. Each of the seals picture a particular fleshly attitude which must be loosened within us before the book (the Word of God) can be opened to us. The first seal, the white horse, represented the spirit of self-righteousness that binds us in so many respects. This *antichrist spirit* tries to boss our lives. It is self-righteousness that supports the antichrist spirit of rebellious defiance against the rightful rule and reign of Jesus Christ in our lives. Once this seal is broken, our eyes are open to see the truth of ourselves and our depraved nature. Then the second seal is opened. Certainly the seal of anger is a great seal in our carnal nature. Frequently do we mount the red horse of anger when circumstances of life fail to go just as we think they should. The second seal operates out of our Pride of Redemption. When our will is crossed, we try out of pride, to redeem ourselves by using the red horse of fleshly anger. Sometimes we call it righteous indignation, disgust, irritation, resentment, or "I just can't stand that person," The following sketch describes the progression of anger.



If we deal with our murmuring, fretting, complaining, and irritation, then we will never progress to where we mount the red horse of warfare. God is faithful to expose our carnal nature. As we press on with Him, He places us in times of tribulation that reveal the beginning of anger. His motive is to break and to loosen the second seal within our fleshly nature. The weapon of anger is just another of *our fleshly cudgels* with which we try to beat down the other person so we can have our own way. Our cudgel of fleshly anger can stir up the other person's anger and cause him to bring up his fleshly cudgel. The culmination of such a situation is a big carnal warfare. The Lord permits us to take this fleshly route until we finally get discouraged with taking our own way. Beloved, there is no discouragement in the will of God. Praise His Name! His redemptive will produces love, joy, peace, and mercy. His revelation will produce sincerity, surrender and obedience, gentleness, and faith. His satisfying will produces goodness, temperance, longsuffering, and humility. These three aspects of the will of God produce such precious and satisfying fruits. What a contrast to the fruits that come out of the selfish and perverted human will.

A ride on the red horse of anger is most contaminating; wounds which sometimes never heal, are left behind. Worse yet, consciousness of the Bridegroom love flees from our temples. Anger causes us to lose the feelings of unity and closeness and blessedness of the sweet presence of Jesus in our hearts. Riding the red horse hurts and destroys. A good fit of anger can destroy spiritual fruit that may have taken months to attain. It is so easy to lose spiritual ground this way.

Anger sometimes has far reaching effects. This principle is seen in the case of Esau and Jacob, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. As the firstborn, Esau was entitled to the kingship of the family, the priesthood of the family, and the double portion of inheritance from his father's blessing. Esau lost all of these blessings when he sold his birthright to Jacob. Later, desiring the lost blessing, Esau became very angry toward his brother Jacob. Instead of mounting his red horse of anger and engaging in a fleshly battle, Jacob listened to the counsel of his mother and fled from Esau. The story of Jacob tells how he sought to please God by accepting His headship in even the daily circumstances of life. God eventually gave Jacob the foundation for the whole nation of Israel. The twelve tribes which formed the nation came out of Jacob's loins. While Jacob was following after God, Esau continued to ride the red horse of anger. Esau's anger was so strong that it even polluted the minds of his children with an anger that has been perpetuated from generation to generation.

Many years passed and God greatly blessed Jacob with wives, children, flocks, and wealth. Esau's anger subsided until finally a peaceable reconciliation was made between the two brothers. But he had poisoned his children with an anger from which they have never recovered unto this present day.

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, (descendants of Esau) and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever (Amos 1:11).

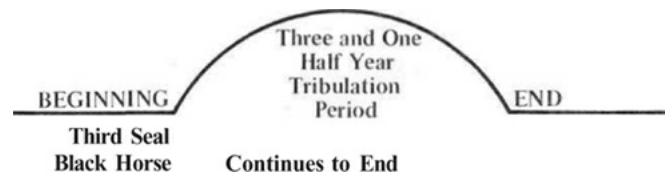
Notice that anger casts off all pity because it blinds one's eyes. We see only *our* side of the situation and fail to see the side of the other person. The Edomites were cowards. They did not have the fortitude to go up and fight Israel face to face, but if another nation went up to fight Israel, then the Edomites tagged along. Anger tears and rends. Lacking in courage to face the problem openly, anger goes behind one's back to cause damage in a subtle way. Devoid of reason and compounded with stubbornness, anger can accomplish only hurt and destruction.

How we need to let the Word of God search us out and expose our spots and wrinkles. The second seal, the red horse, the sea! of angry warfare, is one with which we must deal if we desire to be in the Bride of Christ. Tribulation will expose our fleshly anger. Remember, beloved, the millennial reign of peace follows the tribulation dispensation. If we will allow the Lamb to break this seal of anger within us, then we will personally experience a new rule and reign of peace.

How dreadful it will be to be alive on the earth during the tribulation period. The reign of Antichrist will bring intense suffering and anguish upon all men. The red horse of fleshly anger rides forth to war and to take peace from the earth, "...and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should **kill** one another: and there was given unto **him** a great sword" (Revelation 6:4).

III. THE THIRD SEAL - Opened at Beginning of Tribulation

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine (Revelation 6:5,6).



The Lamb opens the third seal, and the third beast, the one with the merciful, compassionate nature of the man, Jesus Christ, directs John to "Come and see." When this seal is loosened, a black horse appears. Black is the color used to signify carnal reasoning, which has no light in it. Upon the back of carnal reasoning rides the terrible judgment of famine that affects the body, which in turn, affects the soul and spirit. Remember, the first seal loosened self-righteous Antichrist to rule and reign over the earth. The second seal loosened devastating anger and warfare on the world. The third seal loosens the black horse of carnal reasoning to ride throughout the whole world. As it goes forth, its rider of famine spreads slow death among the inhabitants of the earth. This is a just and fair judgment. God promised Israel that if she walked contrary to Him, He would chastise her severely. One of the promised chastisements was famine (Leviticus 26:23-26). Israel has already rejected her true Messiah. Soon she will receive the Antichrist as her Messiah. By walking contrary to God's will, the nation of Israel forces Him to chastise her and the rest of the world with the ravages of famine brought on by carnal reasoning.



THIRD SEAL
BLACK HORSE OF CARNAL REASONING
CARRIES THE
SPIRIT OF FAMINE

The rider on the black horse carries in his hand a pair of balances in which he measures the wheat and the barley. It is a time of famine. Wheat will be so scarce that it will be weighed and measured out carefully. Even barley, the more humble grain, is also weighed. The famine fell most severely upon the bread; the main staff of life was broken. One judgment seldom comes alone. The judgment of war naturally draws after it the judgment of famine. Those who will not humble themselves under one judgment must expect another judgment with even greater suffering. When God contends, He prevails. The famine of bread is indeed a sore and terrible judgment.

Although careless, carnal Christians are not sensible to it, the famine of the bread of God's Word is even a greater and more terrible judgment. This is taking place in the religious world today. Each group or denomination has its own invisible black horse of carnal reasoning with its rider of famine, as it were. Each denomination carries its own pair of scales and weighs out, according to its particular doctrine, what they want the people to eat. In this way they prevent God's people from feeding on the full bread of God's Word from Genesis to Revelation. When one is deprived of the full Word of God, he is prevented from growing up into full stature of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ must loosen this seal of the black horse of carnal reasoning that causes us to reject certain portions of God's Word as unnecessary, as belonging to another age, or another race. We cannot choose what we want to eat spiritually and ignore the rest. God has declared in His Word that ALL SCRIPTURE is profitable (II Timothy 3:16,17). In the Old Testament, a command was given to eat ALL of the lamb, which was a type and shadow of the Lord Jesus Christ. None of it was to remain until the morning (Exodus 12:10). If any remained, it was to be burned with fire. They lost forever the opportunity to eat of the full stature of the lamb. Many people prefer to weigh out the lamb chops, or the leg of the lamb, and turn away in disgust at the kidneys (cleansing organs), the heart, the lungs, the feet, the intestines of the stature of the Lamb. This is the reason for the spiritual famine in the religious world today. Christians are too busy weighing out the Word of God; they are refusing to eat the *whole* Lamb. The Lord knows just what to serve us to nourish our spiritual bodies and meet our particular needs. All too many Christians prefer to weigh out the Word according to their carnal denominational appetite.

The lamb that was not eaten had to be burned by fire when morning came. In this life only do we have an opportunity to eat of the Crucified Christ, the Lamb, in order to gain spiritual growth and stature. When resurrection morning comes, the uneaten part will be burned, as it were, with resurrection fire. Never again will we have an opportunity to eat of His surrender, humility, and obedience which will produce crucifixion in our fleshly man and

promote growth in our spiritual man. The crucified Lamb is served in this life. The humility, surrender and obedience of the crucified One is served here. After the battle is over, there will be no more need for the earthly surrender and obedience of the humble, crucified Lamb. As we go on with God, He will loosen this third seal that wants to weigh out the Word of God according to our carnal mind. Weighing out the Word brings famine. We can know spiritual famine right now. The world will experience literal and spiritual famine in the tribulation period.

We experience spiritual famine because we measure the bread, the oil, and the wine according to our own weights and measurements. Jesus Christ is the bread of life (John 6). Bread is made from both wheat and barley. The wheat speaks of resurrection bread, while the barley is the humble, crucifixion bread. If we want the Living Bread to nourish us completely, we must partake of both aspects—the humble as well as the exalted side of the bread. The oil mentioned in Revelation 6:6 types the Spirit of God. The wine, the resurrected Blood of Jesus Christ, is a picture of the joy that comes through the surrender and obedience that was revealed through His shed Blood.

The weights of man are unjust balances and are an abomination unto the Lord. Carnal reasoning is incapable of giving righteous judgment. For example, some groups have rejected the full bread of the Word. Others measure out the oil by rejecting the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and by relegating the gifts of the Spirit to the Apostolic Church Age. They refuse to allow God's people to have true liberty to worship God in the Spirit in the sanctuary. If we have all Word and no Spirit, we dry up. On the other hand, all Spirit and no Word makes one spiritually shallow. God never separates His Word from His Spirit. They always work hand in hand when God is measuring out spiritual substance. The work of the Devil is to divide the people of God into two camps, more or less. We either emphasize the Word and ignore the Spirit, or we exalt the Spirit and slight the Word of God. When we have equal portions of the Word and the Spirit, then we will grow spiritually.

God measures and weighs out according to the weight of the sanctuary. Jesus Christ is that sanctuary. In other words, Jesus Christ is God's measuring stick, God's pair of scales. The Apostle Paul warns us not to weigh or compare ourselves with ourselves. If we weigh ourselves with a brother who has little spiritual stature, we feel exalted, for we seem to weigh very heavy. But if we compare ourselves with someone who is more spiritual, we tend to feel discouraged and want to despise what God has really done for us. We are to weigh ourselves with Jesus Christ. If we will climb onto one side of the scale, Jesus will climb onto the other side. Then we can see how much we actually weigh spiritually. Right and true are God's measurements.

When King David mounted his black horse of carnal reasoning and used his own scales, he found himself in trouble with God. David let pride prod him into numbering the children of Israel, and God sent a plague among them. This never would have happened if David had numbered them according to the weight of the sanctuary. In Exodus 30:12-16, we read about this matter of numbering. Each man from the age of twenty upward was to be numbered. Each numbered man had to offer a half a shekel of silver as atonement money. The half shekel of silver served as a memorial before the Lord that atonement for salvation had been made.

When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them (Exodus 30:12).

When a half shekel was not laid up as a memorial before the Lord, a terrible plague came upon the people. This same thing happens to us spiritually when we ride on our black horse of carnal reasoning. We can never understand the wheat, the barley, the oil, and the wine of God's Word merely with the carnal reasoning. The intellect cannot appreciate the life, the strength, the anointing, or the joy of spiritual truth. We must partake of it first by faith. After eating it, spiritually speaking, then understanding comes. Carnal reasoning causes us to reject many needful and precious things which the Lord has provided for us. Our rejection brings famine. As Christians we become stunted in our spiritual growth. How much better to eat ALL of the Lamb. Only then will we prosper and flourish, and grow in God.

In the tribulation period, the black horse of carnal reasoning follows the red horse of anger. The pattern is the same in the spiritual realm. When we allow the red horse of anger to declare war in our minds and hearts against people, circumstances, and situations, we immediately find God's Word closed to us. We find the black horse of carnal reasoning riding forth with famine to weigh out the truth. The beginning of this evil procession was the white horse of self-righteousness, which carried the rebelliously defiant Antichrist.

1. White Horse of self-righteousness says "I am worthy of more. I do not deserve this circumstance or situation of life." His rider is ever ready to defy the Living God and usurp His authority and position in our lives.



2. Red Horse of anger carries his rider forth to war and to protect the rule and reign of self-righteousness.

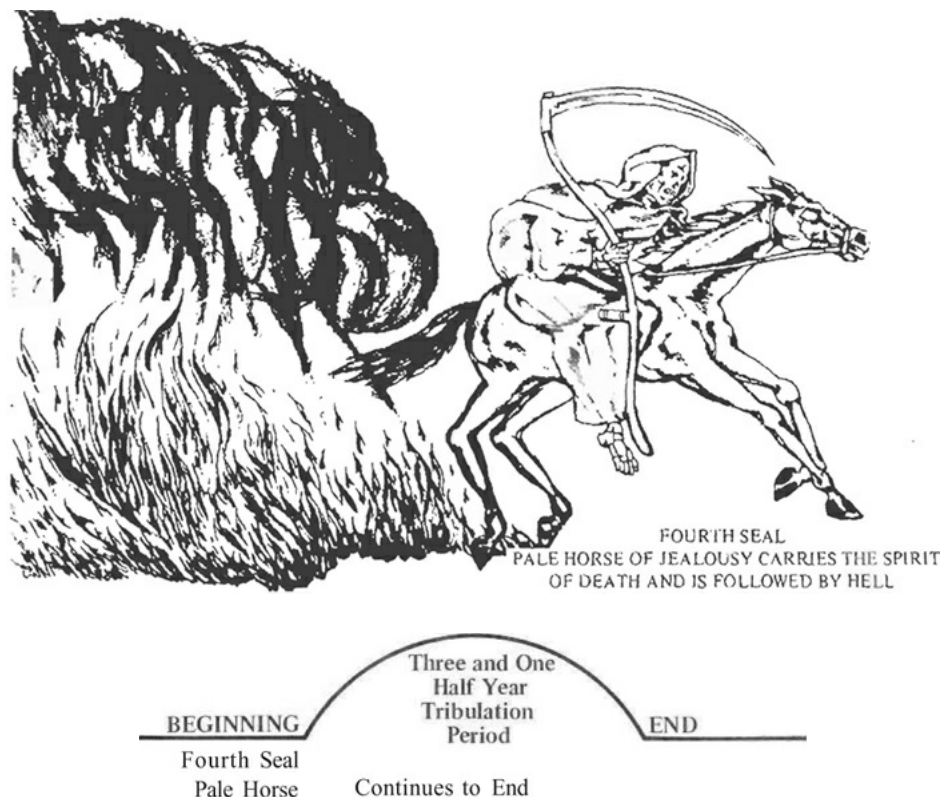


3. Black Horse of carnal reasoning with his rider of famine seeks to starve the spiritual man so that he cannot rise up in defense to overcome self-righteousness and anger. Thanks be unto Jesus Christ, the Lamb, for He is the One who will loosen these invisible seals of the self life to let us see and understand the enemy. Then He will come to help us war until we overcome and enter into His righteous reign of peace.



IV. THE FOURTH SEAL - Opened at Beginning of Tribulation

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth (Revelation 6:7,8).



When the Lamb opens the fourth seal, the fourth living creature (the flying eagle with wings to fly swiftly to obey the Lord), ministers the invitation to “Come and see” the pale horse and his rider. In the Greek, the word *pale* means greenish. God uses the color green to identify fleshly envy and jealousy. The rider on the pale horse was called Death, the king of terrors. Death charged about on horseback and made fresh conquests every hour. The attendant and follower of this king of terror was Hell which is an eternal fire that produces misery for all who die in their sins. In times of war, famine and death such as we have just seen, multitudes go down unprepared into the valley of destruction. Such an awful thought is enough to make all hearts to tremble. Damnation and punishment immediately follow upon the death of an impenitent sinner.

The progression of judgment is clearly seen. In God’s book of counsels, He has prepared a connection between one judgment and another. Because the world rejects the true Christ, He will send the Antichrist. Because the world receives the Antichrist, God will send the wasting calamity of war, which draws after it scarcity and famine. Famine denies men their proper sustenance and forces them to take that which is unwholesome. Famine brings on Death. Notice the instruments that Death uses to accomplish this judgment: sword, hunger, death, and even the beasts of the field, which become ravenous because of hunger. Through these four instruments, Death kills a fourth part of the earth’s population. Death takes life, and Hell follows with an open mouth to swallow up the hard impenitent souls that have been assassinated by Death.

How does this pale horse with its rider of Death ride through us personally? Paul gives a vivid description of the poison of death that abides in the human organs of speech in the third chapter of Romans.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness (Romans 3:13,14).

We know this is basically a description of sinners, but many Christians also still have the poison of death inside of them, down in their throats. When the pale horse of jealousy begins to stir, the rider of death comes out of the mouth and speaks words of death, negative words, degrading words, critical words. All these jealous words produce death in the speaker and in the receiver. When we feel a sense of death on us, it is sometimes because we have been talking death. The pale horse of jealousy rides forth, carrying its negative talk, its murmuring and complaining. How can we possibly feel life under such circumstances’?

The human throat is an open sepulchre, always ready to give forth the foul, negative odors of the death that are already in it. Through our unjust judgment, critical prejudice, and malicious deceitful opinions we swallow new victims among the poor and innocent. It is possible to kill and destroy others with our words.

The human lips are like a serpent, lurking, awaiting an opportunity to do mischief, and seeking to devour all who pass its way. When the human lip cannot find its way to publicly and openly vent and avow its cruelty, it finds secret, underhanded ways to use its most venomous and incurable poison, with which they blast the good names of neighbors. Thus their names are marred by the false witness. Yes, the poison of asps, the secret power of death, is under the lips.

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course [the whole wheel] of nature; and it is set on fire of hell...But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison...Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be (James 3:5-10).

Man's most unruly member is his tongue (James 3). The tongue is a pen of a ready writer (Psalm 45:1), ready to give forth its deceitful, proud opinions and ideas, degrading and vilifying the thoughts and ideas of others. The mouth is full of cursings and bitterness; it complains and frets against God because He allows pain and suffering to come our way. The mouth is full of bitterness against others who mistreat us. It takes a perfect man to control that unruly member that is used to speak deceitful, poisonous remarks, cursings and bitterness.

Our unbridled tongues commit tongue murder. We sometimes kill a new convert with our untimely criticisms. We chew on other people's bones (meditating on their fleshly nature) until we are full of death, and when death flows out, all hell can break loose.

Hell follows after Death in the natural and in the spiritual. When we allow jealousy to bring words of death out of our mouths, then, the hell of suffering and misery fills our own hearts and the hearts of those around us. But thanks be to God, it is through our Lord Jesus Christ, that He can loosen this seal of the pale horse of jealousy and show us how it is bringing Death and Hell into our lives. Then as Christian believers, we can call on Jesus Christ, our Conqueror of Death and Hell. He can ride triumphantly through our hearts and lives and deliver us from the death and hell of our carnal self nature.

Spiritually speaking we have this pale horse riding forth in our own lives. But when the fourth seal is loosened by the Lamb, the pale horse of jealousy will ride forth literally to carry Death and Hell throughout the whole world.

V. THE FIFTH SEAL - Opened at Beginning of Tribulation

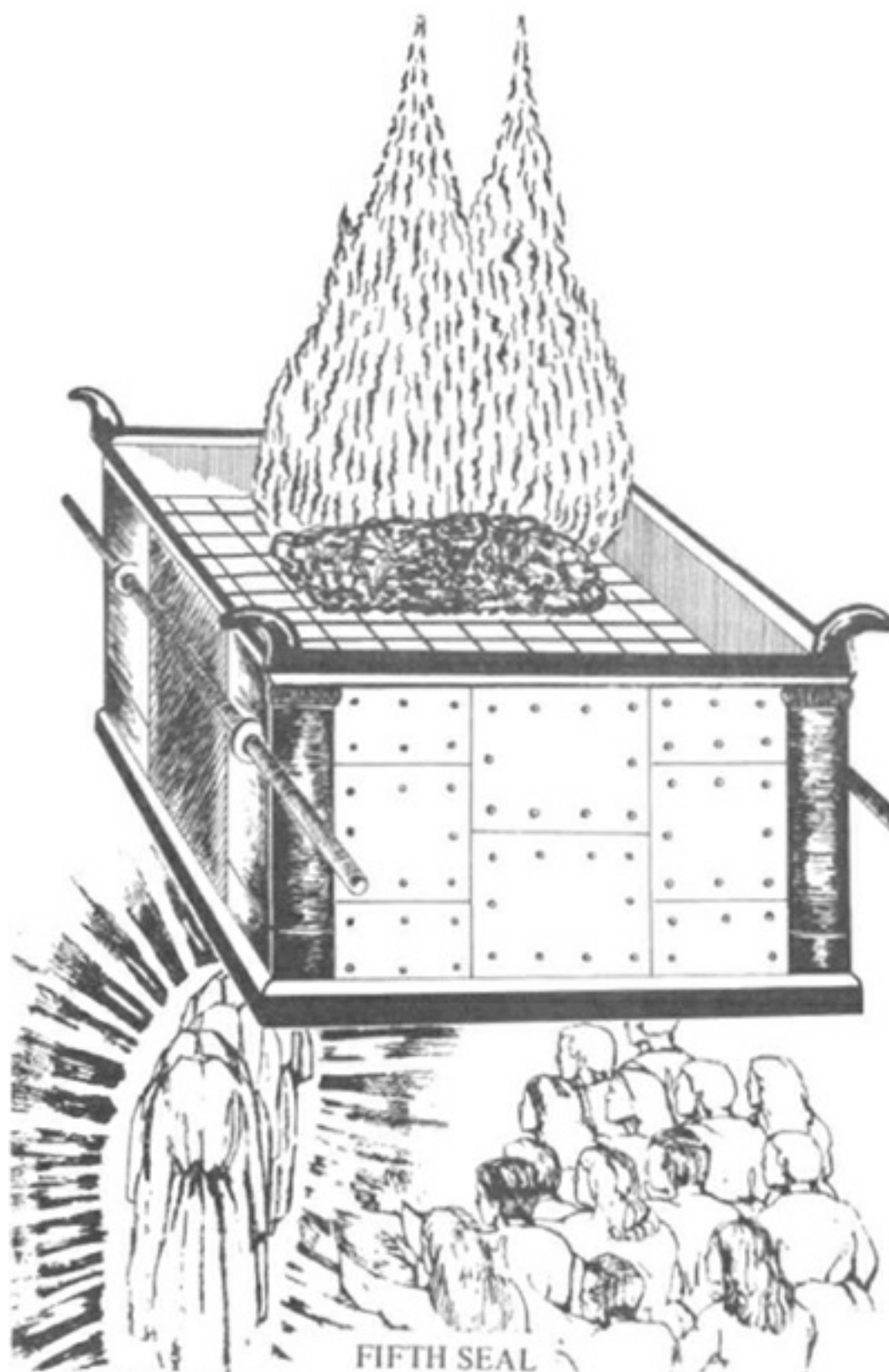
And when lie had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be kilted as they were, should be fulfilled (Revelation 6:9-11).



There was no special invitation given to John to come and see when the fifth seal was opened, because by now John was thoroughly prepared to behold the next prophetic event. The apostle saw a tremendous sight when the fifth

seal was loosened by the Lamb. He saw the souls of the martyrs under the great altar, which is at the feet of Christ, as it were, in heaven. The most that persecutors can do to Christians is to **kill** the body, but their souls and spirits go into the presence of the Lord. God has provided a better place in a better world for those who have been faithful unto death and who have not been allowed a place any longer on earth.

These souls had suffered martyrdom because of the Word of God and their testimony. They were believers who had missed the Rapture and had been left behind to go through the tribulation under the Antichrist. Realizing that the Antichrist was an imposter, these believers began to testify against him, confessing the truth of God's Word. This profession of their faith was steadfast and unwavering. For this cause, they were slain by the Antichrist and his followers.



FIFTH SEAL
MARTYRED SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR IN HEAVEN
BEING PRESENTED WITH THEIR WHITE ROBES

“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, doest thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Then a loud cry contained a curious desire to know why God delayed in taking vengeance against their enemies. They knew that the Lord’s nature is holy and true and that He would mete out justice upon their enemies, but they wanted to know *when*. There was impatience and complaining in their cry. The Lamb was not moving as quickly in vengeance as they thought He should. Their question “how long?” betrays their immature stature. The fleshly nature of man is always crying in the face of difficulties, “Why, Lord?...How long, Lord?...” With spiritual maturity comes the patience to wait upon the Lord. Beloved, the Lord does all things well. He is never too early, nor is He ever late.

The Lamb showed His kindness to these souls by what He gave to them, and by what He said to them. Presenting them garments of glory, He said “...that they should rest yet for a little season...” Although they had not yet experienced the resurrection of their bodies, they were given their white robes of glory with which their bodies will be clothed at their appointed resurrection time. How kind and gracious of the Lamb to encourage these souls by giving them their robes of glory to enjoy in advance of the resurrection of their bodies.

Let us look at this matter of clothing mentioned in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians. Verse one speaks of our earthly house, which is our physical body. When it dies and goes to the grave, we have in the heavens another house with which we shall be clothed.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle [the body we are living in now] were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven [our glory house] (11 Corinthians 5:1,2).

In the heavens there is a house which shines in the degree of glory that we have attained through spiritual growth in this life, as we have followed the Crucified Christ and the Resurrected Christ. When the physical body, the earthly body, stands up again in the resurrection, our house of glory, or garment of glory, will come down from heaven and become one with our physical house. It is indeed a house, a garment, a building, not made with hands. In the Book of Revelation God describes three different garments which are worn by the resurrected saints. He mentions White Robes, White Raiment, and White Linen. Each of these garments refer to the particular degree of glory that accompanies different stages of growth in spiritual stature. At the time of the resurrection of our earthly house, another house will come down to clothe the physical house so that it shall not stand naked before God. Be* cause this outer house of glory fits right down over the physical house, it is aptly described as a garment.

With this thought in mind, it is easy to understand the state of these souls which rested under the altar in heaven. They were in spirit and soul form, and had already been presented with their glory house, their White Robes. However, they had not yet been joined to their resurrected bodies of glory because their earthly, physical bodies still lay in the grave. In other words, they could not wear their White Robes because a garment of glory is tailored, as it were, to fit a resurrected body.

These souls were found at the altar. This is the Great Altar found in the Courtyard of the Heavenly Tabernacle and is like unto the Brazen Altar found in the Courtyard of the Mosaic Tabernacle. Because of the largeness of this one piece, it is always referred to in Scripture as *the altar*. When the Golden Altar, found in the Holy Place, is indicated, the term *Golden Altar* is always used. Here, then, is our first introduction to the White Robed saints. We shall see more concerning them as we progress into the book.

Secondly, the Lamb encouraged the souls under the Altar by what He said to them. They were told to rest for just a little season, quietly satisfied, for it would not be long until the number of their fellow sufferers would be fulfilled. The Word given to the souls under the Altar served to admonish them of their impatience and uneasiness and prepare them to wait until God’s will is fulfilled on earth. God knows those of His children who are appointed as sheep for the slaughter, set apart to be martyred witnesses for Him. As the measure of the iniquity of persecutors is filling up, so is the number of the persecuted and martyred servants of Jesus Christ increasing. When the number of both are filled up, God will take a just and glorious revenge upon their cruel persecutors by visiting them with tribulation and judgment. To the persecuted martyrs, He will grant perfect peace and rest. This group of souls under the Altar are those who were martyred during the tribulation period. When slain for their faith, their bodies went to

the grave, but their spirits and souls went to heaven to rest under the Altar there. They were presented with their White Robes, but they do not wear them until they are resurrected.

When the Antichrist goes riding forth on his white horse, he goes forth to conquer, and conquer he does. Some believers he conquers spiritually and some physically. Although souls under the Heavenly Altar are among those who have missed the Rapture, they were not conquered spiritually. In the tribulation, they will lay down their lives because of their stand for the Word of God and the testimony which they hold, so a small degree of victory is evidenced at last.

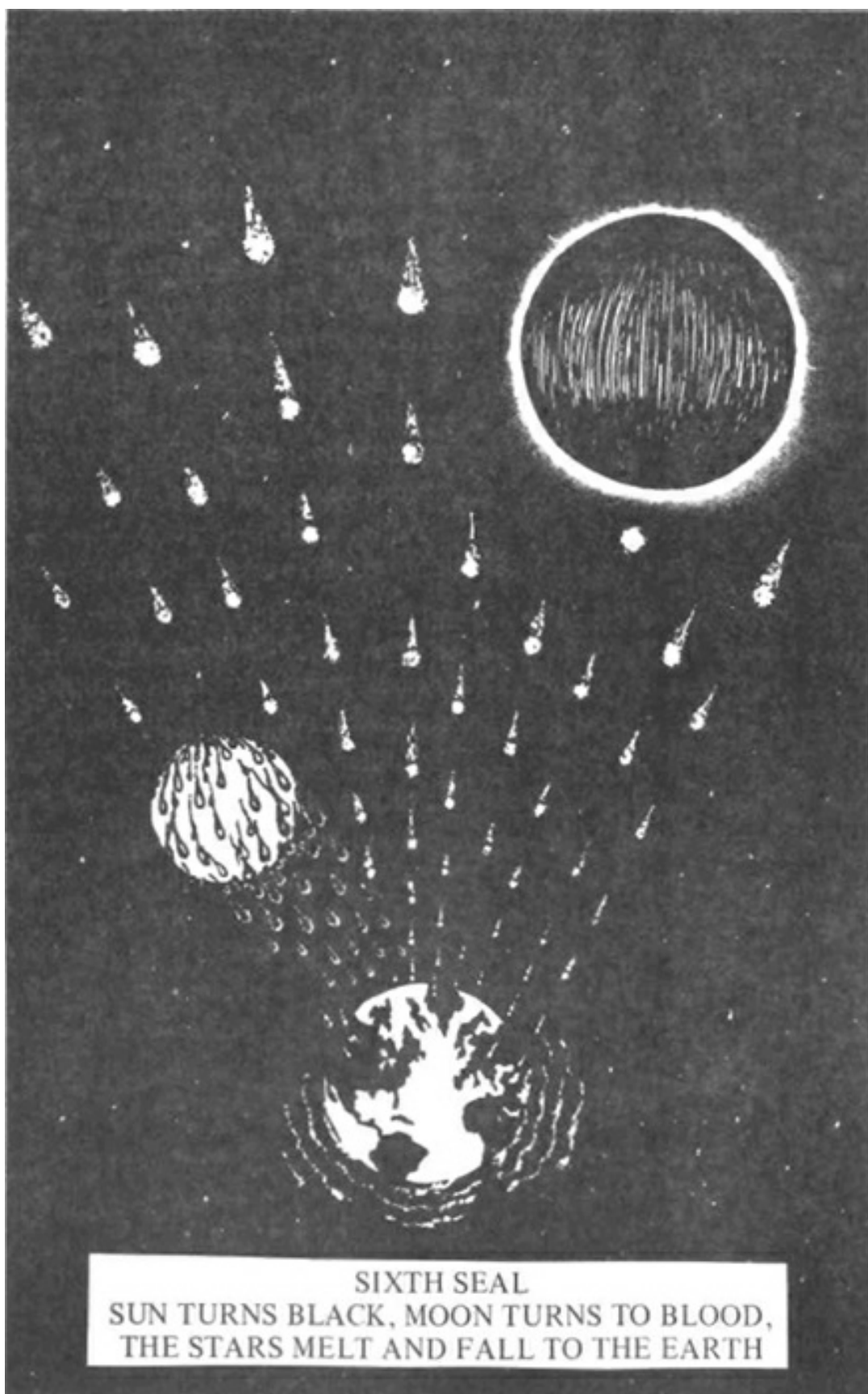
Spiritually speaking, this seal represents that martyr-like attitude that dwells in our carnal nature. This self-pitying spirit clothes itself with the glory of the flesh until it appears as a glorified martyr. How distasteful this spirit is to God and to those round about.

As Christians we often bear burdensome yokes in the service of the Lord. When fleshly self-pity comes up, we begin to feel sorry for ourselves, and then we do just as the souls seen under the altar in heaven. We cry, "Why, Lord? How long, Lord?" Self-pity produces unwilling service which is repugnant. We have all seen this martyr spirit, sometimes in the work of the **Lord** and sometimes in the secular realms of living. This self-pitying attitude causes one to square his sagging, weary shoulders and say, "Bless God, I'm going to do it if it kills me." This may sound like a spiritual determination, but if it is said in a spirit of resentment, we can be sure it is self-pity. When service is permeated with self-pity and resentment, it is distasteful to God and man.

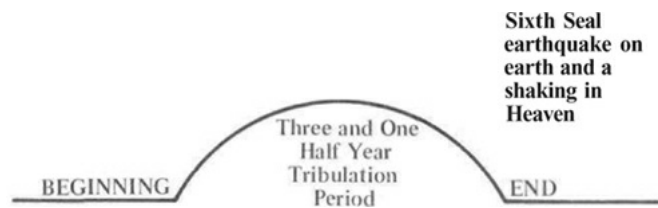
The Bride of Jesus Christ has the ox nature of self-control and faithfulness formed within her heart to bear burdens. She has grown to the head realm of spiritual stature. She is spiritually mature, which means that she has allowed the Lamb to loosen the seal of self-pity and complaining in her self-life. She has given the Lamb permission to rule and reign over these attitudes. Likewise, if our spiritual goal is to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ, we must allow the Lamb of God to loosen the fifth seal within us. It takes the Lamb to open our hearts and show us how we question, complain and feel sorry for ourselves under the many burdens that we carry in this life. Otherwise we **will** be stalled in our upward journey to spiritual maturity and laying hold of the prize of being in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. THE SIXTH SEAL - Opened at End of Tribulation

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places (Revelation 6:12-14),



SIXTH SEAL
SUN TURNS BLACK, MOON TURNS TO BLOOD,
THE STARS MELT AND FALL TO THE EARTH



We have seen the judgments that take place on earth during the tribulation period as each of the five seals are opened. The white horse brought the Antichrist. The red horse brought war. The black horse brought famine. The pale horse brought Death and Hell. The spiritual persecution that was prevalent during the tribulation period is evident. The souls under the Altar were martyred for their testimony. The sixth and seventh seals are not loosened until *after* the tribulation period is over: “*Immediately after the tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:” (Matthew 24:29).

The revelations of God are not always given in chronological order, and this is certainly true in the Book of Revelation. For example, chapter six does not reveal the events that will transpire between the fifth and sixth seal in chronological order. Instead, it leaps forward to describe what will happen after the tribulation when the sixth seal is loosened.

The sixth seal is loosened after the tribulation period of three and one half years is finished, and it precedes the second coming of the Lord who is accompanied by His Bride. A violent upheaval takes place in all of the natural creation at the loosening of the sixth seal. Several occurrences contribute to make this day very great and dreadful. A great earthquake tears the earth asunder. Mountains and islands are shaken from their foundations. The heavens become chaotic as the sun turns black, the moon becomes as blood, and the stars are cast down upon the earth. In heaven, the scene is so distressing that it is as if the heavens are gone, non-existent, rolled up like a scroll. When men on the earth see these things happening, they are filled with fear.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every 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? (Revelation 6:15-17).

Men in terror will be crying out for the mountains and rocks to fall upon them, so that they might be hidden—anything to cover them from the face of the Lamb. The great day of His wrath is come. Who can possibly stand in the face of all this?

Let us consider one of these strange natural phenomena that is mentioned: “the sun became black as sackcloth of hair...” Because sackcloth was an uncomfortable, scratchy material, it was worn as an indication that a person was humbling or abasing himself before the Lord. Twice the sun puts on sackcloth, and both times it is in connection with Christ. The first time the sun wore sackcloth was when Jesus Christ hung upon the Cross. “And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And *the sun was darkened*, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst” (Luke 23:44,45). And here in Revelation 6:12, this same phenomenon is seen in connection with His second coming.

The spiritual principle involved here was mentioned at the time of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus, the King of the Jews, came riding into Jerusalem meek and lowly upon an ass, a foal of an ass. He deserved praise and honor on this occasion, for He was the King of the Jews; He was the Messiah; He was the Lamb. A multitude of His disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, saying, “Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest” (Luke 19:38). Other people were irritated with all this jubilation. They demanded that Jesus rebuke His disciples and silence their acclamation. To this demand, Jesus said, “...I tell you that, *if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*” (Luke 19:40).

This is the principle: If men fail to give God the praise, honor, glory, and humility due to His Name, then God will allow the natural creation to do so. In this case, the stones would have cried out if the multitude had failed to give Him praise and honor as their King. The same principle applies to the two times the sun clothes itself with

sackcloth and darkness.

At the crucifixion, all His disciples forsook Him and fled (Matthew 26:56). Jesus, the sinless, spotless, perfect Lamb of God, hung there alone in ignominy with His body writhing in pain. Although forewarned of His impending death, His disciples did not understand the glory and triumph of His vicarious death that day. This was the greatest moment of human history. It was the culmination of God's eternal plan of the salvation of men. Here was the apex of triumph and victory, and yet not one man in all of the earth lifted up his voice in praise. No man offered even one syllable of thanksgiving to God for His unspeakable gift. Actually, man should have hung his head in shame and humility because it was his sin that called for such a supreme sacrifice on God's part. Because of his sin, man deserved to wear the sackcloth of humility, but he refused to put it on.

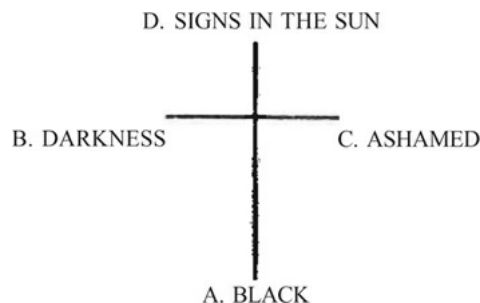
When man failed to do his part, natural creation stepped in. The earth quaked and the rocks rent (Matthew 27:51). The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the sun was darkened (Luke 23:45). The sun had never sinned against his Creator. Jesus was not dying to redeem the sun. He (the sun is referred to as *a he* in Psalm 19:4-6) had no reason to humble himself and put on the sackcloth of humility. Yet when mankind failed to offer up the humility and praise that Jesus was worthy to receive that day, the sun wrapped himself in sackcloth and darkness. The sun offered up humility and praise in the place of sinful man. What great humility was this! Although the sun had never sinned nor transgressed against God, he clothed himself with humility because the Word of God, the Son of God, had been dishonored.

As Christians we have occasions to put on sackcloth in the place of others just as the sun did in man's place. At such times we fellowship some of the deepest realms of the humility of Jesus Christ. When others fail to give God the just worship and praise that He deserves, then we can step in and put on the sackcloth of humility in their stead. As a substitute for the other person, we can give God His praise, honor, gratitude, and humility. We can minister to the Lord even as did the sun.

Daniel practiced vicarious humility on the behalf of Israel. He clothed himself with sackcloth and offered repentance, humility, and supplication in the behalf of his people Israel. Moses did the same thing. Israel should have put on sackcloth and offered repentance because of her frequent disobedience. She failed to do so, however, so Moses put on the sackcloth for them and went before God to pour out repentance, confession, and humiliation.

We, personally, can benefit by putting on this sackcloth when the opportunity presents itself. The greatest benefit of all is the wonderful increase of unity with the precious Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

Let us consider a stature about the sun, for this study will show why the sun humbled himself the second time which was at the close of the tribulation.



A. BLACK

...and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair,...(Revelation 6:12).

The word *black* means destitute of light, to mourn, to be ashy, to put on sackcloth (humility). The first time the sun turned black was at the death of the Lord Jesus Christ when He was made sin for us. When no human being would come to share Jesus' sackcloth and humility as He hung there on the Cross, the sun was humble enough to clothe himself with sackcloth. In light, there is life and glory. Yet the sun covered up his life and his glory so that Jesus Christ might be glorified as He poured out HIS life and glory for a sinful, rebellious world. The same remarkable manifestation of vicarious humility occurs at the second coming of Christ. Immediately after the tribulation, the sun puts on the sackcloth of humility in place of the people that should have been prostrate in repentance before God. Jesus prophesied about this in the Book of Matthew. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and

the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" (Matthew 24:29). The inhabitants of the earth should have humbled themselves, for every warning had been visited upon them. Sufferings were intense upon the earth, and supernatural judgment was poured out from heaven upon them. Yet there was no awakening on man's part, no fear of God, no repentance, no humility before God's face. So, for the second time, the sun clothes himself with the sackcloth of humility, substituting for man.

B. DARKNESS

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine (Isaiah 13:9,10).

In addition to turning black, the sun puts on darkness. The Hebrew word for *darkness* here means misery, woe, affliction, which in turn speaks of invisible darkness. The sun is clothed with literal and visible darkness, but it will also know this invisible darkness. The sun will know the sufferings of misery, woe, and affliction that came as a result of man's sin. This is the same class of darkness that God put on Egypt (Exodus 10:21). The darkness over Egypt could be felt because it was full of misery, woe, and affliction. The Prophet Amos speaks prophetically of the time that the sun would know the darkness of misery, woe, and affliction. "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos 8:9).

C. ASHAMED

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously (Isaiah 24:23).

Look at the suffering of the sun. He is even going to be ashamed. If human beings, created by God, fail to render unto their Creator all that He deserves, then, beloved, God will cause His natural creation — the sun, the moon, the stars, the stones to praise and glorify Him. The word *ashamed* here means to turn pale, to be ashamed, to be delayed in shining. God has poured out all of the trumpet judgments from heaven upon the earth in an effort to awaken the people so that they can see that the Antichrist is not really Christ. He pours out the seven vials to give them other opportunities to repent of their evil and wickedness. Nevertheless, the people remain rebellious and determined to worship the Antichrist. The sun cannot stand to look any longer at such flagrant disobedience. He turns pale with shame and disappointment with God's human creation. It is a pitiful state of affairs when the natural creation has to react with shame over the sin of God's highest creation -man.

One of the vials will be poured out upon the sun. The heat of the sun will be so intense that it will scorch men. Do they repent then? No. They only curse and blaspheme God all the more. Some people refuse to worship or acknowledge God regardless of the pressures or circumstances that God brings upon them. When God casts these stubborn, rebellious ones into the Lake of Fire, things will change. They will experience a torment such as they have never known. The word *torment* in the Greek means to put in a stock, in a vise. In the Lake of Fire, God's vise will squeeze and pressure them until they are forced to confess and acknowledge the truth. Wrapped up in the tormenting flames of God's jealous wrath the wicked will be forced to praise God and render glory to Him by acknowledging who He is. They will bow and give honor to God and to the Lamb.

Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11).

We must all acknowledge that God is worthy of praise and glory. It is much better to willingly praise Him now than to be forced to honor God after being cast into the Lake of Fire.

D. SIGNS IN THE SUN

The word *sign* means a miracle, a wonder. The Jews were always asking for a sign, but Jesus told them that the only sign given unto them would be the sign of Jonas the prophet. In connection with the second coming of Christ, however, there are many signs, many miracles and wonders given.

And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven...And mere shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:11-27).

There will be several signs in the heavens, but we are presently interested in the sun and the four miraculous signs mentioned about it in the Book of Revelation.

1. Black as Sackcloth of Hair

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise (Revelation 8:12).

One third of the day and a third part of the night are going to be darkened. This strange, supernatural darkness will follow around the circle of the sun in its normal orbit, causing the entire world to taste of God's judgment of darkness. God is trying to move the people to repentance. Although the Antichrist claims to be God and sits in the temple of God in Jerusalem, yet he is unable to stop the judgments of the true God that are being released out of heaven upon the earth.

2. Smoke from the Bottomless Pit

And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit (Revelation 9:2).

The second sign that the Book of Revelation mentions about the sun is in relation to its being darkened by the smoke of the bottomless pit. The smoke of God's holy hatred against sin ascends into the heavens like the smoke of a literal furnace. The smoke of God's holy hatred is thick enough to blot out the light of the sun.

3. Sevenfold Brightness

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory (Revelation 16:8,9).

The third miraculous sign in regard to the sun is its brightness. By the sackcloth and by the smoke, the sun has been humiliated. It was created as the major light bearer of the natural heavens, but its light has been darkened and its ministry unfulfilled. But now the scene changes. The sun is restored to shine again. It is exaltation time. The sun will be given glorious brilliance to scorch the earth's inhabitants, who have followed the Antichrist in the tribulation. Likewise, the sun will receive a new power to shine with a sevenfold brightness that will bless the earth with new realms of fruitfulness during the millennial reign. The Prophet Isaiah also spoke of this experience: "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound" (Isaiah 30:26).

4. Angel in the Sun

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great (Revelation 19:17,18).

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matthew 24:27,28).

The fourth sign is the angel standing in the sun. This sign appears before Jesus' second coming. When Jesus Christ comes back again with His Bride, His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives which shall cleave toward the East and the West, toward the South and the North.

And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shalt reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee (Zechariah 14:4,5).

Jesus creates a special valley of protection for the believers who are still living in Jerusalem and surrounding areas. God's people will flee into the valley and be protected there. Just as the land of Goshen was a protection to the children of Israel when God poured out His judgments of flies and hail upon the land of Egypt, so will this valley be the place of protection for God's people during the battle of Armageddon.

The final confrontation between the armies of the Lord, and the armies of the Antichrist takes place at the battle of Armageddon. It is short-lived, however. At this time, the defeated Antichrist and False Prophet will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire. The fact that they are cast alive into the Lake of Fire proves they are in resurrected bodies. The Lake of Fire is the second death and is a place of punishment for the spirit, the soul, and the *resurrected body* of the wicked. The sharp two-edged sword coming out of the mouth of Jesus Christ will cut down the armies of the Antichrist (Revelation 19:20). Their sudden destruction will cause them to think that they have been attacked from outer space. Men's minds are being conditioned today to receive this very thought.

When God prepares the scene for the battle of Armageddon, an angel stands in the sun and calls to all the fowls of heaven to come to the supper of the Great God. Because he is a spiritual being, with a spiritual body, the sun does not affect him. He performs four miraculous feats: first, he speaks to ALL the birds over the entire earth. Secondly, when the angel speaks, the birds clearly understand him. Thirdly, their nature is instantly changed. All types and species of birds become carnivorous—even the little sparrows, robins, cardinals, and bluebirds, for example. Fourthly, they will miraculously gather to eat all the flesh off the bones of the slain in this place of such great carnage. Matthew's account particularly specifies the eagles, which are bone crushing birds. Even the marrow will be eaten from the bones of the wicked dead.

This sign will be seen only by the Bride of Christ, for she alone, will be with the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, on this occasion. The Bride will have a resurrected body like unto the resurrected body of Christ; therefore, she will be able to gaze into the face of the sun and see the angel standing there. Jesus Christ, her Bridegroom, stands the victor over His enemies. The wickedness of those slain is so great that they are unworthy and undeserving of an honorable burial. Their corrupt flesh is left on the ground to be consumed by the fowls of the air. In acknowledging the extremity of their moral baseness, God commands the fowls to devour them so that they are changed into dung. They acted like dung, so dung they will be. God makes a visible demonstration of the depths of their degradation.

This same principle was seen in the death of Jezebel. Because of her great wickedness, she was unworthy of a decent burial. The dogs consumed her flesh. God's day of judgment is coming. On whose side will you stand?

The next dreadful occurrence, when the sixth seal is loosened, will be the moon turning to blood. The events that occur between the loosening of the fifth and sixth seals, when the wild vine is reaped, have a direct bearing upon this phenomenon.

John saw the sixth seal when it was loosened, but he was not shown the chronological order of events that occur

between the fifth and sixth seal. Revelation fourteen tells us that just before the sixth seal is loosened, the Son of man will cut down the wild vine of the earth and cast it into the winepress of God in heaven. Israel is that wild vine. God said He had planted her a *choice* vine, but she degenerated herself until she was a *wild vine* that brought forth wild grapes (Isaiah 5:1-4). God also said Israel was a *noble* vine, but she demoralized herself until she became a strange vine (Jeremiah 2:21).

Through the years of the history of Israel, she constantly degenerated herself by slaying the true servants of God. Eventually, she crucified her Messiah, the Christ. She continued her degeneracy by slaying His followers and witnesses. After killing truth for centuries, Israel accepts the Antichrist as her Messiah. She continues to kill the witnesses of Christ during the tribulation period.

In the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, the fruit of her doings is likened to clusters of grapes, which the Son of man reaps, or cuts down, and casts into the winepress of God's wrath. Israel's grapes, the fruit of her doings, are filled with the blood of the saints from all ages. When this vine is trodden in the winepress of God's wrath, the blood of the saints will flow out as a witness against her. Some of the blood of these saints will be mixed with the wrath of God and stored in God's vials of wrath that will be poured out upon Israel and the world.

In the Word of God, He teaches the law of sowing and reaping. Israel and the world have shed, have sown, as it were, the blood of God's people; therefore, they must reap the blood of God's people, mixed with God's wrath.

Some of this blood will pour down on the moon at the loosening of the sixth seal. The moon gladly humbles herself to receive the blood of God's faithful witnesses through the ages, so that she (the moon is referred to as a *she* in Matthew 24:29) might lift up their blood as a witness before the whole earth. The world is not moved to repentance, however, by this shocking witness; they seek only to run and hide from the Lamb's wrath, which they see mixed with the blood of the saints. God is jealous for the blood of His people. For each drop of their blood that has been shed by this world, He is storing up double portions of His wrath in His winepress to be mixed with the saints' blood. This mixture will be poured upon this world in retribution.

How faithful is God's natural creation to identify itself with the true children, the true servants of God. In the Book of Romans we read that the creation groaneth and travaileth to be identified with the sons of God.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature [creation] itself also shall have liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now (Romans 8:19-22).

The moon identifies herself with the blood of the saints. Although the world recognizes that the wrath of the Lamb is mixed in the blood displayed on the moon, they still hasten to follow the Antichrist into battle against Jesus Christ and His Bride. They are thirsty to shed more blood. They do not understand that when the moon lifted up the witness of the saints' blood, that God was saying "It is enough. You will not again shed the blood of my people." They do not understand that Jesus Christ and His Bride have glorified bodies and never again can their blood be shed.

The moon will indeed become blood at the loosening of the sixth seal. The creation humbles itself in every way to help consummate the wrath of the Lamb upon the earth.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind (Revelation 6:12,13).

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree (Isaiah 34:4).

The stars leave their orbits, their designated places, and fall to the earth when the wrath of the Lamb is poured out. They will be dissolved or melted at this time. Think what a fantastic rain of molten rocks and metal will descend upon the earth. It is no wonder that its inhabitants will plead for the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them in that day. The vacant part of heaven left by the stars will be rolled together like a scroll. These portions of

God's Word are shocking to our finite minds.

The fact that the stars willingly leave their orbits, their places of glory and shining in the heavens, gives us another picture of the great humility of God's natural creation. Every mountain and island moves out of its place in humility and obedience to the Lamb as He pours out His wrath. Yet proud man remains unmoved.

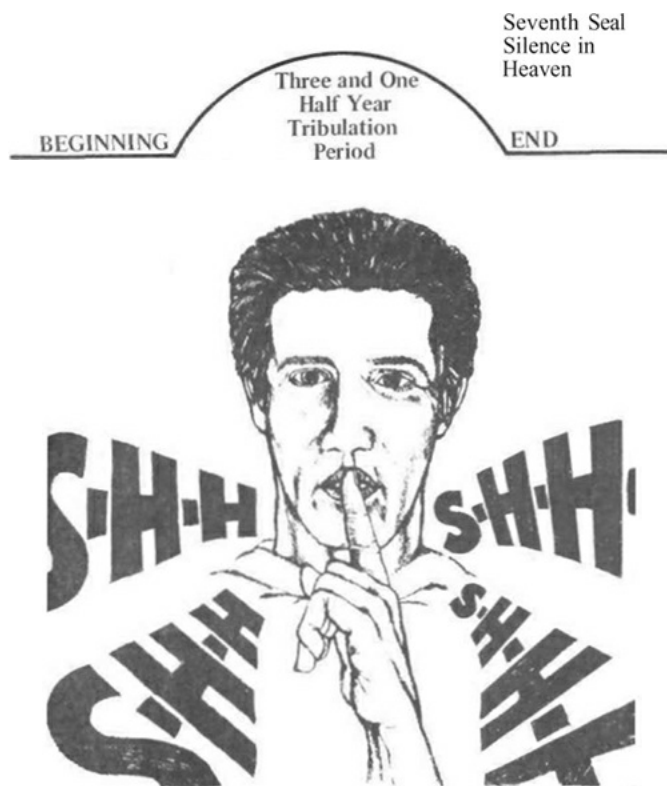
Since all Scripture is profitable to the man of God, we may also draw spiritual lessons and principles for our personal lives from the loosening of the sixth seal.

The natural light of our carnal understanding may be likened to the sun, the moon, and the stars. So much of the time we live, move, walk, and think by the light of our own understanding. The Lord desires that we learn to wrap our understanding in the black sackcloth of the sun's humility and acknowledge humbly before the Lord that we do not know how to go out or come in apart from His wisdom and understanding. The Lord desires that we, by speaking well of others, lift up their life, or the blood, as it were, instead of exalting ourselves. Instead of boasting of our own sacrifice and spiritual attainment, we need to encourage our brothers by speaking well of them. In this way we will be clothed with their blood, or life. Let us lift up the lives of others as a visible demonstration that we are concerned about them. This is certainly scriptural. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:4).

Instead of fighting to shine in the high place, let us be like the stars who are willing to humble themselves and give up their bright light so that the Lamb may be honored and glorified. Instead of being stubborn and immovable and saying, "This is MY place. God has given it to me," let us be like the mountains and islands which humbly move out of their places, that the precious Lamb might be dignified and exalted. If we desire to attain full maturity in Christ, we must allow the Lamb to loose the sixth seal, as it were, and show us where the lights of our own understanding are proudly shining to exalt self; where our mountains and islands are refusing to move to the low place, or to another place that the Lamb might be glorified. Precious Jesus, quicken to our hearts and our wills these truths of humility that we see displayed by your natural creation.

VII. THE SEVENTH SEAL - Opened at End of Tribulation

And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour (Revelation 8:1).



SEVENTH SEAL SILENCE IN HEAVEN

When the seventh seal is opened, there is silence in heaven about the space of thirty minutes. This is the appointed time when the Lord Jesus Christ lines up His armies (His Bride) and waits for the divine command to charge down to the earth.

The battle formation that the Lord Jesus Christ and His Bride assume is that of a cross. This was the formation used by the armies of Israel when they went to battle and when they encamped around the tabernacle in the wilderness. The cross is the pattern that God has established to be used by His armies to war against sin.

Since there is no solar time in heaven, the silence is stated as “about the space of half an hour.” All of heaven stands in a holy hush before the headship of God. His plans and purposes are perfect. Not one other word nor thought could be added by any of the angels or redeemed people in heaven to make them more complete. Finally the Father will give the command, CHARGE! The Lord Jesus Christ, followed by His armies, clothed in the fulness of the Father’s resurrection glory, the glory of the angels, and His own glory, will split the eastern sky. The brightness of their glory shall be so intense that it will melt the elements with fervent heat, and all of the works of man will be consumed. Even man’s ideas, which have given birth to his works, will dissolve within his mind when the intensity of God’s glory sweeps into this earthly realm. The glory will work visibly and invisibly, outwardly and inwardly, to prepare the way for Jesus Christ and His Bride to establish their millennial reign of peace on the earth.

The first five seals loose events that will occur on the *earth*. The fifth seal was seen in heaven, but the persecution and martyrdom took place on the earth. The sixth and seventh seals loose events that will transpire in *heaven* but these events will have an effect on the earth.

What a profound climax occurs at the loosening of the seventh seal. The Lord Jesus Christ is unveiled as KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS, dressed in the glory of His Father, the glory of the angels, and His own glory, as He comes to take over the complete rule and reign of the earth.

The revelation of the loosening of the seven seals not only prophesies future events in the heavens and on earth, but it also gives us a glorious picture of our own lives which should create a blessed expectation of pleasure and delight within us. For we know that if we will be faithful to allow the Lamb to loose the first six seals in our hearts and lives, He will also loose the seventh and last seal, which is a dumb, tongue-tied spirit that is speechless at the headship of the Lord. The self within us is not silent out of holy reverence toward God, but it is quiet because of the stony resistance of our flesh to the will of God. When this seal is broken, we can of a truth rejoice and give thanks for ALL THINGS, because we will gratefully acknowledge His Headship as He rules and reigns on the throne of our hearts. The glorious presence of the KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS will cause our own thoughts, opinions, and ideas to melt before the fervent heat of the glory of His wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.

Oh, Precious Lamb of God, how great Thou art!

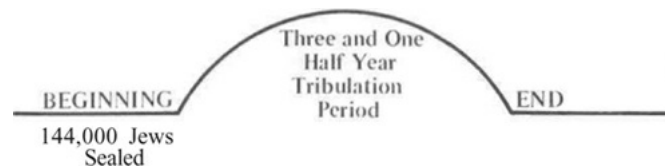
B. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

CHAPTER THREE

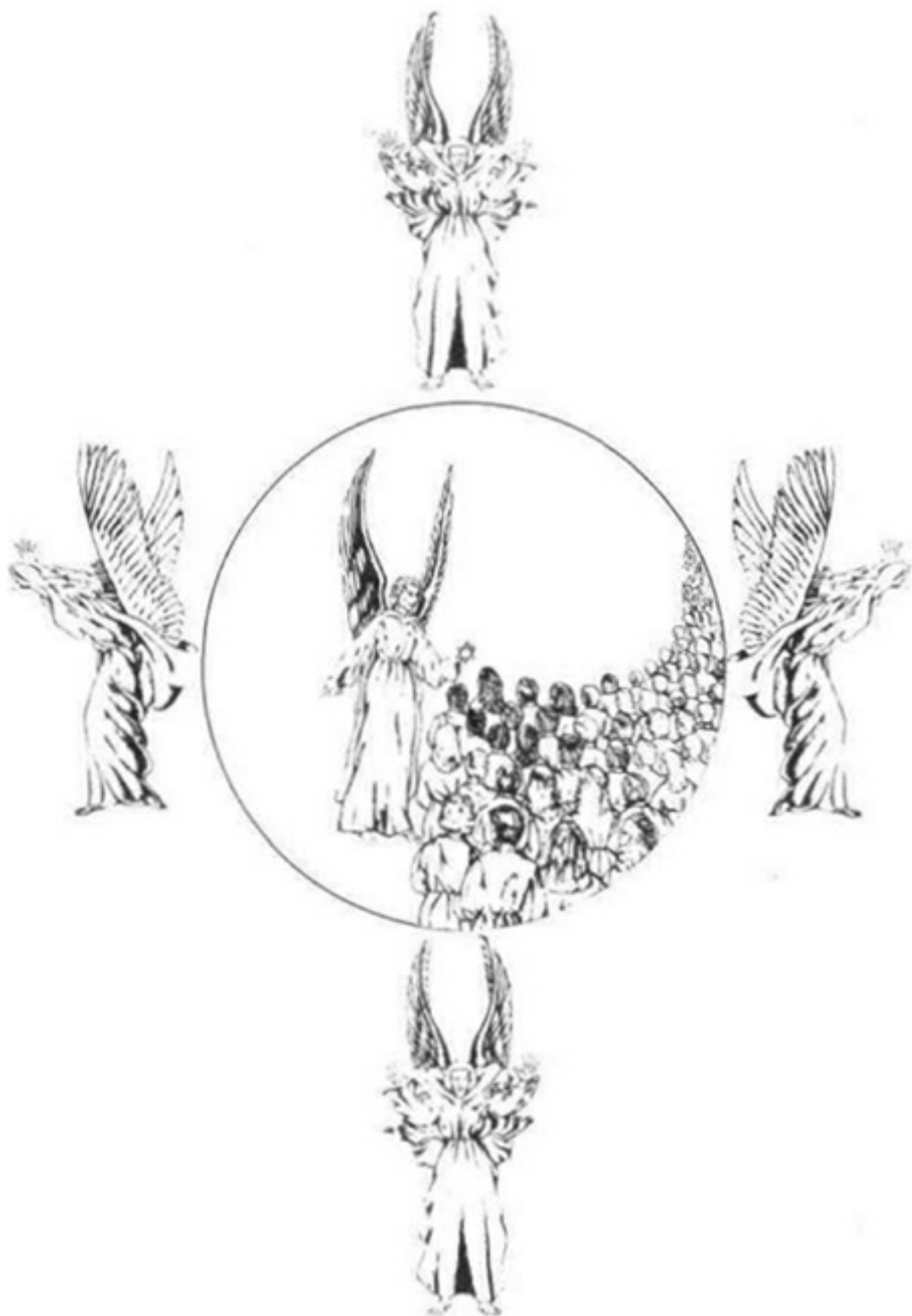
THE HUNDRED AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND SEALED JEWS

In chapter six John had a vision of the judgments that would transpire on earth during the tribulation period. Then God took John back to the beginning of the tribulation period and showed him another vision in order to reveal other things that will transpire on earth and in heaven. Let us look at the vision shown in chapter seven. At the beginning of the Great Tribulation period an angel came down from heaven and sealed the servants of God, the 144,000 Jews, to safeguard their lives during the tribulation. By sealing these Jews, God fulfills His promise to Abraham concerning his seed.

After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree (Revelation 7:1).



This scene takes place on earth. The four angels are seen standing on the four corners of the earth. The four angels are positioned North, East, South, and West, the cardinal points from which the wind blows. The fact that they stood on the four corners of the earth does not mean that God is declaring the earth to be square. He has already informed us that the earth is round (Isaiah 40:22). The Lord is merely establishing here that the four corners are the directions from which the wind blows upon the earth.



ANGEL SEALING THE 144,000 JEWS WHILE FOUR OTHER ANGELS HOLD BACK THE FOUR WINDS

These angels were powerful. They held the winds and restrained them from blowing on the earth, on the sea, or on the trees. God employed these particular angels to administer judgment upon the earth during the tribulation period. But there were to be no hurricanes, whirlwinds or tidal waves turned loose on the earth until God's servants were sealed. Everything was still and quiet in hushed expectancy lest the forces of judgment be stirred before the sealing of God's servants takes place. A fifth angel appeared.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice of the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads (Revelation 7:2,3).

While the four angels held the four winds, another angel ascended from the East, from the rising of the sun, with the seal of God. How precious and important are the minute details of God's Word, for they continually unfold and confirm the spiritual principles whereby God works. Since God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we may expect to see this same set of principles at work at all times. The angel came from the East with the seal, which was a protection and a form of redemption, to keep the remnant of Jews from the Antichrist during the tribulation and to preserve them unto the second coming of Jesus Christ. Then they will see and recognize Jesus Christ as their true Messiah and receive Him for their own. This scene of redemption, as it were, arises from the East, which is the same direction that redemption was found in the Old Testament Tabernacle. The beginning of redemption in Moses' tabernacle began on the East side with the Brazen Altar, where the sacrificial blood was shed. God has ordained that redemption or protection comes from the East, just as each new day is redeemed from the darkness of night by the rising of the sun from the East.

This seal that the angel carried was a signet or stamp which he used to imprint the 144,000 Jews with a mark of ownership which secures and preserves them for God. This was the seal of the Living God, not a dead God; that is why it carried such a vital impact. The Antichrist had his own seal with which he marked his followers. His seal protected their lives from certain death, for those who did not have the seal could not buy nor sell. However, those who took the Antichrist's mark came under judgment from the Living God who had power to condemn them to an eternal death. God's seal protected the 144,000 Jews from being killed by the Antichrist and from God's judgment.

The angel cried with a loud voice and commanded the four angels not to injure the earth, the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of God. Although the angel came alone, he said WE will seal. He acknowledged, then, that God was working with him. The angel sealed the servants in their foreheads, which is the noblest, as well as the most conspicuous part of the human body.

Although Israel is divided into twelve tribes, only eleven of them are sealed with the seal of God; the tribe of Dan is not sealed. From each tribe of eleven tribes, the angel seals 12,000 Jews. To replace the number from the tribe of Dan, he seals a double portion out of the tribe of Joseph. This makes the number of sealed Jews total 144,000.

There are two distinct groups of 144,000 mentioned in the Book of Revelation. The first 144,000 were seen on the earth and the second 144,000 were seen in heaven. The first 144,000 mentioned in chapter seven, refer to those sealed on the earth who are literal Jews. The second 144,000 are seen in chapter fourteen. This scene is in heaven, and in this case the 144,000 are spiritual Jews out of every nation. They belong to the Bride of Christ. We shall study this second group when we come to chapter fourteen. Let us look now at the 144,000 who were sealed on the earth.

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel (Revelation 7:4).

The next four verses enumerate the particular tribes out of which the angel seals 144,000. Let us compare those who were sealed in the Book of Revelation with the tribes that surrounded the Mosaic Tabernacle.³ However, we need to pause briefly to explain how the tribes came to be listed in their particular order. First of all, the tribe of Levi

was set apart from all the other tribes for special work and worship before the Lord. Their place of encampment was to encircle the tabernacle. This left a vacancy in the ranks around the tabernacle. Also the name of Joseph does not appear among the ranks. That is why we find the two sons of Joseph listed; they fill these two vacancies. Manasseh and Ephraim are named because they represent their father's double portion of the inheritance. According to the Law of Inheritance, it was the firstborn son who received a double portion. While Reuben was the firstborn son of Jacob, he forfeited his right to the double portion when he lay with his father's concubine (Genesis 35:22). The birthright, then, went to Joseph, who was the firstborn son of Rachel, Jacob's second wife. Later Jacob claimed Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, for his own and gave them positions of honor and exaltation with his other sons. Thus Ephraim and Manasseh took the place of Joseph and Levi in the twelvefold arrangement of the camps around the tabernacle.

One of the tribes mentioned in the Old Testament arrangement is excluded from the list given in the Book of Revelation. Let us compare the two lists.

TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL	AS LISTED IN REVELATION SEVEN
1. Judah	1. Judah- 12,000
2. Issachar	2. Reuben- 12,000
3. Zebulun	3. Gad- 12,000
4. Reuben	4. Asher- 12,000
5. Simeon	5. Naphtali- 12,000
6. Gad	6. Manasseh- 12,000
7. Ephraim	7. Simeon- 12,000
8. Manasseh	S. Levi- 12,000
9. Benjamin	9. Issachar- 12,000
10. Dan	10. Zebulun- 12,000
11. Asher	11. Joseph- 12,000
12. Naphtali	12. Benjamin- 12,000

In comparing these two groups we see two changes. Joseph is listed in the second list instead of Ephraim. This does not mean that Ephraim was excluded, for he was of the tribe of Joseph. Levi takes the place of Dan, who was excluded entirely. The reason the tribe of Dan is not sealed here is because a spiritual principle is involved.

In the beginning when Israel entered into Canaan's land, eleven of the tribes chose to walk by the light and direction of the Urim and Thummim, God's provided way of confirming His divine mind and will to Israel. They accepted God's governmental headship as it was revealed through the breastplate of the high priest. However, this was not true of the tribe of Dan.

Dan was the first tribe to be guilty of worshipping idols in Canaan's land. God had graciously fulfilled His promise to them by driving out the enemy so that they could possess their lot in Canaan's land. Then He commanded them to be loyal and faithful to Him, who had been so good to them. But the first thing that Dan did after they were in the land was to break God's statutes by setting up a graven image to which they perversely attributed their success. Along with their false god, they set up their own substitute for governmental guidance. They rejected the Urim and Thummim and substituted a teraphim to walk by.

And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war...And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh (Judges 18:17-31).

For this reason the tribe of Dan was not sealed. Dan must be given another opportunity to be tested as to what its ultimate decision will be. It must choose between the Antichrist (idolatry) and the real and true God. As a tribe, Dan is exposed to the violence and darkness of fallen Lucifer during the tribulation, for it is a season of testing, and the

time to make their final choice. There will be a remnant out of the tribe of Dan who will choose for God. We know this because the last chapter of Ezekiel lists the new order of the twelve tribes of Israel as they will be seen in the millennium. Their order during the wilderness journey differs from what it will be in the millennium.

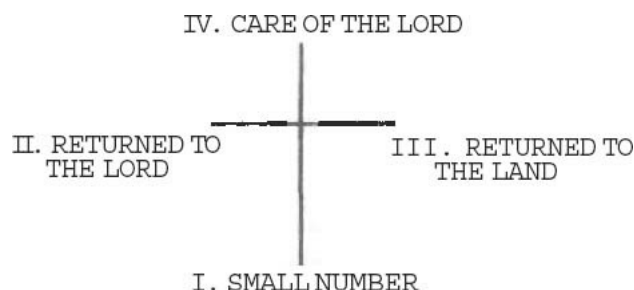
Now these are the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazarenan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east and west, a portion for Dan. And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher (Ezekiel 48:1,2).

And these are the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures. And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: the three gates northward: one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi. And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and the three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan (Ezekiel 48:30-32).

So we see that Dan is represented when the land is divided during the millennial time. Here is another illustration of those who are predestinated and those who are foreordained. The eleven tribes listed in the seventh chapter of Revelation are predestinated ones (sealed, fenced in ones), because of their original choice for God and His government. Predestination has nothing to do with sinners and their eternal destruction. God never predestinated anyone to be lost and go to hell. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and be saved (II Peter 3:9). Predestination in eternity pertained only to God's people and was based solely upon the original choice which some made for God when they existed in seed form in His loins. When Lucifer walked up and down among the stones of fire (spirits and souls), some of the seeds chose for God and against Lucifer. Because of their choice, God puts a fence, as it were, around them when they are born into this world. This invisible fence helps them to make the same choice for God again, in this life, as they did in their spirit and soul form. The seeds who made the wrong choice (against God and for Lucifer) have an opportunity through Christ Jesus *to change their minds* and make the right choice for God in this life. This class of people is known as the foreordained ones. The *word foreordained* simply means that we all were ordained to serve and worship God, but because God created us with a free will choice, some seeds chose Lucifer instead of God. Just because God built a fence to help those who chose for Him find their way to Jesus Christ, does not exclude the foreordained class. The message of the Cross of Jesus Christ is for "Whosoever will," for the predestinated ones and for the foreordained ones.

The tribe of Dan represents the foreordained ones. They were the ones who failed to make the right choice in the beginning and must, therefore, make their second choice freely without the aid of God's fencing. The choice is left completely up to them. The tribe of Dan was not sealed (protected by God's fence). They are given the opportunity to make up their minds once and for all about walking under the government of God's headship (Urim and Thummim), or whether they still prefer their idol worship and the government of their teraphim. We know that Dan does make the right choice, for we see him listed again as one of the twelve tribes of Israel during the millennium.

Let us consider a stature of truth concerning the sealed remnant



I. SMALL NUMBER

Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:9).

On this occasion Israel was left like a small remnant when she was led into the Babylonian captivity. This remnant was a monument of divine mercy and grace in the midst of corruption and desolation. Had it not been for this small remaining portion, Israel would have been wiped off the face of the earth, as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. But God left a remnant, just as He will during the tribulation period.

The word *remnant* means small. Comparatively speaking, 144,000 sealed Jews of the house of Israel is a small remnant, a small seed. But God can do great things from a small beginning. God uses small things to produce great things. This principle is true in the natural realm and in the spiritual realm. We should not allow ourselves to be disheartened because we are in a dispensation of small things. Remember, in God's hand a small thing can grow into a great thing. God will use the remnant of Israel saved out of the tribulation period to fulfill His promise to Abraham that his seed would be as the dust of the earth (Genesis 13:15,16).

The Prophet Isaiah also speaks of the tribulation period when the wrath of God is poured out:

And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger (Isaiah 13:11-13).

These words are twofold in meaning; they relate to Israel's captivity as well as the day of God's fierce anger in the tribulation period. The Lord will make man precious (scarce) in that day. Because of the devastating results of God's wrath, there will be only a remnant of men left. Again and again this thought of Israel becoming a mere remnant is emphasized. Repeatedly, the Lord God pleads with Israel to take heed unto themselves, for God's judgment is sure.

Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets (Jeremiah 6:8,9).

The Prophet Jeremiah projects the same truth. God will have a remnant. How great the slaughter will be in the tribulation period.

Ezekiel, too, prophesies about the remnant of Israel. Because God's promise was not only to Abraham but to his seed, He never allowed the nation of Israel to be completely destroyed. A remnant will always be kept until He brings Israel into a mature nation naturally and spiritually in the millennial reign.

Yet will I leave a remnant [this is a message against the mountains of Israel. God is going to level her to the ground, make her desolate, and breathe the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries. And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations. And they shall know that I am the LORD [this refers to His second coming when Israel is going to really know that He is God], and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them (Ezekiel 6:8-10).

Zephaniah's prophecies further describe the remnant of Israel as afflicted and poor,

A. AFFLICTED

In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid (Zephaniah 3:11-13).

Israel's big sin has always been her spiritual pride in her holy mountain (Zion), in her Holy City (Jerusalem),

and in her holy house (the Temple). For her sin, Israel shall be cut back to a mere remnant, since the sin and sinner shall be purged out from among them in that day. They shall be ashamed as true penitents, not spurious repenters who return to their sin. They shall no longer do the shameful things they have done. The proud haughtiness of Israel which was so offensive to God will be silenced and taken away. After she has suffered God's affliction, she will be a remnant of holy, humble serious people who will have a precious relationship with Him and who will be interested in His will and His kingdom. Israel is suffering affliction when the second coming of the Lord takes place, but out of the remaining seed of Israel a nation will be born in a day. God sees that it is necessary for the remnant seed to be planted in the soil of afflictions and sufferings so that it might spring up as a nation.

B. HUMBLE

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid (Zephaniah 3:12,13).

In addition to being afflicted, the remnant of Israel will also be poor, humbled in all her circumstances. She will be despised by the world, low in her own eyes and humble in her spirit. These are the distinguished remnant of the precious ones that God has reserved for Himself. They are the ones He has chosen to preserve the seed of Abraham, and to bring honor to Abraham's name. Natural Israel, the natural wife of God, as it were, will begin to learn the same basic principles of humility that the spiritual Bride of Jesus Christ has learned.

C. TRUSTING

...and they shall trust in the name of the LORD (Zephaniah 3:12).

After Israel had been severely afflicted, she finally reached a place of trusting in the Lord. When she became poor, when her confidence in herself was completely destroyed, then Israel was able to look to the Lord in perfect trust.

From this small group of people who learn to trust in Him, God will build a nation that will live forever on the New Earth. God does not need a mighty number to accomplish a great work, Gideon's host of warriors was culled to 300 valiant men, men who were not afraid to trust in God's Name; then God used them to overcome the armies of their enemies. God can do more with two or three who trust in His Nature, His Name, than with a whole nation of unbelievers.

That is why God can use the remnant of Israel; they will have learned to trust in His Name through their affliction and their being brought low. God is able only to get glory to His Name through those who learn to trust in His Nature. The greater the affliction and poverty in this world, the more reason there is to trust in God. Affliction and poverty are beautiful places for developing trust in the Name, the Nature, of the Lord. When we stand in a state of poverty, a place where we are stripped of our own ability to accomplish anything, the best thing to do is trust in the Lord.

This remnant, who have learned to trust in the Lord, shall be blessed with purity and peace. They shall be blessed with purity both in word and deed, because they do not speak lies, neither do they practice iniquity. Justice and truth shall govern them.

As sheep of God's pasture, they shall enjoy the surety of peace. Their fears and anxieties shall be non-existent. Nothing will be present to make them afraid, so they will eat and sleep in perfect peace.

The greatest thing God can do for us is to bring us to the place of complete rest, peace, and happiness in Him. He will do this for each of us as we come through affliction and humility to the place of completely trusting in Him.

II. RETURNED TO THE LORD

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall

overflow with righteousness (Isaiah 10:20-22).

The number of Jews who refuse to accept the Antichrist and remain true to their belief in the living God is a very small number compared to the vast multitude of Abraham's descendants who have been born during the years of time. It is this remnant out of the whole nation of Israel who will be sealed, or set apart, for God.

Although these Jews are sealed in the beginning of the tribulation period, and an invisible fence of protection put around them, they will not return or be converted to the Lord Jesus Christ until after the tribulation period when He returns with His Bride to set up the millennial reign of peace. The Word says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Revelation 1:7). This proves that the remnant that is spared of Israel are among those who will look on Him whom they, as a nation, have pierced.

In Zechariah we read: "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zechariah 13:6).

As Israel looks upon the Lord when He returns, they inquire about the wounds in His hands. This proves that, up to this time, Jesus Christ has not been revealed to them as their Messiah, because they do not recognize Him. However, they were sealed during the tribulation and kept for the day of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, since He will reveal Himself unto them as their Saviour, and they will accept Him.

III. RETURNED TO THE LAND

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elarn, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth...And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt (Isaiah 11:11-16).

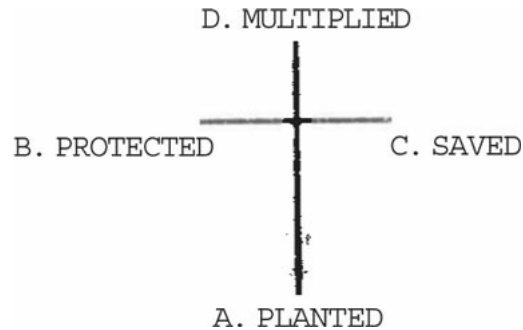
When Jesus Christ was crucified, He was lifted up from the earth that He might draw all men unto Him. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). When Jesus Christ comes again, He will lift up the sign of the Cross as an ensign, which will shine forth as a beacon to the remnant of Israel and to all the nations, so that they might be drawn unto Him. The ensign of the Cross, the banner of truth, the banner of love, will allure Israel to Him (Hosea 2:14). The drawing power of truth and love will cause the nations to enlist in His Kingdom.

During the tribulation, the LORD is going to make a highway on which the remnant of His people will return to Him, even as He made a highway through the Red Sea for Israel when she made her exodus from the land of Egypt. Anything that might hinder the progress and success of the return of the remnant will be taken out of the way. All obstructions shall be removed, and insurmountable difficulties shall be overcome.

When it is God's time to bring nations or particular persons home to Himself, divine grace and power will be victorious over all opposition. When it was God's time for Israel to enter Canaan's land, the presence of the Lord parted the river and a way was made for Israel to walk in the will of God. Likewise, those who set their faces heavenward and desire to walk in the perfect will of God will find Him removing all difficulties and overcoming all opposition that might hinder them.

IV. CARE OF THE LORD

This is God's care of the remnant of Israel: she is planted, protected, saved, and multiplied.



A. PLANTED

And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this (Isaiah 37:31,32).

God is going to have a remnant out of natural Israel, and as the Husbandman, He is going to plant that remnant in the promised land so that it might take root downward and bear fruit upward. Israel shall be fruitful as a nation. Her fruitfulness will compensate for those who were lost by their backsliding. She shall not feel any of the ill effects of the enemies' wasting, for God shall increase her to become a full mature nation, naturally and spiritually. Though Israel continually rebelled against God, yet we see His loving concern and care for her. Likewise, He will love and care for spiritual Israel, the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, until she grows to complete spiritual maturity in Him. She, too, will be planted in the New City, the New Jerusalem, and bring forth fruitfulness of His glory and of His humility.

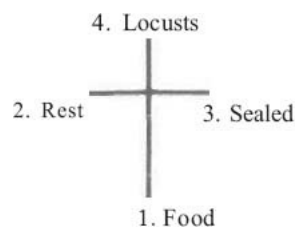
B. PROTECTED

The **LORD** said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction (Jeremiah 15:11).

God is going to transplant the remnant of Israel into her own land. In order to do this, God will bring the Jewish people out of every nation on the earth into their own country. From this time on, God will be her protection from all her enemies.

God controls every heart, and He can turn men's hearts to favor His servants when He chooses. God has the wisdom and power to keep and protect His servants, His remnant. When trouble threatens, let us not despair, for we can trust the One who has the wisdom to make a way and the power to protect us in the way.

God can make our enemies treat us favorably even in the time of affliction. This is what He will do for the remnant of Israel. Let us consider the stature of how He will protect the sealed remnant:



1. Food

And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed there upon...(Zephaniah 2:7).

Israel shall be strengthened and satisfied with the food out of her own land. Food speaks of satisfaction and strength, and it is a protection from weakness and death. We have the promise that if the Lord is our Shepherd, He

will prepare a table for us in the presence of our enemies. Even when our enemies are raging round about us, God is there to protect us and feed us with the Bread of truth, which is our strength and satisfaction.

2. Rest

...in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity (Zephaniah 2:7).

For thousands of years, more than any other people, the Jewish nation has been an attacked, driven, beaten people. The Philistine city of Ashkelon belonged to one of Israel's bitterest enemies, but a time of peace is coming when the Jews will have no enemies to fear. They will dwell in safety in their own country. The long-standing conflict over the land of Israel will be ended when, for the first time, the remnant possesses all the territory that God promised to Abraham. In that day Israel will rest in peace and safety from all warfare, for God will be her protection.

3. Sealed

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads (Revelation 7:1-3).

The Lord protects His remnant out of natural Israel by feeding them, by giving them rest, and by sealing them in their foreheads. Although their seal is invisible, it has power to protect the 144,000 Jews from being physically or spiritually lost to the Antichrist during the tribulation. To protect the physical bodies of the remnant of the Jews from injury or destruction, the four angels are commanded not to let the wind blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on the trees until after the Jews are sealed.

4. Locusts

In the ninth chapter of Revelation we see God's protection of the spiritual life of His people. Keep in mind that at this point Israel is still not a believer in Christ as her Messiah.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star [an angel] fall from the heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads (Revelation 9:1-4).

First, God sealed the remnant from the storms, winds, tempests, tornadoes, hurricanes, and all manner of violent storms that will claim many lives during the tribulation period. Natural forces unleash an unprecedented violence upon the world. The remnant of Israel, the sealed ones, are protected from this natural evil that takes place ON the earth. But more than that, they are protected from the spiritual evil which comes from UNDER the earth. Weird, uncanny locusts that ascend out of the Bottomless Pit cannot hurt them.

Hell, with its pit, in the *heart* of the earth is the place of punishment for fallen Lucifer, the fallen angels, and unredeemed fallen man from the present heavens and earth. The Bottomless Pit is the place of punishment for those who sinned in the prehistoric age. The Bottomless Pit is located *under* the earth. The locusts that come out of the Bottomless Pit are perverted creatures from the prehistoric world. These creatures were a result of the extreme depths of sin to which prehistoric man sank when he cohabited with animals. God is faithful to protect His remnant Israel from the scourge of this abominable sin, which goes back to the prehistoric heavens and earth. Although these creatures will be loosed, they will be unable to touch God's people who bear His seal.

God protects the 144,000 sealed Jews because He desires to see their salvation. In caring for natural Israel, God

plants her, protects her, and then gives her salvation.

C. SAVED

For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel (Jeremiah 31:7).

God is going to save Israel from being destroyed from among the nations of the earth. He tells us to publish this fact by singing about it. We are to sing and shout among the chief of nations with prophetic joy about what God is going to do in the future for His people.

The restoration of Israel will be celebrated by all her neighbors. They shall all join with Israel in her rejoicing and will pay their respects to her, thereby lifting her to a place of honor. Even the chief of the nations, from the most insignificant to the greatest, shall think it an honor to congratulate the restoration of Israel. In publishing these glad tidings, praise and honor will be given to the God of Israel, for His plan and purpose which had been conceived in the invisible for Israel had now been brought into visibility.

In this dispensation of grace God has another remnant among the house of Israel whom He desires to see saved. This is not the same remnant that is going to know physical safety during the tribulation and then be converted. God has a remnant of Jews that He wants to be saved now. It is our responsibility to pray for these and to search them out to bring them to the knowledge of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. God will bless us if we bless the Jews, His chosen people. Israel is going to be the hub among all the nations in the millennium as well as the hub on the new earth in eternity. We need to respect the Jews because they are God's choice for the position as the hub in the great wheel of the nations. We also need to love and appreciate them for the rich heritage they have given us as Christians. Our Bible and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, has proceeded from the Jews.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call (Joel 2:32).

There is salvation for that spiritual remnant now that they might go into the body of Christ, and there is salvation promised for natural Israel when the Lord comes again. He is talking about that great day of His second coming, for the preceding verses of Joel speak of "...I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come" (Joel 2:30,31). The sun is turned into darkness after the tribulation, at the loosening of the sixth seal. We have already mentioned Matthew 24:29, which is the clue telling us exactly when this darkening of the sun is going to take place. It states immediately after the tribulation. That places the sixth seal immediately after the tribulation, after the seven vials are poured out in consecutive order.

So, then, salvation will be brought to the remnant of Israel at the second coming of the Lord. After Jesus Christ makes His appearance on the Mount of Olives, and the mountain splits in two from the east to the west (prior to the battle of Armageddon), then the remnant of Israel will start crying unto God for a deliverance. "...Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered." When they call on the Name of the Lord, they will experience salvation.

The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel (Joel 3:16).

The remnant will be calling upon the Lord, for He is their only hope. After seeing Him and calling upon Him for salvation, they shall then flee into the valley for protection.

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east, and toward the west, and

there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea. ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light (Zechariah 14:1-7).

The day of the LORD refers to His second coming. The gathering together of all nations against Jerusalem to battle is the gathering together for the battle of Armageddon.

There are several reasons why Old Jerusalem is going to suffer such a devastating judgment. It was here that His Name was established. Jerusalem is where the Temple stood in the form of a cross, depicting the full stature of Jesus Christ. Jerusalem is where God's headship was manifested from the Ark of the Covenant. There He showed Himself as a spiritual husband, as it were, to Israel, His wife. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Let us look at a spiritual principle in the Old Testament. You will recall that in a case of natural adultery where a common woman was involved, the guilty woman was stoned. But if the case involved a daughter or the wife of a priest, she was to be burnt with fire if she were guilty. Israel was the wife of God, as it were, among the nations, but she became an adulterous wife. Not only did she give herself in idolatrous worship (spiritual adultery), but she will also give herself in union with the Antichrist. Her sin was not judged as that of a common wife, but her judgment was comparable to that meted out for the sin of the daughter of the High Priest. Her position carried a great weight of spiritual responsibility, so she was worthy of judgment by fire.

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast (Revelation 17:12).

God is going to permit the ten kings to have power for one hour with the Antichrist, so that His fury might be fulfilled on idolatrous, adulterous Israel. After the vials of God's wrath are poured upon Old Jerusalem, the Antichrist also becomes angry with her. In the beginning of the tribulation period, the Antichrist Beast carries Mystery Babylon (Old Jerusalem) upon his seven heads of power (Revelation 17:9). Thus, in the tribulation, Mystery Babylon, Old Jerusalem, is seen lifted up and riding in her glory on the power of the Antichrist. Spiritually speaking, she becomes the wife of the Antichrist. But now, in anger, the Antichrist begins to visit Jerusalem with fire from without, and God begins to pour down fire from above. God will burn her flesh because of her spiritual idolatry in receiving the Antichrist, his mark, his name, his number, and for worshipping his image, which God likens also to spiritual adultery. In addition to the fire she will also be stoned with hailstones. In other words, she receives a double portion for her sin (Revelation 18:6-9).

Psalms 18:13 gives us the two sides of God's Word: 'The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.' The hailstones speak of the humility side and the coals of fire the exaltation side. God will pour out double judgment on Old Jerusalem by giving both the cold hailstones of humility which will level her to the ground as a city, and His hot coals of fire of exalted judgment to purge away what is brought to the ground.

After Old Jerusalem is leveled with hailstones and burned with coals of fire, Jesus Christ will appear and continue the fight. The light of that gloomy day will be extended, as in the time of Joshua, until God finishes the battle and completes His work of judgment. We shall consider these matters further as we move on in the Book of Revelation, but because it has a personal application for the remnant of spiritual Israel, we must understand some things here to appreciate the natural and spiritual salvation that Israel will know in that day.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy (Micah 7:18).

God will not retain His anger permanently. He will forgive the remnant of the children of Israel and do a new thing for them.

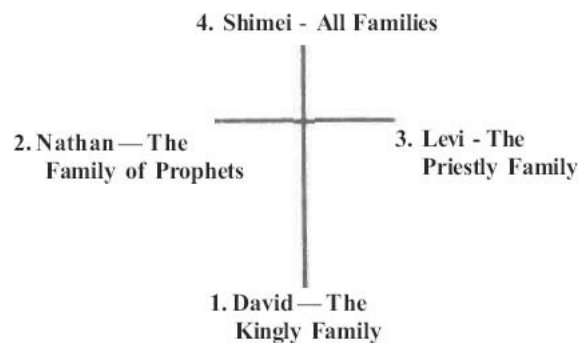
And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one

mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn (Zechariah 12:10).

When they look upon Jesus, they are going to see and understand that they crucified their Messiah. Their grief **will** be comparable to that shown at the death of their firstborn. His death **will** be so real and visible that their mourning **will** be as if their firstborn son had just been placed there upon the cross to die.

In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; **All** the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart (Zechariah 12:11-14).

Let us consider the stature of those who mourned, for it has to do with Israel's four sins against the Son of God. All Israel contributed to the guilt; therefore, **all** shall share in the grief.



1. David - The Kingly Family

The kingly family sinned against God. Were they not the leaders in idolatry? A long line of kings were guilty of condoning heathenish worship: Ahab, Jehu, and Solomon, for example. Even though Solomon was the wisest man in the world, he also was an idolater. The greatest princes must not think themselves exempt from the law of repentance, but rather obligated most solemnly to express it. Rulers should be the first to set an example of repentance, humility, and faith toward God, and this they will do when Jesus comes again. God will pour out the Spirit of grace, supplication, and mourning on the house of David, the kingly family, so that they might influence others with their power of repentance for the kingly sins of the nation of Israel. The kingly family joined in the crucifixion of the Son of God, and therefore, carry a great load of guilt. They will be made aware of their guilt when they see HIM at His second coming.

2. Nathan - The Family of Prophets

The false prophets of Israel, who had prophesied many lies in the Name of the LORD were equally guilty with those who joined in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The guilt will be revealed to them at the second coming of Jesus Christ. God set each group apart so that they might repent especially for their own sin lest they be tempted to push the blame off on some other group. Also their sorrow shall be so deep and distressing that everyone will endeavor to avoid another, and vent his grief and distress of soul in private.

3. Levi - The Priestly Family

The prophet singles out the kingly family, but the priestly family and the prophetic family are each identified through the subordinate branch for the purposes of showing how the wailing is to extend to every subdivision of the entire nation. When Jesus Christ is revealed to the nation of Israel, mourning will sweep through her from the greatest to the most insignificant. Their feelings of remorse will increase into penitent lamentation over their misdeed of crucifying the Son of God. The priestly family will share the greatest responsibility over the crucifixion

of Jesus Christ because they were the ones, who through envy and jealousy, deliberated and accused Him of blasphemy and labeled Him an imposter and delivered Him up for crucifixion although they knew, by the witness of the Urim and Thummim, the true identity of Jesus Christ.

4. Shimei - All Families

Shimei was the man who persecuted King David in word and in deed. He walked along beside David and cursed him, cast stones at him, and challenged David's authority to be king over Israel. Shimei represents all the rest of the people of Israel, for even the common people in Israel will also be stricken with remorse and penitence over their guilt. The people followed their leaders in thrusting through the Son of God. Therefore, when they see Him at His second coming, and view the nail prints in His hands, they will realize that they are responsible, and they will indeed mourn and wail.

When there is sin in the camp, we are prone to look at others rather than ourselves. We excuse our sinful attitudes and dispositions by saying we are tired or nervous. We say "I forgot" or "I am sick." We blame our circumstances and other people. "She made me do it" is the cry of the flesh. Sometimes we refer to carnal anger as *righteous indignation*. Nothing is accomplished this way. Only when we begin humbling ourselves and acknowledging our own faults can we receive forgiveness. Unconfessed sin separates us from the blessings of the Lord. How much better it is to repent of our faults so that we can walk under the blessings and joy of His forgiveness.

The shed Blood of Jesus Christ has been provided for ALL of our sins. Typed by the sacrificial shedding of animal blood in the Old Testament, the blood was applied in four different ways: Poured out, sprinkled about, applied by dipping, and wrung out. The blood of the Peace Offering was applied by dipping the finger into a bowl of blood and then applying it to the horns of the altar, and then anointing the ear, the right thumb, and the right toe of the offerer. This is the particular application we must use when we come to confess and acknowledge a *specific* sin. By faith, we dip our finger into the Blood of Jesus Christ and apply it directly to the very area of our sin. Only infantile behavior will make us feel good when we think we are getting by with something. It is much better when God puts His big finger right on the spot and continues to apply pressure until we get down to business, confessing it and applying the Blood on it. Only then can we be fully cleansed of the sin. Either we deal with sin here and now, or we will face it later at the judgment seat of Christ.

The remnant of Israel uses this very same principle of applying the blood to particular sins in their great experience of mourning and repentance. God graciously promises to pour out upon them "the Spirit of grace and supplication." This is not a call of general repentance. Each group is going to have to deal with their particular sinful part in crucifying the Son. The kingly family must confess their kingly sins of idolatry against His headship. The prophetic family must confess their false prophecies against the truth. The priesthood must confess their sins of priestly jealousy against His ministry. All the remaining inhabitants of Jerusalem are called upon to repent for rejecting the Son of God as their Saviour and helping in the crucifixion.

Notice, the males and the females were separated in every case. The male is a type of the Word of God, and the female types the Spirit of God. When we persecute God, we persecute His Word and we persecute His Spirit. God is Word, and God is Spirit. When man was created in the likeness and image of God, they were created male (Word) and female (Spirit). God joined them and called *their* name Adam. Together they represented the image of God. Both aspects were necessary to portray the nature of God: Word and Spirit. It is impossible to persecute the Word without persecuting the Spirit of God, and vice versa. When they crucified Jesus, they offended the Word of God, and they offended the Spirit of God.

We must pinpoint our sins when we confess them to God. This is why the men were divided from the women in their mourning. As men, their repentance was directed toward their sins against the Word of God. As women, their repentance was directed toward their sins against the Spirit of God. God's requirements were stringent with Israel, as they are with us also.

And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends (Zechariah 13:6).

The scales will be removed from her eyes, and Israel, as a nation, will see her Messiah for the first time and will be saved. Only then do they become concerned about His wounds. How it hurts to know that "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). Beloved, think for a moment on the tender love Jesus showed for

those who had driven the nails into His hands. Jesus might have held out His wounded hands and said, “My *enemies* did it to me. My *enemies* drove nails into my hands and feet. My *enemies* jabbed long thorns into my brow and plunged a spear into my side.” This would be the normal fleshly reaction. Yet no such bitterness came out of the mouth of God’s Lamb. Jesus admitted to the wounds and, at the same time, acknowledged His appreciation for those who had crucified Him. It was God’s eternal plan and purpose for the Lamb to pour out His life’s Blood on Calvary’s Cross, but He could not nail Himself to the Cross. Someone else had to do this for Him. Jesus did not hate those who nailed Him to the place of crucifixion because they had helped Him fulfill God’s will for His life. For this, Jesus called them *friends*. May we learn the same measure of humility and appreciation for those who take us to the place of crucifixion and nail us there, as it were. We can call them friends instead of enemies when we realize the part they play in helping us to die out to the flesh and fulfill God’s will in our personal lives.

In spite of how Israel, as a nation, has treated the Lord, God has promised that King David will have an eternal throne.

Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saying that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: (Amos 9:8-11).

During the millennial reign, Jesus Christ will be seated upon David’s throne. However, David will take his own throne and reign upon the new earth throughout eternity. God promised David that his throne would be an everlasting one, and God shall surely fulfill His Word. The sinful kingdom of the Antichrist will be destroyed from off the face of the earth to make way for the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ to be set up. God will protect a remnant of Israel through the great tribulation. When these sealed ones see the Messiah, Jesus Christ, at His second coming, they will repent of their sins against Him and be saved. The 144,000 sealed Jews will enter into the millennial reign with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal (Romans 11:1-4).

God has always had, and will always have a remnant. During the reign of wicked King Ahab (a type of the Antichrist), God had a small remnant, a seed, as it were, of 7,000. In this present dispensation of grace, God has a remnant according to the election of grace: “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 11:5). This reference concerns spiritual Israel. Then during the tribulation time, God will have another remnant. He has always had a remnant, a people, and He has always protected, cared for, and saved that remnant in spite of all existing circumstances. This He will continue to do until He establishes and accomplishes His will in the midst of Israel as a nation.

D. MULTIPLIED

In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever (Micah 4:6,7).

For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things (Zechariah 8:12).

Notwithstanding the dispersions, distresses and infirmities, the nation of Israel shall be planted and established

in her own land again, and there she shall be multiplied. Israel shall multiply into a strong nation, both in the natural and in the spiritual. She shall indeed be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. She shall be multiplied and strong when, at last, she comes under the eternal headship of her King and Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God promised to bless Israel's seed. This blessing includes the seed of her loins, the seed of the ground and the seed of the vine; they all shall be multiplied and blessed. How precious to come under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and let Him bless and multiply us, both in the natural and in the spiritual.

Thus, we see God's great plan for sealing and protecting a remnant of the nation of Israel. He seals 144,000 Jews and brings them through the tribulation and reveals Jesus Christ to them at His second coming. Then He plants the remnant back in her land to grow into the mature nation that will become the hub of the wheel of the nations of the earth.

B. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

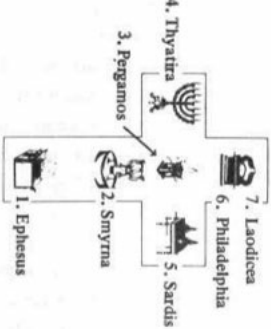
THE WHITE ROBED SAINTS

CHURCH AGE (Dispensation of Grace)

Beginning



Calvary's Cross



End



Rapture of Overcomers

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:34-36).

“Take heed to yourselves” Luke says. The Rapture shall come suddenly. Only those who are caught away will escape the dreadful things that will happen on the earth during the tribulation period. Our hearts must be rightly related to God. An overcharged heart is one that has grown fat through indulgences in the pleasurable things of the

flesh. Self-indulgence makes us lose out spiritually. Our spiritual pace is slackened by drunkenness, and by the cares of life. The heavenly vision fades out of sight and only the present seems important and worth living for.

While many Christians may be quick to say, "I never touch alcoholic beverages of any kind," this may be true. But it is important to understand that we can be drunk on our *emotions* as well as the many intoxicating liquors of this present world. Surfeiting, drunkenness, and being taken up with the cares of life are warning signals. We must take heed to them, for hearts like this will not be ready for the coming of the Lord, and neither will they be a part of the bridal party. If the experience of salvation is all we need to be included in the Rapture, then there is no need for Christians to watch and pray. There is no reason for them to take heed unto themselves in order to be ready, that they be counted worthy to escape. But, beloved, there will be a catching away of *overcomers*. We need to alert ourselves. The next great event is the Rapture.

Keep in mind that the Rapture is NOT the second coming of Christ. In the Rapture, Jesus Christ does not come to the earth. Instead, He appears in the sky where both the dead and living overcomers are caught up to meet Him. Then they all ascend together into heaven. His first advent on earth began with His incarnation and closed with His death on the Cross. His second coming to earth takes place after the great tribulation. At His second coming when He puts His feet on Mount Olivet, Jesus Christ returns in the full glory of His Father, the glory of the holy angels, and His own glory, leading His Bridal armies. The battle of Armageddon follows with its great and certain destruction. Although Old Jerusalem (Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots) is visited with special judgments near the end of the tribulation period, it is only when her cup of iniquity is full that she is brought to final and complete destruction.

The signs which accompany His appearing at the Rapture are the same signs that indicate His second coming. The signs are not seen at the Rapture in a fully mature form, however, as they are at the second coming. The signs of His second coming are many. Let us pause to consider the sign of Noah, for this sign shows, again, the distinct separation between the overcomers who are raptured before the tribulation and the believers who are left to go through the time of judgment.

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (Matthew 24:37-39).

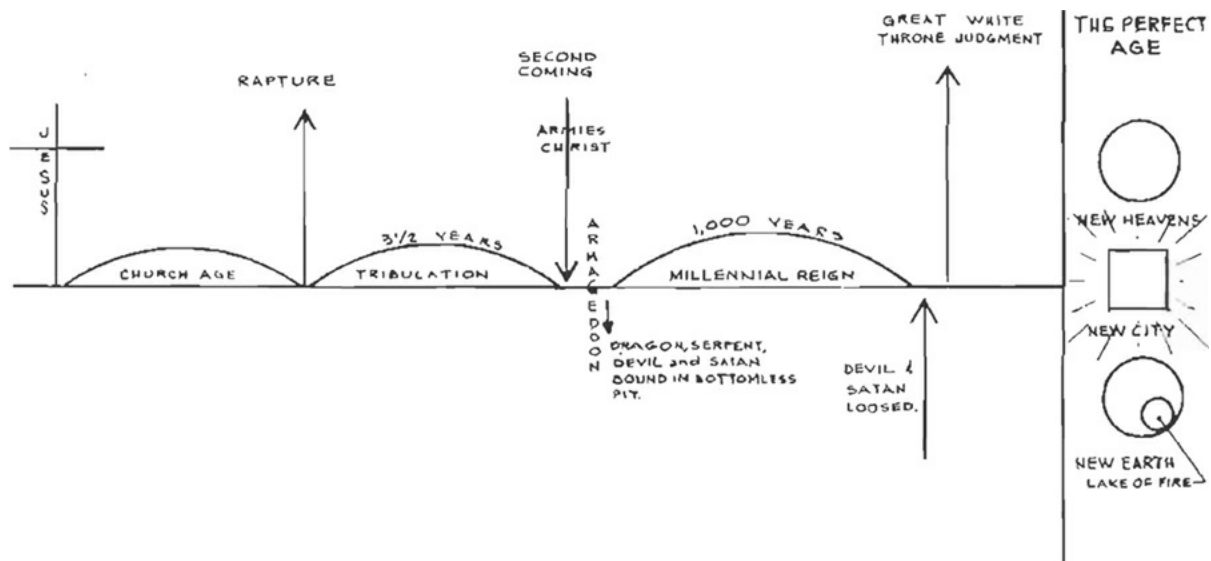
Noah types the believers who miss the Rapture and, therefore, must go through the tribulation. The judgment in Noah's day was not only to protect Noah, but also to destroy the wicked. Noah never left *the* earth, but was lifted above and preserved on top of the judgment waters. There was a small remnant in Noah's day that was preserved through the time of judgment and destruction. So it will be in the second coming of Christ. When the feet of Jesus Christ touch the Mount of Olives, it is going to split and form a valley to protect and preserve the remnant believers who flee out of Jerusalem before utter devastation strikes.

Enoch, on the other hand, types the overcoming saints who are raptured out of the earth before the tribulation. Enoch was a man who walked with God and was caught away suddenly into the presence of the Lord. This happened *before* the flood. Enoch was caught away, raptured, as it were, but Noah was carried through. Noah walked with God, but not to the same degree as Enoch walked. Enoch was a holy man of God, a prepared man. He was ready to go and God took him. We see further confirmation that the Rapture is for the catching away of the *worthy ones*-those who are living and walking in all the spiritual light they have. They are watching and praying. They are overcomers.

At the very beginning of the tribulation, the full stature of fallen Lucifer is loosed upon the earth to work through the Antichrist (the beast) and the False Prophet. When Jesus Christ returns with His Bridal armies, they are met by the armies of the Antichrist, and the battle of Armageddon takes place. Jesus wars against them and overcomes them with the sharp sword of His Word. Standing in the sun, an angel invites all the fowls of the earth to come and feast upon the flesh of the Antichrist's slain armies. The defeated Antichrist and False Prophet are cast alive into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20). The full stature of fallen Lucifer (Satan, Devil, Serpent, and Dragon) is chained and bound in the Bottomless Pit for a thousand years. During this time Jesus Christ sets up His millennial reign of peace on the earth. He sits upon the throne of David in Jerusalem and judges the nations. After the inhabitants of the earth have known a thousand years of righteous rule and judgment, they are given an opportunity to willingly choose to be ruled by Christ. After the millennial reign, Satan and the Devil aspects of Lucifer's nature

is loosened to come out of the Bottomless Pit (Revelation 20). (The Serpent and the Dragon nature never comes out of the Bottomless Pit.) Satan and the Devil then go about the earth and deceive many into enlisting in their army. From all quarters of the earth, men come together to the holy city of Jerusalem to battle against Christ and His Bride. There is no battle at this time, however, because God sends fire down out of Heaven to devour the rebellious armies. Satan and the Devil will be cast into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and the False Prophet are. After this happens, all of the dead who were not resurrected in either of the three phases of the first resurrection will be raised to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment Seat. Those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Then we come to the Perfect Age: the New Heavens, the New Earth, the New City, and the Lake of Fire.

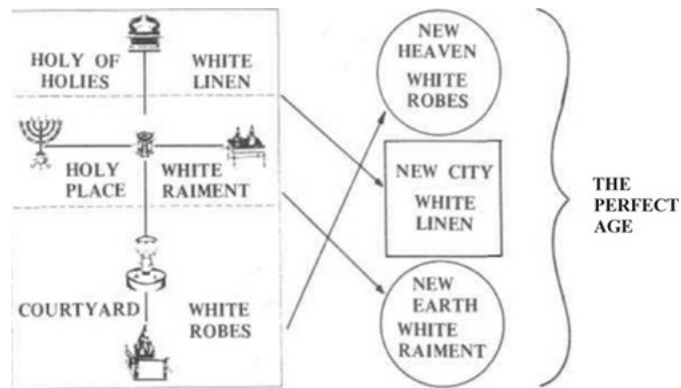
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The Perfect Age (eternity) is of great importance and interest to us all. The question is "Where will I spend eternity?" Every human being is going to be in one of four places throughout eternity. After death there is no second chance, no opportunity for further growth in the stature of the Crucified Christ. What we are spiritually when we leave this life determines where we will spend eternity. Whatever degree of glory Christians attain in this life is the realm of glory they will dwell in throughout eternity. Sinners go to the Lake of Fire. The four places of eternal abode are:



Let us examine the degrees of glory evidenced by the following distinctions: White Robes, White Raiment, and White Linen. Every Christian will stand up in the resurrection in one of these three garments of glory.



SPIRITUAL STATURE NOW PREPARES FOR ETERNITY

In the seventh chapter of Revelation the question is asked, "...What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" It behooves us to know who these are, for the bulk of Christendom is found in the White Robed group.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb (Revelation 7:9,10).

Following the sealing of the 144,000 Israelites, John sees an enormous multitude of people clothed in white robes standing in Heaven before the Throne. These could not be, as some say, the great multitude that are saved out of the tribulation period, for this scene takes place at the very beginning of the tribulation. It is a heavenly scene. These White Robed ones stand before the Throne of God and magnify the salvation of God and the Lamb.

Redeemed people out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues are represented here. We know they are resurrected saints because they are wearing their resurrected bodies, their garments of glory, their White Robes

And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled (Revelation 6:11).

In this verse we see another group of White Robed saints in Heaven. They are the martyred ones who were slain for their testimony in the beginning of the tribulation period. They have not yet been resurrected. We see them in spirit and soul form resting under the Great Altar in heaven. Although they have been given their white robes, they do not wear them until their bodies are resurrected from the grave at the judgment of all the dead, after the millennium (Revelation 20:12).

The saints under the Altar laid down their lives as martyrs for their testimony, but they did not do so as *overcomers*. Let us rehearse, briefly, the background associated with their death. The Antichrist makes his appearance on the scene and declares himself to be the resurrected Christ just shortly before the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, appears to catch away the overcomers that make up the Wedding Party.

The Rapture will create great confusion on the earth. Overcoming Christians will be taken from their automobiles as they drive along the highway. Overcoming Christian pilots will leave their planes in flight. The moving vehicles will be left unattended. Who can imagine the number of wrecks and crashes that will happen at the Rapture? People from all positions and from all walks of life will suddenly vanish. Instantly, the whole world shall hear a loud wail from the Christians who are left behind. When they realize what has happened, they will begin to say that the Antichrist is an impostor, that Jesus is the real Christ. Their testimonies, added to the countless accidents and unexplainable disappearances, wound the Antichrist's head of deceit unto death. Their testimonies threaten the Antichrist's power and position. To silence their voices, the Antichrist has them destroyed at the very beginning of the tribulation. They were left behind because they were not overcomers, and then they are martyred so soon after the Rapture that the souls under the Altar had no time to overcome. They did not live long enough to get the victory

over the Antichrist as did those who are mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of Revelation. These died as they had lived — believers, but not overcomers.

John saw these souls under the Altar in the very *beginning* of the tribulation. He heard them being exhorted to “...rest yet a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled” (Revelation 6:11). These were martyred in the Antichrist’s first wave of persecution. They suffered martyrdom *before* the Antichrist had time to set up his government, *before* the False Prophet had time to beguile the people into setting up an image of the beast, and *before* the Beast instituted his mark, or enchanted the people with the number of his name. Their names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life, and they will be resurrected at the end of the millennium to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment Seat.

The White Robed ones in chapter seven are seen *wearing* their garment of glory. The word *robe* is an entirely different word in the Greek than the words used for raiment or linen. Robe means a stole, a long gown, a mark of dignity; to repress, to abstain from associating with, withdraw self, to avoid. Clothed with the dignity of salvation, these believers are overcomers even though they never did attain a mature stature of spiritual growth. Nevertheless, they know what it is to repress, to abstain from, and withdraw themselves from the things of the world. The White Robed multitude are Christians who have all experienced the sin offering of the Blood which dealt with the penalty of sin, which is Death and Hell. Also many of these have partaken of the whole burnt offering of consecration and sanctification, and also the peace offering of union.

Some of the White Robed saints will have also experienced the power, the gifts, and the fire of the Holy Ghost. This degree of spiritual stature is typed at the Brazen Altar of the Old Testament Tabernacle. Some of the others will have grown far enough in God to have laid hold of the outward aspects of the waters of the Name, Death, and Life of the Lord Jesus Christ. This latter experience is pictured by the Laver, which was also in the Courtyard. The blood experience, the fire experience, and the water experience were all found in the Courtyard of the Tabernacle. We know, then, that the White Robed ones are Courtyard saints as far as their spiritual stature is concerned.

There is another point we need to notice about the great multitude which “stood before the throne, and before the Lamb...” The word *before* is often used as a Hebrew expression meaning in the face of. Everything that was done in the Mosaic Tabernacle was done *before* the Lord, or in the face of the Lord. In other words, as they slew the sacrifices out in the Courtyard, they were doing it before the Lord; that is to say, the Lord’s face was beholding and seeing the sacrifice. Let us take an example.

There are three basic blood sacrifices: the Sin Offering, the Whole Burnt Offering, and the Peace Offering. The twenty-ninth chapter of Exodus records these offerings and how they were to be offered.

And thou shalt kill the bullock *before the LORD*, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation (Exodus 29:11).

They came to the Brazen Altar where the sacrificial animal was to be slain. The slaying took place “before the LORD.” In other words, He took note of the sacrifice as it was being offered. Further along in the chapter we read of the wave offering which followed the other three offerings.

And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened bread that is *before the LORD*: And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and shalt wave them for a wave-offering *before the LORD*. And thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn them upon the altar for a burnt-offering, for a sweet savour *before the LORD*: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD (Exodus 29:23-25).

We could go on and on, but this Scripture is sufficient to prove our point. These offerings were all performed out in the Courtyard at the Brazen Altar, yet it was stated again and again that they were offered *before* the LORD, before His face. The people could not see the presence of God in the Holy of Holies, yet God could see out in the Courtyard. He watched everything that was going on in the Tabernacle. When it was done in the Courtyard, it was still *before* His face.

It is necessary that we understand this terminology in its scriptural use or we could get confused thinking that the White Robed multitude was actually standing before the Throne of God. This is impossible. We have already seen the positioning of the White Raiment group around the Throne: the four and twenty elders are seated on thrones

round about the Throne (like a rim of the wheel), and the four beasts or living creatures are round about, yet in the midst of the Throne (like the spokes of the wheel). Although the White Robed multitude, in the seventh chapter of Revelation, stands *before* the Throne and the Lamb, this does not place them, stature-wise, in the Holiest of Holies, or in the Holy Place. They are Courtyard saints who had died as overcomers. Some of them had been resurrected when Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Others were resurrected at the Rapture to take part in the Wedding Supper, Nevertheless, they stand *before* or in the face of God's Throne and the presence of the Lamb. In their hands they hold palms, which speak of victory. They were overcomers "...accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the eiders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen (Revelation 7:11,12).

All the angelic host and the redeemed in Heaven fall prostrate in worship and adoration before the Throne, A sevenfold tribute to the magnificence of God pours forth from their hearts and lips: (1) Blessing, (2) Glory, (3) Wisdom, (4) Thanksgiving, (5) Honor, (6) Power, and (7) Might. Look at the angels, the most excellent of all creatures who never sinned. They are before Him continually. Not only do they cover their faces, but they fall down on their faces before the Lord! What humility, then, and what profound reverence, should become us, vile frail creatures who transgressed against the Lord, when we come into the presence of God. We should fall down before Him! The angels, the elders, and the beasts acknowledge God's headship by saying "Amen." They acknowledge His character, His attributes, His omnipotence, His omniscience. What an example this is for us mortal human beings.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:13,14).

John is moved with wonder as he beholds the worship of Heaven. The question is raised as to the identity of this countless White Robed multitude, and from where they had come. John readily admits his ignorance, and with obvious respect says to the elder, "Sir, thou knowest."

...And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation...(Revelation 7:14).

These came out of great tribulation but not *The Great Tribulation*, because this scene in heaven takes place before the Great Tribulation period has scarcely begun. The Church of Jesus Christ is no stranger to tribulation, for it has suffered many a blood bath. Multitudes upon multitudes of Christians have laid down their lives for their testimony of faith in Jesus Christ. How horrible are the tortures recorded in Foxe's Book of Martyrs, yet this book is just one limited record of the sufferings of the saints of God. As the Master suffered rejection, hatred, and violence, so the servants suffer likewise, at least in part. Knowing this, Jesus spoke these comforting words to His disciples, 'These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (John 16:33). Paul and Barnabas exhorted the Christians "...to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

These White Robed ones had come out of such tribulation. Without a doubt, many of them had paid dearly because of their faith in the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, they had come through as victorious overcomers.

The White Robed group in Revelation 7:14 have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. These are white robes, robes of purity, glory, and splendor. Although they stand before the Throne of God clothed in their resurrection glory, they still acknowledge the source of their cleansing. They wear robes made white in the Blood of the Lamb. The merit, the worthiness, the efficacy of the cleansing process is attributed to the Blood of the Lamb.

Not only do they wear their white robes, but they have also managed to keep them clean. We receive our white robes as a result of our experience of salvation. This is a Blood robe provided for us through the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary. Although this robe is not visibly manifested until after resurrection, yet we have the responsibility

of keeping our salvation robe clean while on our earthly journey. We overcome as we daily confess our mistakes and sins and keep ourselves washed and cleansed in the Blood of the Lamb. Let us consider some of the privileges of the White Robed group.

I. SERVE GOD DAY AND NIGHT IN HEAVEN

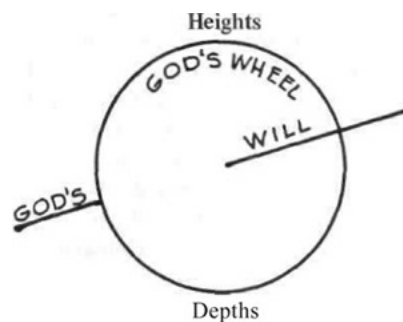
Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them (Revelation 7:15).

The White Robed multitude is in the Temple of God in Heaven. We learn later in the Book of Revelation that the Throne of God and the Lamb moves from the Temple in Heaven into the New City. However, the Temple remains in Heaven forever, and so do the White Robed saints. We understand, then, that the White Robed ones shall inhabit the New Heaven in the Perfect Age. In the Heavenly Temple, the White Robed group is privileged to serve God day and night.

Let us examine the meaning of the phrase *day and night*. Since this service takes place in God's Temple in Heaven, we know it cannot be referring to solar days and nights, for the solar clock relates primarily to earth. A heavenly day and night is another way of expressing the thought of *forever and ever*. We know, then, that the White Robed saints will never leave Heaven. They will spend all of eternity praising God in the Heavenly Temple. Five times in the Book of Revelation reference is made to *day and night*.

And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not *day and night*, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come (Revelation 4:8).

The four beasts (living creatures) praise God day and night—forever and ever. Day and night has to do with the turning of the great wheel of God. In reference to man's being, James says "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the *course of nature*;..." (James 3:6). The Greek word for *course* means wheel. Since man is created in the image and likeness of God, then we know that God's being is also in a wheel formation.



The day has to do with the heights of the wheel. Day speaks of the light and revelation of God's Word and Spirit. The night relates to the depths of the wheel. Night speaks of the hidden, the obscure, things which are not yet revealed. Forever and ever (the same concept as day and night) indicates the ceaseless turning of the wheel of God. While the wheel of God is turning, He is unfolding Himself in the heights of the day experience as well as in the depths of the night. While the wheel of God is turning, it will be the ministry of the living creatures to give praise unto the nature of God, which is holy.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him *day and night* in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them (Revelation 7; 15).

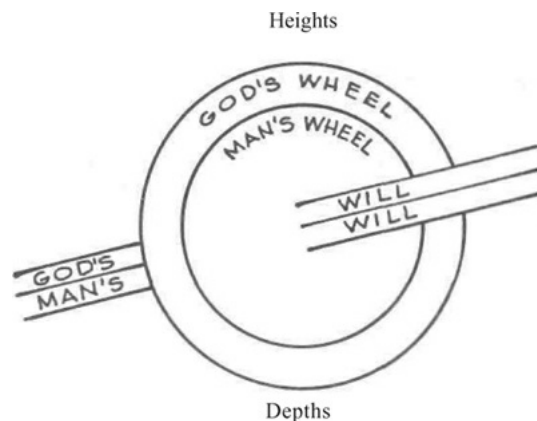
From our context we know these are the White Robed saints that minister day and night (forever and ever) in the Temple of God in Heaven. From this we understand that this group will never leave Heaven but will inhabit the New

Heaven in the Perfect Age.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God *day and night* (Revelation 12:10).

Before fallen Lucifer's full stature is cast out of Heaven, his work is to accuse the people of God day and night. The name *Devil* means an accuser, slanderer, to vilify, to exhibit as a spectacle. The Devil is that part of the nature of Lucifer which torments, accuses, and blames where there is no blame. The Devil is the one who ridicules and makes us feel like a spectacle. There is a war in Heaven just before the tribulation period. Michael and his holy angels prevail against Lucifer and his evil angels. At this point Lucifer and his angels are cast out of Heaven and confined to the earth during the tribulation period.

Even now our individual experiences with God relate directly to the heights and depths of God's ever-turning wheel. We have personal day seasons and night seasons. God alternates these experiences lest we become unsymmetrical in our development. The wheel of God continually grows bigger as we grow progressively in our development in Him. But the wheel can be no bigger than the axle can carry. The axle of our being is our will which is strengthened only as it is surrendered to union with the will of God. As the will grows, so grows the wheel of revelation and experience with God.



In the beginning of our spiritual experience, the wheel of God is very small, because our will is still too weak to carry any greater revelation. Since the axle controls the movement of the wheel, it would lead to a catastrophe to have an unfit axle govern a huge wheel of revelation. So, as the human will grows in its union with the will of God, so does the wheel of revelation continually increase. The further we ride this great wheel of God, the bigger it becomes. In fact, there is no limit to the revelation, for in the day and night operation of the wheel of God, we have the unfolding of the infinite God.

When we are down in the night aspect, in the obscure depths, God has something to reveal to us, something He wants us to lay hold of in our night season. The deeper the depths of our night, the higher will be the heights of the day that follows. The extent of these experiences indicates to us how big our personal wheel has grown in God. It is when we are down in the depths of the wheel that the Devil first comes to accuse us. He accuses day and night, forever and ever, for this is his very nature. When we are in our night season, he is there to whisper "God has forsaken you. You are getting nowhere. You might as well give up. Look at you now. What a sad shape you are in. What disgrace. It's not worth it." We have to understand the nature of God's great wheel and our experience in connection with it. Then we are better equipped to withstand and resist the Devil and his accusations.

The Devil is there to accuse us even in the day season. As we enjoy the light of revelation, the blessedness of seeing, our accuser says, "Now you really think you are somebody. You think you are really getting some place now. You are not worthy of such great blessing. You are not fit for all this. Who do you think you are anyhow?" Whether it is day or night, we must consistently war against the accuser. He is the enemy of God and the enemy of our souls. There is no end to this fight as long as we are in this world.

The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*: and they have no rest *day or night*, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (Revelation 14:10,11).

The Antichrist and all his followers are cast into the Lake of Fire where they shall be tormented forever and ever, day and night. Both terms are used together here to indicate the same truth of eternity. With every turning of God's wheel, new torments will be created to force these that are down in the Lake of Fire to confess the truth. God will reach down into new depths and new heights of His Being to force these Antichrist worshippers to acknowledge the truth. By one means or another, God will have worship and praise and acknowledgment of the truth from every living creature, even if he is found in the depths of the Lake of Fire itself.

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented *day and night for ever and ever* (Revelation 20:7-10).

Here is another reference where the words day and night, forever and ever are united to express the same thought. After the Devil is loosed out of the Bottomless Pit, following the millennial reign, God speaks His final doom and judgment on Satan and the Devil. You will recall that the Serpent nature and the Dragon nature of fallen Lucifer will never come out of the Bottomless Pit. Fallen Lucifer went into the Bottomless Pit with his full stature, but only the Devil and Satan were released for a very short season to complete their work on earth. Their efforts are successful, for they gather a mighty army together for one last battle of rebellion against God. The arch enemy and his army are eternally defeated by God in a sudden sweeping victory. Fire comes down from God in Heaven and devours them all. Then the Devil joins his cohorts, the Beast and the False Prophet, in the Lake of Fire where there is continuous torment day and night, forever and ever.

The evidence is conclusive. The term *day and night* means the same as the term *forever and ever*. We took the time to establish this point because it verifies the fact that the White Robed saints spend all eternity in heaven where they serve God day and night in His Temple. Obviously, the White Robed multitude does not constitute the Bride of Christ, because the Bride will dwell in the New City. Neither do the White Raiment group have any part with the Bride of Christ. Their ministry is confined to the New Earth. In the Perfect Age, they will serve as kings and priests (Revelation 5:10).

II. WALK IN OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

...and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them (Revelation 7:15).

The first privilege afforded to the White Robed ones, was that of serving God in His Temple day and night, forever and ever. A second privilege is seen in the verse that says "he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." God, by His omnipresence, shall dwell among them throughout eternity. In the Perfect Age, the Temple of God remains in Heaven, but the Throne of God and the Lamb moves out of the Temple and places itself in the New City, the New Jerusalem. The literal personal presence of God and the Lamb reside in the New City in eternity. We must not belittle the omnipresence of God. This is how we know Him now. How wonderful and satisfying and blessed it is when the presence of God is manifested in our midst. Heaven shall be filled with His omnipresence, and the White Robed multitude shall be greatly blessed and satisfied. Each group, with its particular degree of relationship with Him, will be fully satisfied. Our capacity will be filled. These Courtyard saints (White Robed ones) have a smaller spiritual capacity than the White Raiment group or the White Linen group, because they have not grown nor developed as great a capacity for God. They will be satisfied fully with as much as they are able to receive. So they shall know His omnipresence in eternity, and it will be their portion of joy and delight in Him.

III. FED BY THE LAMB

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 (Revelation 7:16,17),

The third privilege of the White Robed ones is that they will be fed by the Lamb of God. The *word feed* means to tend as a shepherd, to supervise, to rule. The Lamb will be their Good Shepherd. He will tend to their care, supervise their needs, watch and rule over them as a good shepherd would. Through the personal interest and concern of the Lamb, Himself, their every need shall be supplied. They shall be amply fed, and the result of feeding is contentment.

IV. LED BY THE LAMB

For the Lamb...shall lead them...(Revelation 7:17).

Their fourth privilege is that of being led by the Lamb. Since the Lamb always walked in the way of humility, then we know that He will lead the White Robed ones in the way of humility. They will not have the privilege of denying themselves and crucifying the self-life and gaining spiritual stature by growth, for that privilege and opportunity belonged to their earthly journey. They did not avail themselves of their opportunity. But God in His great mercy through the Lamb will feed, lead, and give drink that they by *gift* might taste of the stature of Jesus Christ.

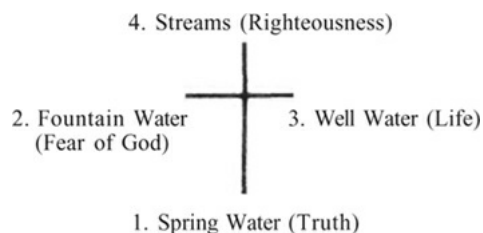
V. DRINK LIVING WATERS

For the Lamb...shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: (Revelation 7:17).

Their fifth privilege is drinking and quenching their thirst at the living fountains of water. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;...For the Lamb...shall lead them unto living fountains of waters..." Fountains pertain to the fear of the Lord: "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death" (Proverbs 14:27). Fountain water creates reverential fear or reverential trust in God in the hearts of this White Robed group. However, they do not have the full stature of living water that was found in the Bride's heart in the Song of Solomon.

A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed...A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon (Song of Solomon 4:12-15).

The Bride's heart is a virgin heart (sealed, inclosed, shut up), filled with fruit and four classes of water.



In addition to these four classes of water, the Word of God reveals that floods, waves, billows, and rivers also issued forth from the loins of God. This is another study, however. The White Robed group will have their spiritual thirst quenched—but only with the fountains of water which will produce a reverential fear of God in their hearts.

VI. DELIVERED FROM ADDED PRESSURE

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat

(Revelation 7:16).

How fully their needs shall be met. They shall no more hunger, no more thirst, “Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.” The implication is that they shall not suffer the heat, which makes toiling most difficult. Their toiling under the added pressure of the heat of day will have ended. Pressure is one of the things God uses to help us go on for Him. Since it is no longer possible for the White Robed group to gain spiritual stature, God mercifully lifts the pressures from them.

VII. TEARS WIPED AWAY

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 (Revelation 7:17).

These are spiritual tears being wept by resurrected spiritual beings in heaven. Why do they weep? They weep when they see the Bride, the prize they missed, but God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There is nothing gained by their tears. No change can be made at this point, for they have already received their eternal bodies, their white robes. God has appointed each of us our portion of spiritual tears. We have a choice to either join them to our natural tears as we journey through the earth while we weep in repentance over our faults and failures, weep over the Word of God, weep over lost souls, and in this way gain spiritual growth in the stature of the Lord Jesus Christ, or we can wait until we get to Heaven where God will force us to offer up our spiritual tears by showing us what we have missed. God will require from us, in one way or another, all the gifts which He has given to us. How precious it is to use *now* what God has given to us, for by so doing we can gain spiritual stature in Jesus Christ and lay hold of the prize of being in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through circumstances, situations, heartaches, and problems, God purposely brings us to the place of weeping. Pressured by these, we find it easy to weep in the prayer closet. Along with our natural tears come spiritual tears. In our weeping, there is hope for change. The only way we can obtain more spiritual growth in stature is by walking in the humble footsteps of the Crucified Christ, for here we see ourselves for what we really are. Then we can weep, repent, and confess our sins. Through this kind of weeping we experience crucifixion to our self-life. We can die daily, be buried in the death of Jesus, and come up on the resurrection side with new life. Tears fulfill a purpose now, but tears shed in Heaven accomplish nothing. Therefore, God wipes away all tears from the eyes of the White Robed group. The word *wiped* means that He smears out, obliterates, erases, pardons, blots out. They do not have the privilege of having their tears put in a bottle or written in a book. “Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?” (Psalm 56:8).

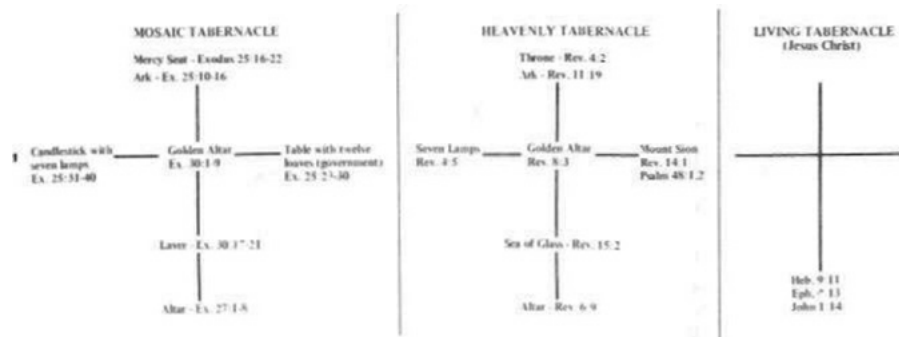
In this chapter we have seen that three distinctions are made among the White Robed saints: Some were seen under the great Altar in heaven, some were seen before the Throne of God with palms in their hands, and others were seen standing on the Sea of Glass. These White Robed saints, with palms in their hands, were granted seven privileges: I. Serve God Day and Night in Heaven; II. Walk in Omnipresence of God; III. Fed by the Lamb; IV. Led by the Lamb; V. Drink Living Waters; VI. Delivered from Added Pressures; and VII. Tears Wiped Away.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE HEAVENLY TABERNACLE

We have progressed sufficiently in our study of the Book of Revelation to realize that there is in Heaven, a Heavenly Tabernacle (Revelation 13:6) or Temple (Revelation 11:19) which is the divine blueprint of the Mosaic Tabernacle.

The Mosaic Tabernacle was laid out in the form of a cross to be a picture, a figure, a shadow, a type of Jesus Christ. It was also a picture of His spiritual stature. The seven pieces of furniture in the Mosaic Tabernacle portray, then, the seven degrees of spiritual maturity that is possible for Christians to attain through growth in Jesus Christ. The Mosaic Tabernacle was made after the pattern of the Heavenly Tabernacle; therefore, the Heavenly Tabernacle is also a picture of Jesus Christ. God has one divine blueprint—His Son. The invisible God used His Son, who became visible, to portray the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). Let us compare these three tabernacles.

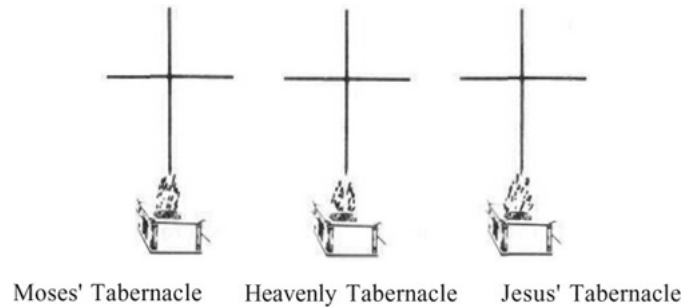


In the Heavenly Tabernacle, the same pattern of the cross is unveiled to show the seven positions of spiritual stature. Different groups of saved people are positioned, according to their spiritual growth on earth, at each of the different pieces of heavenly furniture. This does not mean that these people have opportunity in Heaven for increase of stature by additional spiritual growth, for growth in the stature of the Crucified and Resurrected Christ comes only by following His footsteps of surrender, humility, and obedience *in this life*. The opportunity to gain the prize of being in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to this earthly journey because only in this earth do we find His crucified and resurrected footprints. After death there is no more opportunity to lay hold of further stature or glory by growth. After the body is resurrected and clothed with its eternal house of glory, it can never change its degree of glory. The saints who are in Heaven do not grow in spiritual stature. Nevertheless, God continues to instruct them so that they can, by gift, be increased in wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.

To refresh our memories, let us rehearse some pertinent points of information in connection with the earthly Tabernacle (Mosaic) which was an exact copy of the Heavenly Tabernacle, both of which are a portrayal of Jesus Christ. There was only one main difference between these two tabernacles. The Old Testament Tabernacle lacked supernatural blood. A study of these tabernacles will help us to know Him better.

Let us compare the three tabernacles, the Mosaic, the Heavenly, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Tabernacle.

I. THE GREAT ALTAR



The largest piece of furniture' in the Mosaic Tabernacle was the Brazen Altar. This is why it is called *the* Altar, the Great Altar. Found in the Courtyard on the east side where the point of entrance was, the Altar was the foundation, as it were, upon which all the other pieces of furniture rested. The Altar is the beginning point for all spiritual experiences. There can be no further building of experience in God without the foundation first being laid. God placed two important things on the Brazen Altar: first blood, and then fire.

Our first and initial experience with God is the blood. In the Old Testament Dispensation the priest would slay the sacrificial animal, and its blood would be applied in various ways upon and around the Altar. The blood of these animals, which was a figure and a type of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ, could not take away sin because it was just a figure, a type of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. Animal blood merely covered sin until Jesus Christ could offer Himself as a sin offering on Calvary's Cross. Only His Blood was efficacious to forgive sin and carry it away into the Sea of Forgetfulness. It was the Blood of Jesus that opened up a river of remission which carries away our sins (Isaiah 38:17; 43:25). The Blood of Jesus Christ carries our sins to the Sea of Forgetfulness, behind the back of God; then the Blood keeps them there so they can be remembered against us no more.

Jesus Christ had a supernatural Blood. It was not animal blood. Jesus Christ, the second Tabernacle, is a greater and more perfect Tabernacle than the first (Mosaic), because He had all the supernatural things of the first Tabernacle, plus He had better Blood, or supernatural Blood. There is a better covenant, which has a better blood because it is living Blood, divine Blood, and it is human Blood with resurrection life in it. In His veins flowed a Blood that had two sides, human and divine. The divine side was *given* by God and is therefore, holy and pure. God created the human side without sin; therefore it, too, was holy and pure. This was the Blood He shed upon the Cross. After His human Blood was resurrected, it was deified, or in other words, eternally joined to the divine side. The deified Blood was carried up to Heaven to be offered upon the Throne of Grace before the Father. The man Jesus was made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), and as such, is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. In the case of the Old Testament sacrifices, each Israelite had to have his own sacrifice, his own blood offering. This is not necessary for New Testament believers because all have a share in the One Blood, the Blood of Jesus, which unites us and makes us one in Him. Because His Blood is omnipresent, it is efficacious for us all at the same time, and all of the time.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man (Hebrews 8:1,2).

Jesus Christ is a priest and a minister in the Heavenly Sanctuary, which was established by God and not man. If the priests of the earthly tabernacle were engaged in offering sacrifices and shedding blood, then Jesus Christ, the Heavenly High Priest, also has a sacrifice and a shed Blood to offer.

For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto (this earthly priest and earthly tabernacle) the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for. See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount (Hebrews 8:3-5).

Jesus Christ could not qualify for the earthly priesthood because He was not of the Aaronic lineage; neither was

He from the tribe of Levi. He came from the tribe of Judah. Nevertheless, Jesus Christ was after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 6:20) which was an eternal and unchangeable priesthood. The Mosaic Tabernacle was a figure and shadow of the Heavenly Tabernacle. Jesus Christ became the visible fulfillment of the type. Now He has gone back to Heaven to minister in the Heavenly Tabernacle.

The second thing found at the Brazen Altar, the Great Altar, was the fire, which was a supernatural fire that descended from God upon the sacrifice.

And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces (Leviticus 9:22-24).

This fire was a picture of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire. The Fire of the Holy Ghost is our second experience with the Lord and is also a foundational experience with Him. The Great Altar was in readiness; the sacrifices had been slain and offered according to God's instructions. After man's part was finished, Aaron waited for God to do His part. Suddenly, the glory of God appeared, and out of it came the fire of God, which lit upon the sacrifices and consumed them. They became a sweet smelling savor which ascended into the nostrils of God. Likewise we find the same experience in Jesus Christ, the anti-type. After He completed His sacrifice on the Cross, died, was buried, and resurrected, He ascended back to the Father. As High Priest, He waited for God to send the fire, and this God did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

Thus we see the unity of principle between the Mosaic Tabernacle, the and His ministry in the Heavenly Tabernacle. In building the Living Tabernacle of Jesus Christ within, we experience forgiveness of sin through the Blood of Jesus Christ. In order to receive the second experience, we must wait before God and offer ourselves unto Him as a living sacrifice. Then God will send the Holy Ghost baptism and fire upon us. Blood and fire, in the Old Testament Tabernacle are a type of salvation and the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Living Tabernacle.

Before we study the third foundational experience which was provided in the Courtyard, also a free gift from God, let us review the three categories or three degrees of glory with which the resurrection body will be clothed: white robes, white raiment, and white linen. The first group, the White Robed multitude, is seen in connection with the furniture located in the Courtyard. Three groups within the White Robed throng are mentioned in the Book of Revelation,

A. SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled (Revelation 6:9-11).

The souls resting under the Great Altar, are the spirits and souls of saints martyred in the beginning of the tribulation period. More saints are to be martyred, so the souls under the Altar are exhorted to rest there. In the meantime, for their encouragement, they have been given their white robes. Since their bodies have not yet been resurrected, they are unable to wear these robes until they are resurrected at the end of the millennium to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment Seat.

B. WHITE ROBES WITH PALMS

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands (Revelation 7:9).

Here is a great multitude of redeemed, clothed in white robes, worshipping and magnifying God before His Throne. The palms in their hands indicate a greater degree of victory than the first group seen under the Altar. We also know they are a resurrected group, for they are *wearing* their robes of glory. Their resurrected garments bear witness of their spiritual stature. They wear white robes, so we know that they are Courtyard saints. These are not tribulation saints, but they are saints who were resurrected at the Rapture because they had died as overcomers. These White Robed saints shall serve God day and night in the Temple in Heaven by giving their praises and worship to Him (Revelation 7:15).

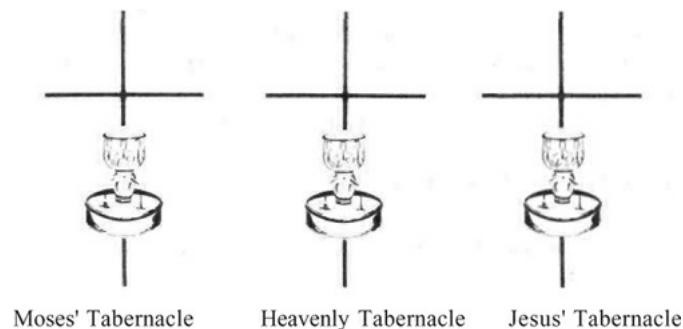
C. WHITE ROBES WITH HARPS

And **I** saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints (Revelation 15:2,3).

Although we have no literal description of their apparel, we know from logical deduction that this group is also clothed in white robes, for they are seen worshipping the Lord on the Sea of Glass, which is equivalent to the Laver in the Courtyard of the Mosaic Tabernacle. During the tribulation period, some people will be overcomers; however, they have no opportunity to mature as we have now. Although they are overcomers, they missed their opportunity to be in the Wedding Party, or the Bride. The White Robed group, found resting under the Great Altar of the Heavenly Tabernacle, were martyred for their testimonies' sake. These White Robed ones who are seen upon the Sea of Glass have overcome in a greater degree of warfare. They stand victorious with harps in their hands, after overcoming the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name. We shall study more about them when we come to chapter fifteen.

Let us turn our attention to the second piece of furniture found in the Courtyard of Heaven, the Sea of Glass, or the Heavenly Laver.

II. SEA OF GLASS OR THE LAVER



And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal... (Revelation 4:6).

This is the first mention of the Sea of Glass or the Laver in the Heavenly Tabernacle. The word *crystal* can be traced back to the thought of ice, which in turn, speaks of humility, or the cold breath of God. In Psalm 18:13 God reveals the two sides of His Word, or Himself!

The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice: hail stones and coals of fire (Psalm 18:13),

Here we see the cold and the hot breath, the hailstones and the coals of fire. The hailstones speak of His humility, while the coals of fire speak of His exaltation. Note the divine order: first, the hailstones, the cold, the humility; second, the coals of fire, the hot, the exaltation. God has established this principle, this doctrine, over and over in His Word. Before honor (hot) is humility (cold).

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (Revelation 15:2).

These saints are not *under* the Altar; they are seen standing on the Sea of Glass, or on the Heavenly Laver. These are victorious warriors against the Antichrist who have prevailed over his image, his mark, and the number of his name. The Beast is the Antichrist himself. And his image, which will be set up in the temple in Jerusalem to be worshipped, will have power to do fantastic things. This image will be given life, so that it will be able to speak and do supernatural wonders. The Antichrist will introduce his mark, and all the subjects of his kingdom will bear, upon either the forehead or the hand, this etching or sculpturing of the mark of the Beast. Displaying the proud desire of the human heart to be worshipped, the Antichrist will cause his mark, which is the imprint of his own image, to be placed on everyone possible. Through His mark his presence will be seen and felt everywhere. Also, the Antichrist will have his number, which in the Greek means to expiate sin. The power of this number 666 will be so great that people wearing it will be mesmerized into thinking their sins are forgiven. The power of the number is such that it will set people's minds at ease and make them feel good, make them feel secure. But it is only a dream, and a rude and horrible awakening awaits them all. The number of the Beast is a number of enchantment with power to make an illusion seem real.

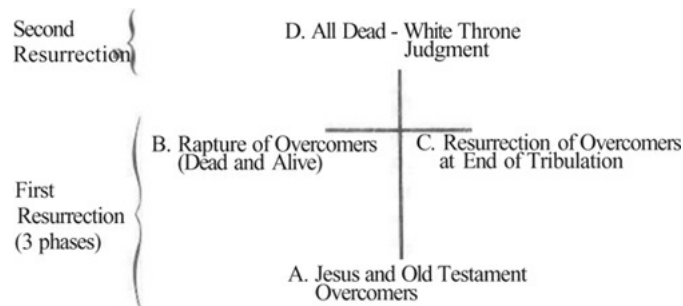
All of this is no small battle for these saints to war against. They gain spiritual victory over the Antichrist and all that pertains to him, but in doing so, they have to give up their physical lives. Although they cannot be in the Bride of Christ, nor can they come any higher than the Courtyard in their stature, they have come to the highest position in the Courtyard, that of the Laver. They stand on the Sea of Glass, having the harps of God in their hands. The harp represents certain degrees of humility. Since this group of White Robed ones possessed harps, we know they were capable of making the beautiful tones and melodies of humility.

The Sea of Glass saints will be resurrected at the end of the tribulation period to assist in the millennial reign of Christ on the earth. God always rewards the overcomer, and this group of victorious saints is no exception.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6).

The resurrection of the ones who stood on the Sea of Glass takes place after the battle of Armageddon, and after the full stature of fallen Lucifer is cast into the Bottomless Pit and bound there for a thousand years. Then these victorious saints are resurrected to assist in the rule and reign of the Bridegroom and His Bride in the millennial reign of peace upon the earth.

While we are on the matter of resurrection, let us call your attention to a few facts about it. The first resurrection, which is *the* blessed resurrection, is comprised of three phases and pertains only to overcomers. The second resurrection includes the *all* dead, all those who did not go up in the first resurrection. The stature of resurrections is as follows:



The word *resurrection* means to stand again, to stand upright, to recover moral and spiritual truths. We are viewing the bodily aspect of resurrection for all dead. Whether saints or sinners, *ail* will experience physical resurrection in either the first or the second resurrection.

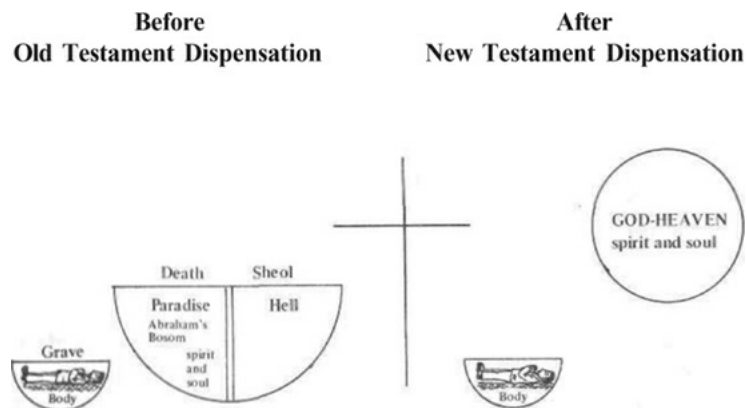
A. JESUS AND OLD TESTAMENT OVERCOMERS

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and *many* [not all] bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:51-53).

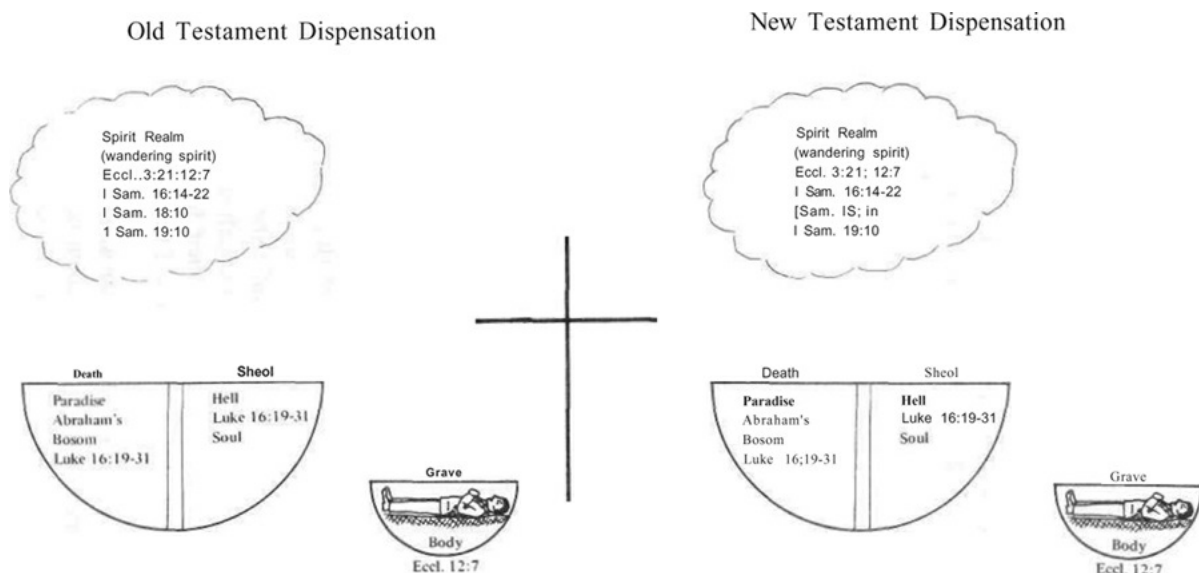
God provided, through the law of animal sacrifice, a blood covering for man's sin, and thereby assured him a spiritual rest after death. Although animal blood could not do away with sin, it could cover it, until the time of the shedding of the Blood of Jesus Christ. God's law stated, "...without shedding of blood is no remission [of sin]" (Hebrews 9:22). In another Scripture we read, "...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). Then Jesus came with His Living Blood. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..." (Hebrews 9:28). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified...now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:14-18). The offering of the body of Jesus Christ was a once-and-for-all sacrifice—one sacrifice for sins forever (Hebrews 10:10-12).

At death, Old Testament believers could not go into the immediate presence of the Lord because the blood of animals could only cover sin; it could not take it away. In the Old Testament Dispensation, upon the death of a believer, his body went *to* the grave, and his soul and spirit went to Paradise, also called *death* and *Abraham's bosom*. After the Blood of Jesus was applied to the Mercy Seat in Heaven, the spirit and soul of a believer could go directly into the presence of the LORD (II Corinthians 5:8).

TWOFOLD SEPARATION OF BELIEVERS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CROSS



At death, a sinner suffers a threefold separation of his being: his body goes to the grave, his soul goes to hell, and his spirit ascends upward to God. "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" (Ecclesiastes 3:21).



COMPLETE SEPARATION OF A WICKED PERSON ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CROSS

The first resurrection includes three phases which we shall designate as A, B, and C. The first phase (A) was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the firstfruits, and the Old Testament overcomers. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:20). The message of the angel at the empty tomb to the two Marys as they came early on Easter morning was: "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him..." (Matthew 28: 5-7).

But this was not all, for there were others resurrected in this first phase. After Jesus Christ took the keys of Death and **Hell** from the Devil and arose from the dead, He went back to Paradise for the saints who were overcomers, and He brought them up after He was resurrected.

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and *many* [not all] bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:51-53).

Not all of the Old Testament saints were resurrected at this time. Only those who had attained unto the better resurrection mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews came up with Jesus Christ. They became eligible to come up at this time because they overcame their circumstances of suffering, persecution, and tortures, for example. These saints had crucified their self-life, denied themselves, followed God's will in their lives, to prove they had chosen spiritual truth over the things of this present world.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might OBTAIN A BETTER RESURRECTION: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (Hebrews 11:33-37).

They endured all of this because they had their eyes upon a *better resurrection*, the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection..." (Revelation 20:6).

Let us rehearse the order of events as they transpired in this first phase of the first resurrection. Jesus Christ took our place as sinners, and died upon the Cross; therefore He experienced the threefold separation of sinners. His body rested in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; His spirit was committed into the hands of the Father; and His soul, accompanied by the Christ, went into hell. The Christ, the King of glory, the LORD strong and mighty, wrested the keys of death and hell from the hands of the Devil (Psalm 24). On resurrection morning Jesus Christ came forth, triumphant over death, to ascend to the Father and to present His shed Blood in the Tabernacle in Heaven. However, the power of a hungry heart caused Him to detour from His course for a few moments. While Mary Magdalene wept at the empty sepulchre, Jesus suddenly appeared before her.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:17).

According to the law, the Old Testament priest could not be touched by anyone or anything, lest he be defiled, as he carried the blood from the Brazen Altar to the Mercy Seat in the Holiest of Holies on the day of Atonement. This is why Jesus could not be touched until He had fulfilled His duty as High Priest and offered His Blood to be applied to the Mercy Seat on the Throne of Grace in Heaven. The only person to see Jesus at this time was Mary. Jesus ascended alone into Heaven on this occasion. The Blood had not yet been applied in Heaven to make an atonement for sin, so it was impossible for the Old Testament overcoming saints -to accompany Him at this time.

His mission was completed, and Jesus Christ returned to earth to be seen visibly by many for a period of forty days.

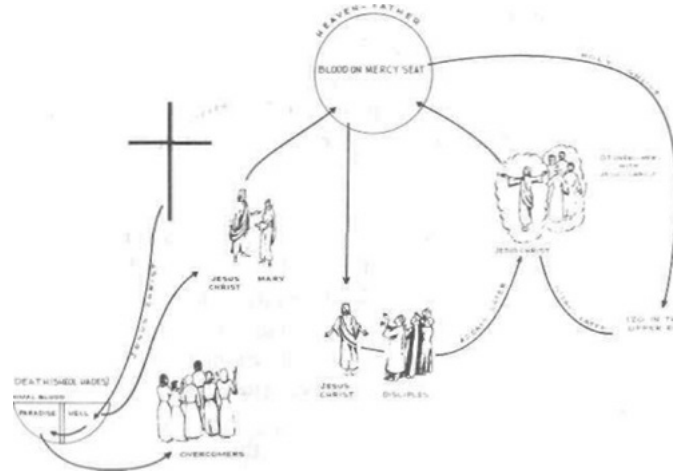
And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: fori know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you..And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him (Matthew 28:5-9).

Now they could touch Him. In fact, it was important that they could bear witness of His physical resurrection. By touching Him, they were able to declare that He was flesh and bone and not simply a spirit. When the veil was rent in the temple in Jerusalem, “the graves were opened; and *many* [not all] bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many” (Matthew 27:51-53).

After forty days, Jesus ascended again into Heaven, and took with Him the Old Testament overcomers, “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9). Ten days later, the Holy Ghost came with power, and with Him, the gifts that were to function through the body of Christian believers:

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men (Ephesians 4:8).

The Old Testament overcomers had been held captive by death in Paradise until the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now He makes them *His* captives. True freedom is a state of mind and spirit, and therefore is not dependent in any way upon our outward circumstances. Jesus Christ sets the souls of men free. When we become His captive, then we are really free. So as He ascended into Heaven the last time, He took with Him “captivity captive” and on the day of Pentecost “gave gifts unto men.”



B. THE RAPTURE

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

The second phase of the first resurrection (B) is the Rapture, the time when Jesus Christ shall appear in the sky to catch away the *overcomers* out of the New Testament Dispensation. The dead shall be raised first, and then the living shall be changed and caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. The rest of the dead believers do not come up until the resurrection of ALL dead.

C. TRIBULATION SAINTS

These overcoming saints are seen standing on the Sea of Glass, or the Laver in the Courtyard of the Heavenly Tabernacle in Revelation 15. They overcame the Beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name. This is the (c) or third and last phase of the first resurrection. These will be resurrected at the end of the tribulation period.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years (Revelation 20:4).

Verse five puts the final closing on this special and privileged first resurrection: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection," meaning that this is the end of the first resurrection. So we see that the first resurrection includes the Old Testament overcomers, the raptured overcomers, and the tribulation overcomers in Revelation 15.

D. ALL DEAD - Great White Throne Judgment

The second and final resurrection, that of the Great White Throne Judgment, is the resurrection of the ALL dead. This will take place after the millennial reign of Jesus and His Bride on the earth. Three burial places are mentioned in Revelation in connection with this last resurrection: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them..." (Revelation 20:13). So we see that the Sea (Bottomless Pit), Death, and Hell, give up their dead at the last resurrection.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the

books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death (Revelation 20:12-14).

This second resurrection includes those believers who are still held in Paradise or Death from the Old Testament Dispensation. The *ALL dead* come out of four places. Death (the resting place of Old Testament saints who were not resurrected in the first resurrection because they were not overcomers), Hell (the abode of the wicked dead, the souls of men from the Old and New Testament Dispensations), Sea (the Bottomless Pit, the place of punishment *under* the earth, for the souls from the prehistoric earth), and (4) from the dust (New Testament believers who were not overcomers). This is the Sea, or the Bottomless Pit out of which the Antichrist ascends. The Book of Life is opened here which proves that there are believers included among the all dead who stand before the White Throne of judgment. They are judged according to their works at this time. The Gospel of John records this second resurrection.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which at) that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28,29).

Jesus is speaking here of the second resurrection at which time some will go into the resurrection of life and others into the resurrection of damnation, In none of the three phases of the first resurrection do ALL hear His voice and come forth, so the above Scripture could not possibly refer to the first resurrection. At the first resurrection *all* were raised to resurrection of life, so if some were raised to the resurrection of damnation, this has to be speaking of a second resurrection. Phases (A) and (B) of the first resurrection included overcomers who will be in the Wedding Party. None in these groups, then, are resurrected to damnation. The third group are those who overcome during the tribulation period. They will be resurrected to rule and reign with Jesus Christ on earth for one thousand years of peace; therefore, neither is this group raised to damnation. In the second resurrection, all dead, both believers and unbelievers, will be resurrected together to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment.

Upon their death, the souls and spirits of New Testament believers go directly to be with the Lord in Heaven. However, if believers have not been overcomers, their bodies are not resurrected until the ALL dead resurrection, at which time their spirit and soul will be brought out of Heaven and joined to the dust of their resurrected, earthly bodies. The Prophet Daniel makes note of this fact;

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2).

Daniel is referring to the ALL dead resurrection when believers and unbelievers come up together. Some believers have to wait for the second resurrection because they failed to meet the conditions to come up in one of the three phases of the first resurrection.

An overcomer is one who rules over his carnal mind, will, and desires of the flesh. First we must see and acknowledge the flesh which is contrary to the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:17), and is at enmity against God (Romans 8:7). Until we see what is within us that must be overcome, we cannot be an overcomer. To be an overcomer means that we are trampling underfoot everything in our carnal nature that is unlike Jesus. We rule over Self, rather than letting it rule over us. The term *overcoming* does not necessarily imply perfection and completion, but it means that we deal with our carnal nature as God reveals it to us. Too often we cater to the flesh when we should be repenting and confessing it before the Lord until He cleanses and delivers us from it through His shed Blood. If we walk according to the flesh, with no desire to crucify it, then we are not overcoming.

Having completed our review on the stature of the resurrections, let us return to our study of the Laver and its water. From studying the type and figure in the Mosaic Tabernacle, we gain much understanding of the second and greater Tabernacle, Jesus Christ. We look, then, with much interest upon the first tabernacle, the Mosaic Tabernacle built in the wilderness. First was the blood sacrifice, God's sin offering, God's sacrificial Lamb which depicts the experience of salvation through the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. The second experience was of the fire coming down from Heaven upon the sacrifice; this fire typed the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, These experiences were found at the Brazen Altar. Then came the Laver with its water. These three experiences are alluded to in Acts 2:38.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent [blood-salvation], and be baptized every one of you [water baptism] in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [the fire] (Acts 2:38).

In the Laver experience we take on the Name (nature) of Jesus. And in the washing of the water there, we are sanctified from the power of indwelling sins. Daily cleansing is needed in addition to the initial overall washing.

And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water (Exodus 29:4).

After being initially cleansed, the priests returned daily to the Laver and its foot, for a fresh cleansing of their hands and their feet. Enough water was released from the Laver into its foot, the low humble place, to suffice for each daily cleansing.

All this is significant in our experience now. God's Word tells us where the children of Israel received this water.

And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).

Israel was out in the wilderness and her source of water supply was from the spiritual Rock, which was Christ. We recall that Christ is the name of the Word, whereas JESUS IS THE NAME OF THE MAN. Turning to Deuteronomy 32, we see that this Rock was God,

Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God, He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he (Deuteronomy 32:3,4).

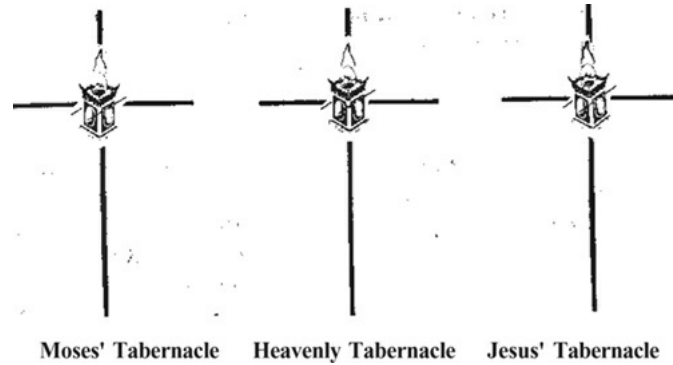
So Christ is the Rock, and the Rock is God, or the Word of Truth. We see three portions of the water: first, the unlimited supply found in the Rock, Himself; second, the water stored in the top of the Laver; and third, the small portion of the water released daily into the foot of the Laver. All of this is a figure, a shadow, a type, of the three degrees of living Water found in Christ, the Rock. In order for our spiritual foundation to be properly and sufficiently laid, we must take on the Name of Jesus Christ in our experience at the Laver. This we do when we are buried outwardly in water baptism, buried into His name, baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (which is the name of Jesus Christ) (Ephesians 3:14,15).

But we also must return daily to the Laver for fresh cleansing and sanctification, dying daily as Paul did (1 Corinthians 15:31). Our hands and our feet must be washed in His Name; name means nature, character, and authority. The foot of the Laver is a portion of humility. We have to bend low to receive its ministration of cleansing. Notice, too, the cleansing waters are not released all at once, but slowly portioned out, a new portion of His Name (His nature) each day for fresh application. Keep in mind that this is Rock water, Christ water, spiritual water of which we are partaking. As we wash in the living water of the Word of God, we partake of His Name; we partake of His nature, character, and authority. In this way we experience daily sanctification, a laying aside, a burying of our old nature into the death of Jesus, that we might take on the new nature of Jesus Christ, and rise up daily to walk in newness of life, His resurrection life.

This is compulsory cleansing if we desire to enter the Holy Place, a higher realm in spiritual stature. If we want to remain an ordinary Israelite, as it were, and remain in the Courtyard at the Brazen Altar with just a blood and fire experience, then we do not have to be concerned with the Laver. But, if we desire to use our privileges as a priest and enter into the Holy Place, we must pass through the Laver experience and prepare for this sacred privilege.

This same Laver is seen in the Heavenly Tabernacle. We know from the shadow and type, that the Heavenly Laver, or the Sea of Glass, also bears the water of the Christ, the Word. After being washed and sanctified at the Laver, we can then progress into the Holy Place to the next piece of furniture, the Golden Altar of Incense. This same piece of furniture is seen in the Heavenly Tabernacle as well.

III. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE



The Altar of Incense is a very important piece of furniture because it joins the vertical bar (the authoritative will of God) with the horizontal bar (the surrendered, humility side of God's will).



The Altar of Incense is the heart of the Stature in all three tabernacles. This is the place where incense was offered. The incense in the Old Testament Tabernacle was a type of prayer. The five ingredients that made up the sacred incense represented the Name of Jesus with its five letters.⁴ Exodus 30:34-38 specifies the ingredients and refers to them as a perfume which filled the entire sanctuary with fragrance. The perfume was released when the high priest placed the incense upon the fire which he carried in his censer from the Brazen Altar in the Courtyard. It takes the Fire of the Holy Ghost to release the fragrance of the Name of Jesus in our prayer lives. At the Golden Altar of Incense, our prayer life is formed within us, which consists of asking prayer, intercessory prayer, and travailing prayer. But the Fire of the Holy Ghost is an essential ingredient in our prayer life, even as it was in the Holy Place of the Old Testament Tabernacle.

LORD, I cry unto thee; make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips (Psalm 141:1-3).

When we leave the Laver, our next elevation or progression of growth in the stature of Jesus Christ is the prayer life we enter into at the Altar of Incense. Here we take on a new joining with the sweet and fragrant Name of Jesus. Our praying is effectual only as it is joined to the authority and power of the Name of Jesus.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it (John 14:13,14).

Let us turn to Revelation eight where we see the Golden Altar in Heaven. We never need to be confused in regard to these altars, for the Brazen Altar in the Courtyard is always called *the altar* and the altar in the Holy Place is designated as the *Golden Altar*. As is the type, so is the Heavenly Golden Altar in every detail.

And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's

hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound (Revelation 8:2-6).

Just as the Old Testament priest came before the Golden Altar of prayer, so does the angel come to the Golden Altar with the golden censer filled with fire from off the Brazen Altar. Accompanying the incense and the fire are the prayers of the saints. Does this include the prayers of all believers, regardless of their spiritual status? In Romans 1:6,7 we find our answer.

Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, *called to be saints*; Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:6,7).

The word *saint* comes from the word that means holy. It is the same Greek word used for *Holy Ghost*, implying holiness. Therefore, a saint is a holy one. We know that all Christians pray, but many do not come to the Golden Altar in their prayer lives. They pray out in the Courtyard, spiritually speaking. Only the prepared and sanctified come to minister in the Holy Place at the Golden Altar. The Apostle Paul projects this same distinction when he prays.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power (Ephesians 1:17-19).

What is the hope of God's calling in our lives? Is it just to be an ordinary Christian, a worldly Christian, a carnal Christian, one that is trying to just get by? Or is our vision on the prize of the high calling of God? The apostle prayed that Christians would have their eyes opened to see the hope of His calling, the riches of His inheritance in the saints, and the greatness of His power. We understand, therefore, that these prayers, offered together with the incense and fire by the angel at the Golden Altar, are the prayers of those holy ones who have, through growth and preparation, ministered at the Golden Altar of prayer.

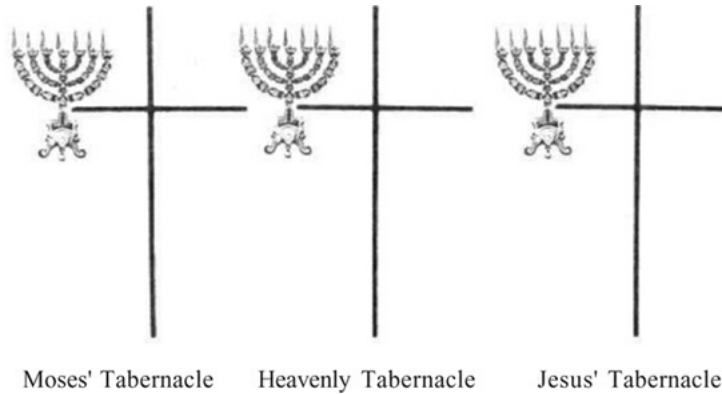
These prayers mentioned in Revelation eight are holy prayers that have been prayed by the saints of God. They are prayers that have been prayed according to the will of God through the power of the Holy Ghost. This is not carnal praying that is limited by our infirmities, but it is praying that is in harmony with the mind of the Spirit of God.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26,27).

When we pray out of our own understanding, sometimes we do not know whether that prayer is holy or unholy. But when we pray through the power of the Holy Ghost, in Holy Ghost intercession and travail, then we know that prayer is in accordance with the will of the Father. The Holy Ghost will not intercede through us for the will of the Father until we have first told the Lord, with words of our own understanding, that we want the will of God in our lives. This is a voluntary thing.

Some very spectacular things happened when the angel in the Heavenly Tabernacle offered up the combination of incense, fire, and prayers of the saints upon the Golden Altar. There were voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. Part of the prayers ascended up before God, and the remaining combined ingredients were cast into the earth to create a very devastating effect. Such Holy Ghost praying is earth-shaking; it shakes the earth of our own spiritual lives and will also literally shake the physical earth during the tribulation period: "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth" (Revelation 8:5).

IV. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK



The Golden Candlestick is placed in the south side of the Tabernacle in the Holy Place; it is on the crossbar of the cross in direct line with the Golden Altar of Incense and the Table of Shewbread. As the figure of Christ hangs upon the Cross, the Candlestick is found in the Lord's right arm, His arm of light and wisdom that was accessible only to the priest. Even so, only the believers who have been made a priest unto God can enter into the Living Word and enjoy the beauty and splendor of His wisdom and His light. This Candlestick of pure gold pictures the light and wisdom of the divine Word of God. It is the shining forth of the purity of divine light. The central shaft, with its six branches, supports seven lights. The number seven is the number of completeness. So we have complete divine light in the Golden Candlestick.

This same Golden Candlestick is seen in the Heavenly Tabernacle; however, it is presented in a different form. Although the form changes, it still conveys the identical truth seen in the Candlestick.

And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were *seven Limps of fire* burning before the throne, *which are the seven Spirits of God* (Revelation 4:5).

...Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the *seven Spirits* which are before his throne (Revelation 1:4),

The Candlestick of the Lamb has seven Spirits, seven lamps, seven horns, and seven eyes.

A. SEVEN SPIRITS

...Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne (Revelation 1:4).

These seven lights are Spirits; therefore, they can enter into our hearts and become one with us. They can illuminate our whole being with the light of the Lamb's humble mind.

B. SEVEN LAMPS

...and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God (Revelation 4:5).

The word *burning* means to set on fire, kindle, consume, light. When the light, the revelation of God's Word shines into our hearts, a burning takes place. We are set on fire, as it were; we are kindled with a new desire, with a new hunger to please Him. This light has mighty power to consume our ideas, our motives, our wood, hay and stubble, anything that is unlike Jesus Christ,

Although light from the Courtyard could not enter into the Holy Place, the lamps in the Holy Place shine forth into all the earth. We cannot stumble along in the light of our carnal mind and expect to receive the rays of the Candlestick of the Lamb. But as we prepare ourselves in the Courtyard with the Blood, Fire, and Water, then we are privileged, praise His Name, to enter into the Holy Place and experience spiritual praying at the Golden Altar. While

praying in intercession and travail, the mighty light of His wisdom, understanding, and knowledge at the Candlestick, shines down into the darkened recesses of our carnal heart, revealing and consuming those things that are not like the nature of Jesus.

C. SEVEN HORNS

...in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns (Revelation 5:6).

Besides being seven Spirits and seven lamps, these seven lights are also horns of power to be used for aggressive and defensive warfare. The light of God's Word will protect the spiritual substance we have already gained. It will also reach forth in its aggressive power to lay hold of new treasures. When we feel weak and begin to stagger in our Christian walk, we need to reflect upon the truth that our Lamb has seven horns, complete power. Nothing is too big for Him to conquer; nothing is too high for Him to bring low. We cannot fail if we will put our faith in Him who has complete power.

D. SEVEN EYES

...stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth (Revelation 5:6).

The seven lights of the Candlestick are seven Spirits, seven lamps, seven horns and also seven eyes. The light of His Word enables us to see as He sees. We cannot deal with our fleshly nature until we see it as He does. Confession takes place in the light, and as the light of the Candlestick shines forth with complete discerning power into darkened areas of our hearts, it is easy to bend low at His feet in humility and to beg forgiveness for the sins of our fleshly nature His seven eyes have revealed. How grateful we should be for the privilege of *being exposed*. In the beginning of our spiritual walk we draw back from such exposure, but as we press on with Jesus, we begin to crave to be pleasing to Him; therefore, we cry and beg for Jesus to reveal the many areas where we are unlike Him.

These seven lights are also manifested in the life of Christ, the Lamb of God. The Apostle John was the only one who had the revelation of the sevenfold light, or the sevenfold Spirit, that Jesus possessed. He obtained that revelation because he kept his head pillowed on the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The seven lights that Jesus Christ possessed, and which He revealed to John are as follows:

1. The Light of Life

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him (Colossians 1:16).

a. Natural Life

Our natural life came from God. If we would only consider how fearfully and wonderfully we have been made, we would have a greater sense of appreciation for life and its potentialities. Certainly we have no right to abuse or misuse it. If for no other reason than His creatorship, we belong to God. The Devil never created us, so we have no right to serve him. We should serve the Living God of light and truth. If we would appreciate our natural life, God would bless us with its light, and even this light could help us find God.

b. Spiritual Life

After God gives us natural life, it is not His purpose to destroy it. Rather, He purposes through Jesus Christ, to swallow up our mortal life with immortality, and thereby preserve it for eternity. God desires to give us spiritual life

that will be joined to our natural life. If we fail to accept this union, our natural life will be joined to spiritual death. Spiritual death will join our natural life for an eternal existence apart from God's life and blessing in the New Heavens, the New Earth, or the New City. We are all going to live eternally in one place or another, either in life or in death.

The origin of this light of life is the Word, the Christ. We recall that the Candlestick was made of solid gold—no wood whatsoever. Since wood speaks of the humanity of Jesus, we understand that the light from this Candlestick was wholly divine. The human side of Jesus Christ contributed nothing to this light in the Holy Place. All light and all life (even naturally speaking) has its origin in the Word of God. No wonder the Devil hates the Word, for there is no life without the Word, the Christ.

2. The Light of Conscience

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not (John 1:6-10).

Every man has this light of conscience within him when he is born into this world in the natural. Man was created by God and God implanted within him a light of conscience that would guide him to God if he would follow it. If man will walk according to his conscience, it will lead him to Jesus Christ. God will then begin to renovate and cleanse man's conscience so that it will become an ever increasing light for guidance. This is the experience of all believers as they walk on with God; their conscience is ever being enlightened so that they cannot do some things today that they used to do in the past.

If we will live in the Holy Place, under the light of conscience, our sensitivity to the will of God will increase, and we will know better how to please the Lord. We must never govern our behavior according to the sin-darkened conscience of others, for they have no spiritual comprehension. The Scripture tells us that the Light shines forth in darkness, but they comprehended it not. They utterly missed God's great gift in the person of Jesus Christ.

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another (Romans 2:14,15).

Proof of the light of conscience is often seen by missionaries as they come with the Gospel to foreign lands. Although the heathen have no previous influence of the Gospel, yet they do have similar convictions of right and wrong. Of course, there are exceptions to the case, but it is an amazing fact that often the same awareness of conscience is found among the various peoples of the world. Even if the heathen had only the eyes of the seven lights to walk by, they would lead them straight to God. This does not minimize our responsibility to preach the Gospel to all the world, but it does establish all men's responsibility to walk before God in accordance to the light that has been given them. Man is without excuse!

3. The Light of Reproof

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproof. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God (John 3:19-21).

The light of reproof ministers along with the light of conscience. We all need the light of reproof to minister in our temples. **For** example, if a misunderstanding and conflict arises with someone, we turn to a friend for consolation and encouragement. We turn to someone who will take **OUR** side so that we can feel justified in blaming the other person. We walk away from such an experience feeling guiltless and light-hearted in the flesh, but spiritually we gain nothing from the incident. On the other hand, if we would sit down under the light of the

Candlestick, the light of reproof would begin to shine and expose our own needs, our own guilt, rather than putting the blame on the other person.

There is comfort in the reproof of the Lord Jesus Christ. His light of reproof is warming and comforting. Even as we enjoy soaking up the warmth of the natural sunshine, so His light carries with it a sense of warmth. As we progress in our spiritual journey, we often reach an impasse. What a relief it is to come and sit under the Candlestick until the light of reproof begins to reach down into the soul and bring understanding of the problem. His light of reproof exposes our un-Christlike attitudes and dispositions. His light sanctifies and cleanses, and it leads to relief when we begin to unload and rid ourselves of these hindering factors.

This light of reproof works for sinners as well as Christians, since it works in conjunction with their conscience. But His light of reproof carries warmth, comfort, and love, for with it God intends our betterment. On the other hand, the accusations of the Devil are directed for our destruction, and come with torment and anguish. It is a privilege to come under the light of reproof as it shines forth through the Christ, the Word of the Living God.

4. The light of Burning and Shining

Jesus declared Himself to be the Light of the World. The written Word of God declared the same thing, and in Heaven we see the Lamb revealed in the same fashion. The fourth light that the Lamb possesses is the light, the eye, the Spirit, the Lamp of the burning and shining light.

If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me (John 5:31-35).

Jesus declares that John the Baptist was a burning and a shining light. John possessed one of these eyes of light, too. The word *burning* in the Greek means to set on fire, to consume, to rouse or excite interest or feelings. Although John was just the friend of the Bridegroom (John is not in the Bride), he had within him this lamp of burning fire that kindled his love for the Bridegroom. He came out into public life clothed in camel's hair, girded about with a leather girdle, and eating a diet of locusts and wild honey. Yet his eyes glowed with a love, a faith, an anticipation for the appearance of the Bridegroom that ignited the hearts of others with the same expectancy. The Jews were looking for the redemption of Israel. They were waiting and longing for their Messiah. John's burning and shining light set some of them on fire with new hope, and stirred them with feelings of excitement and expectation. Fire always creates excitement. It stirs the emotions and ignites the feelings. In fact, John was so aglow with this light of burning, that his listeners mistook him for being *The Light*. John quickly set them straight, however, by confessing that he was not that Light, but he was only the witness of it.

The word *shining* means to make a show, to declare. When coals of fire are burning within the soul, then outward shining is made manifest. It is impossible to get the shining without the burning, for it is a matter of cause and effect. To shine we must first burn. The inward burning will excite the spiritual man and the spirit and soul of the natural man as well. The seven Spirits are sent into the earth (the light shone in darkness). Even though the people of the earth do not understand it, they feel its warmth and comfort. In the type and shadow, the Candlestick stands in the Holy Place. As Christians, we find the spiritual Candlestick in the secret place, Holy Place as it were, of prayer and communion. While lifted up in the Spirit we can go directly to the fountainhead of these seven Spirits of light.

5. The Light of Sight

This light works both naturally and spiritually. We must learn to live under the light of the Candlestick, for it is here that we receive the Spirit of sight, and we need to possess this in order to have both natural and spiritual sight. It works this way. A truth is presented, but we just cannot seem to grasp or understand it. But if we will stay under the Candlestick, the Spirit of sight will begin to penetrate,, moving from the natural eye into the eye of the soul (imagination) and on through the eye of the spirit (faith) and down in through the eye of understanding into the heart. All of a sudden, like a shaft of light splitting through the darkness, understanding and light come. This is the

ministry of the Spirit of light. Everyone of us needs this light.

A fine example of this principle is found in the story of how Jesus restored the sight of the man who had been born blind. The disciples questioned Jesus as to the cause of his blindness, saying, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Sometimes God permits afflictions so that He might have opportunity to demonstrate His healing power. It was so in this case. Using this occasion to teach them further, Jesus continued saying "I am the light of the world." He introduces them to the fact that He possesses the Spirit of sight. It lies in His power to give sight, both naturally and spiritually.

When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent), He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing (John 9:6,7).

This may seem quite ridiculous in the eyes of the bystanders, but there was spiritual meaning to what Jesus was doing. In the eastern countries, *spitting* was used as a visible demonstration that one was canceling the authority of the words, the power, and influence of another. Before the blind man could be healed, it was necessary that Jesus cancel the authority of the Devil from which this blindness had come. There are things in our personal experience to which we are blind until Jesus Christ comes to cancel the authority of the darkness and blindness that is on us. When He puts spit on us, as it were, then we are able to see. What works in the natural realm, works in the spiritual realm as well.

Having washed in the pool as Jesus instructed him, the man "came seeing." As usual, the doubters found it difficult to acknowledge the miracle. At first they would not admit that it was the same man, but after reluctantly admitting that it was, they began to question him further.

Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind (John 9:10-13).

Because Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath, it was the consensus of opinion that "this man is not of God." However, when faced with an obvious miracle, a minority decided that such a miracle was impossible for any sinner to do. Finally, they brought the man's parents, who verified that his blindness was from birth, but because of fear of the Jews, they would not commit themselves as to how their son had been so remarkably healed. The man who had once been blind suffered from no such fear. The healed man was adamant in confessing the truth, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." They were not going to talk him out of his healing. Notice his bold declaration.

I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disci pie...The man answered and said unto them. Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing (John 9:27-34).

So, blinded by their unbelief, the Pharisees found it impossible to even acknowledge the reality of the healing that was so evident before their own eyes. Doctrinal bigotry blinded them to the logical reasoning of the healed man. Emotionally biased, they answered him saying, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" And they cast him out.

We see this same degree of blindness of unbelief, the same class of doctrinal bigotry, and the same measure of emotional bias among God's people today. It only confirms the necessity of our continual exposure to God's Candlestick. Only the Lamb of God, who possesses these seven lights of God, can penetrate through the darkness and blindness of our ignorance. Too often it is far easier to simply cast the person out, for it requires effort and sacrifice to wait upon the Lord until the light breaks through.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him (John 9:35-38).

Now that the healed man was cast out, Jesus quickly came to his side. After healing the man, Jesus had withdrawn from him to leave him to himself. It was necessary that the man be tested; he must prove his appreciation for the natural light given him. Although he suffered for this light, he held tenaciously to his experience. So Jesus came.

He addresses Jesus with the Hebrew word *Adonai*, which is to say, Master husband, Lord, possessor. Although he was already aware of the deity of Christ, for he acknowledged Him as Lord, yet he did not know who the Son of God really was.

His natural sight now restored, he was to receive still further illumination, the sight of the Spirit which gives him the revelation of the Bridegroom, Himself. Earlier in his experience, he named his healer *Jesus*. On this second encounter, he acknowledged Him as *Lord*. The first time, the man met Jesus, the One who gave him natural sight. The second time, he met the Lord, the One who gave him spiritual sight. Boldly Jesus declared Himself to be the Son of God. Again, the man responded in the same way. He did not address Him as “Son of God,” but he still acknowledged Him as “Lord” (master, husband, possessor). And then he bowed before Him in worship. He saw beyond the man that stood before him, and worshipped the divine Christ that indwelt Him.

What greater light could any man experience than to have a sight of the Lord Himself, to see and grasp who He really is? Such a Spirit of sight should place a man in humble worship before the Lord.

6. The Light of the Way

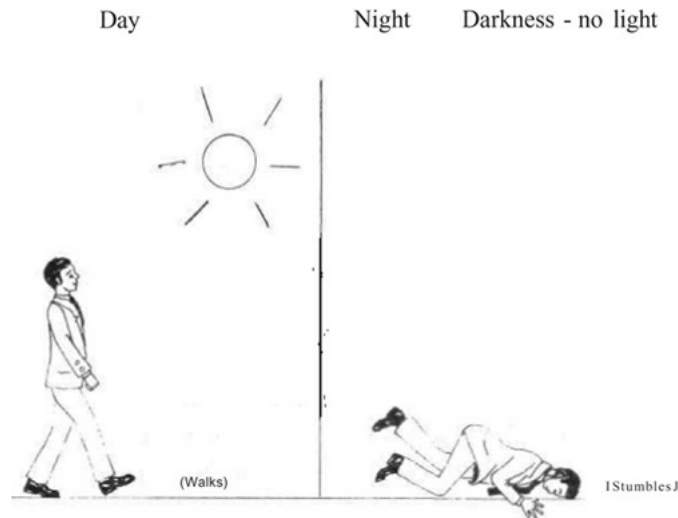
God has made a way for us to walk in the will of God, but in order to walk in it we must have the light of the way. Jesus displayed this light in His experience with Lazarus, who was sick unto death. Jesus received word of Lazarus' sickness, but He purposely delayed until Lazarus died.

Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him (John 11:7-10).

Two days later Jesus told His disciples that they were to return to Judaea where Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, lived. This made no sense to the disciples, for the Judeans were seeking to stone Jesus. What on earth would He go back there for?

By way of explanation and instruction, Jesus used a natural picture to convey His meaning. In connection with natural light, a man who walks by day can walk without stumbling because he sees, not by his own light, but by the outward light of day. On the other hand, if a man walks by night, when there is no daylight, when there is little outward light to guide him, he stumbles because he possesses no light of his own.

NATURAL MAN



This was Jesus' way of rebuking them for doubting His decision. They were judging the situation according to the natural man, who is limited to carnal light. The natural man has no inner light. He does not possess the light of the Candlestick to light his way, so he stumbles. He can walk only by somebody else's light, and when night time comes, he falls and stumbles because he has no inner light within himself.

"These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend, Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Jesus said, "I go." He was saying, "I go to Judaea where they are trying to kill me, where there is darkness and death, no outward light, but I can go and walk and not stumble because I have inside light. I am the Sun of Righteousness. It matters not whether it is night or day, for I walk not by the outward light of others, but I walk by my inward light."

This is why many people cannot stand when they walk in the midst of darkness, death, and unbelief in the things of God. They have not the Light of the Way to illuminate their inward spiritual man. They walk in dependence upon the outward light of their circumstances. When it gets dark, they stumble and fall. They stumble in discouragement, doubt, and fear, because there is not sufficient light of the way within. It takes the sixth Spirit, the light of the way, to stand firmly and yet be able to bend down in mercy to those who are wallowing in the darkness of discouragement and defeat. We can help them only if we are full of the light of the way ourselves. If not, they will pull us down in their pit of darkness. If the light of the way is strong within us, we dare to walk anywhere in the will of God, regardless of the depths of sin and the powers of darkness.

Jesus said in so many words, "I am going to Judaea. I have the light of the way within me. I can see clearly which way to go in Judaea. My time is not yet; I will go there and show forth the glory of God. They will not pull me down into their death, darkness, and destruction. I have the eye to see how to go..."

The greatest secret to learn in all the world is learning to walk in darkness. Darkness, at times, comes suddenly upon us like a flood. We will not stand in those experiences unless we have laid hold of the light of the Candlestick. In the Tabernacle, the priest "ordered the Lampstand" every evening and every morning. They had light in the night, first, and then in the day. If we learn to walk by the light in the night time, we will have no problem walking in the day. We can walk only as we have the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Golden Candlestick, the Light of the Way, shining within us.

7. The Light of Confidence in Suffering

And Jesus answered them, saying. The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: Others said, An angel spake to him, Jesus

answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be Lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them (John 12:23-36).

Without the light of confidence in suffering, we murmur and complain and question God. Even Job had more light of confidence in the midst of his suffering than most Christians do today. The Devil accused Job before God by saying Job served God just for financial benefits and material prosperity. We must all be tested in this respect, for many do serve God for various personal benefits, God is faithful to allow us to be tested along this line, so He did with Job. One calamity happened after the other until Job was utterly stripped of all his possessions. He was left with nothing but his complaining wife. Proverbs states that a contentious woman is like a continual dropping. In other words, a nagging spirit can run a person out of his mind. Job's wife advised him to just curse God and be done with it. But Job lifted his hands and said, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be the Name of the Lord." That is more than many can say, but Job could say it because he had a measure of the light of confidence worked in his heart.

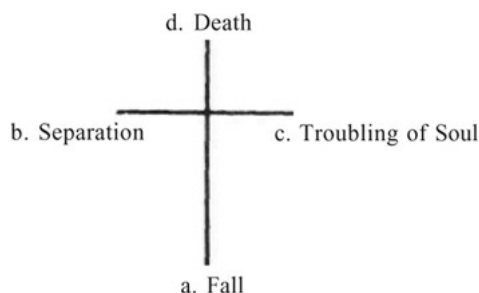
A second time Satan came before the Lord and demanded further testing of Job. God gave him permission to touch Job's body with affliction, but restrained him from taking Job's life. Soon, poor Job was found suffering in utter misery on an ash heap outside of the city. In all his desperation, Job began to complain. His murmuring showed that he did not have enough of the light of confidence in the midst of suffering. If we have enough of this light, we can drive back the powers of darkness with the seven lights of the Lamb and His seven horns of aggressive power.

Because we are lacking in the light of confidence in suffering, we often fail to do the will of God. We are afraid of suffering. Suffering is sure to those who serve God, who preach the truth, who live holiness, who declare Jesus Christ in all they say and do, but without the light of confidence we are hindered and we stumble over the suffering.

Job had to learn more of the light of confidence in suffering. He fell short on the second testing. The Bible says he roared all night long with his murmurings, complainings, and accusations against God. Finally, Elihu (a type of Jesus Christ the Mediator) came along and began to put his finger on the problem. Did Job think he was more righteous than God? After Job began to humble himself, God came down to talk with him and the light began to shine. The Lamb's horns of light began to drive back the powers of darkness from off his reasoning, and Job began to understand. Then the light of confidence began to shine into him, and he repented in sackcloth and ashes. Job ended up with twice as much as he had before.

God deliberately takes us through seasons of suffering in order to manifest the reality of our confidence in Him. Suffering brings us into real unity with God. It is a real marriage that endures the sufferings through the years. When husbands and wives weather the storms of life together, they have a unity with which nothing else compares. It is a unity born out of suffering. As it works in the natural, so it does in the spiritual. How else can we lay hold of the light of confidence if there is never any experiences of suffering?

Let us go back to the Scripture quoted from John 12:23-36 to see how the spiritual principle of exaltation following humility is illustrated by how we gain confidence in God through our failures. Jesus uses the illustration of a corn of wheat which falls to the ground to teach us the steps to resurrection glory. In stature form it is this:



a. Fall

...The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat *fall* into the ground...(John 12:23,24).

The kernel of wheat must first fall; that is, be put into the low place of humiliation. This is the beginning step toward resurrection glory. God has to let us fall into the low place sometimes in order to make a new beginning. How do we feel then? How is our confidence? When we have the light of confidence in suffering, it is of little concern to us when we fall into the low place of humiliation through circumstances and situations. The light of confidence reveals resurrection glory just ahead. Sometimes we fall into the low place of weakness and failure; then the Devil is always there to torment and accuse. But if we have the light of confidence, we will have the power to stand against him and resist him until he flees. With the light of confidence we can rise up and press on again toward the prize of full stature in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a Rabbi once said, "Falling down is not dead!"

In view of His illustration, Jesus concludes by saying, "Walk while ye have the light..." Of what light is He speaking? The light He has just given them. "If a grain of wheat fall..." From where did Jesus fall? He fell from the beauty and glories of Heaven. He fell from the pinnacle of exaltation and revelation into a world of humiliation and rejection. Everyone in Heaven knew who He was, but in the world few knew Him. We all have to fall in order to get the light of confidence. We have to fall from our positions of exaltation into experiences of humiliations.

b. Separation

Except a corn of wheat fall into the *ground*...(John 12:24).

The grain of wheat fell into the ground. The ground is dark and cold; it is wet and wormy. The grain of wheat is hidden and stepped upon. It is in a place of separation. Even here, we can praise God and magnify Him if we have the light of confidence shining brightly within us. Thank God for every experience that puts us *underground*. We must learn the light of confidence when we are put under ground, as it were, in the place of loneliness and darkness, for it is here we experience separation. We would not despise these places if we really had the light of confidence that Jesus Christ is sufficient for our every need in every place. How true the song, "Jesus is all I need." It is a thrill and delight to be under ground when we know Jesus is there.

c. Troubling of Soul

Now is my soul troubled;...(John 12:27).

"Now is my soul troubled," agitated, stirred, torn asunder. Was Jesus troubled because He knew He was going to die? Certainly not, for He declared, "for this cause came I unto this hour." He was troubled because He already was seeing that His disciples were not going to stay with Him. They did not have the light of confidence, so in the hour of suffering they ran away, forsaking Him. He went through His hour of darkness alone; there was not one single human that He could look to for light or encouragement.

d. Death

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (John 12:32).

Jesus referred to the death of the Cross that He was soon to experience. Death on a cross signified a curse, and crucifixion always relates to humiliation, disgrace and shame. The multitude began asking, "Who is this Son of man?" The revelation that Jesus was the Son of God had already been given. There was much discussion as to who He really was. Some said John the Baptist; others thought He was Elias, still others said Jeremias or one of the prophets. But Peter declared the God-given revelation when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). This revelation satisfied the disciples, and their confidence was sure until they realized that suffering was ahead. Then came the cross, the shame, the curse, and their confidence was gone! With the cross in view, they began to ask, "Who is this Son of God?"

Have we not done the same? When confronted with the cross, with suffering and shame, are we not tempted to doubt and question? Without the light of confidence, we all react the same.

Jesus had an answer for them. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light..." He was that Light. The light had just come out of His mouth, the light of His Word. Believe in the Light that ye may be children of the Light. Let the Word come in, believe in it, trust in it, and the light of it will enlighten the way. The disciples failed to walk in that Light, because they did not receive it and walk in it when they had opportunity to do so. I am the Light. Walk in the Light. Let the Light be a mother and a father, as it were, to you. You will be children of Light. Light and truth will be your defense and your comfort. If you become children of Light you will have some brothers and sisters of light to walk together with you. Choose not the children of darkness to walk with.

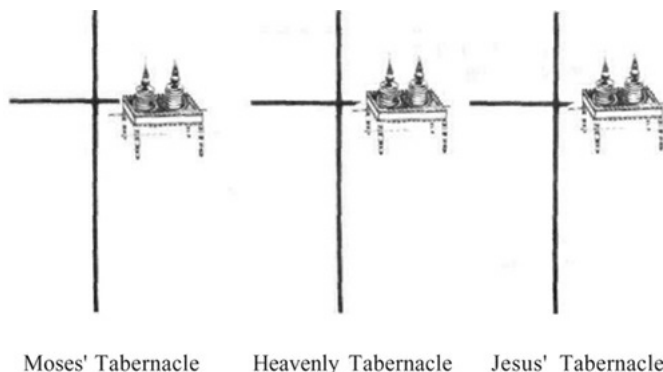
If we let the light of this seventh Spirit come into our hearts, it will give us confidence in the time of suffering. The failure of Israel to possess this seventh light is what kept her out of Canaan's land. In her sufferings, she lost her confidence in God. All of man's fears can be traced back to pride that fears suffering. It is the one thing that will keep all of us out of Canaan's land and thwart and hinder our spiritual journey in the Lord.

In concluding our study on the seven Spirits, seven Lamps, seven Horns, and seven Eyes, we have seen the seven Lights (Eyes) possessed by the Lamb, Jesus Christ. They were as follows:

1. Light of Life
2. Light of Conscience
3. Light of Reproof
4. Light of Burning and Shining
5. Light of Sight
6. Light of the Way
7. Light of Confidence in Suffering

If we, as John, will pillow our head on Jesus' heart, on the Golden Altar of Incense (the place of prayer), then we, too, will be privileged to come under the rays of light of the divine mind of Christ. Lying in this position makes it easy for us to come under the seven lights of the Candlestick.

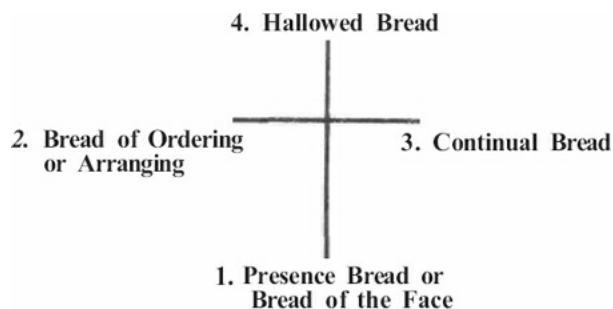
V. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD



The Table of Shewbread in Moses' Tabernacle stood in the north side in line with the Candlestick and the Altar of Incense. The Table was called a pure table on which the bread was served. Let us study, first, the different types of bread on the Table.

A. THE BREAD ON THE TABLE

Bread speaks of strength. The number twelve is the number of government, and since there were twelve loaves of bread, we know that this was governmental bread. If we partake of this bread, it will work in us the nature of subjection to His government and rule. The more we eat of Him the more we are in subjection to Him. Four different Hebrew words were translated *Shewbread*. In these four words, we see the nature of the bread. This bread was called:



1. Presence Bread or Bread of the Face

And thou shalt set upon the table Shewbread [Bread of the face or presence of God] before me alway (Exodus 25:30).

The bread of the face means to feed on, to consume, to battle as destruction, to devour, to eat, to fight, to overcome, to prevail, and to make war. A face speaks of something made known. A glimpse of the face of Jesus Christ gives strength and prevailing power to war and to overcome the enemies, both within and without,

2. Bread of Ordering

And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the Shewbread, to prepare it every sabbath (I Chronicles 9:32).

The Shewbread was also called the bread of ordering (or arranging), because it was laid out in two orderly piles, six in each row. This Hebrew word for ordering means to be expert in war. We can war only as we partake of the strength of the bread which represents the Word, the Christ. In due season, as we grow spiritually, we will partake of all twelve loaves. Our spiritual nourishment is not a haphazard affair, but we eat of the crucifixion bread and the resurrection bread as God serves it to us in His order.

3. Continual Bread

And upon the table of Shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon: (Numbers 4:7).

Shewbread also means continual bread, which means constant and regular. In this bread we find continuous and regular supply of life and strength and government,

4. Hallowed Bread

And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women. And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel. So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the Shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away (I Samuel 21:4-6).

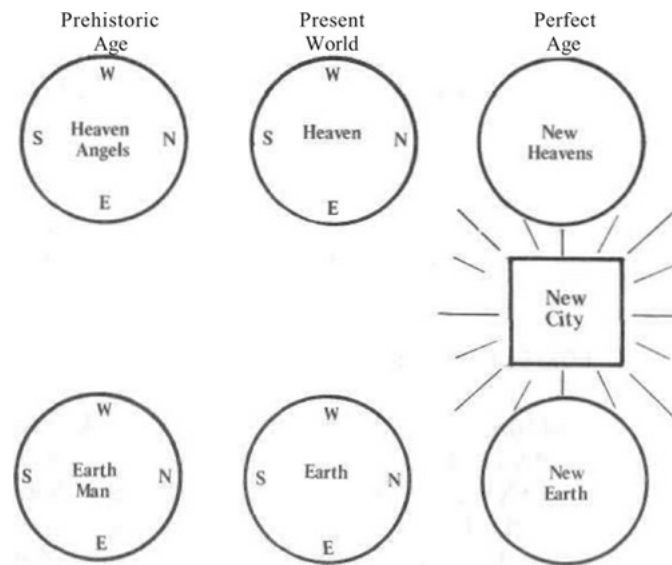
The Shewbread is called hallowed bread, holy bread. Partaking of this bread leads one to righteousness and separation from all that is unclean and impure.

B. THE POSITION OF THE TABLE

Although there is no direct reference in the Book of Revelation to the Table of Shewbread, as such, we know

from other facts that the Heavenly Tabernacle does have a Table of Shewbread. In the Mosaic Tabernacle, the Table was on the north side. Revelation 14:1 mentions Mount Zion, on top of which rests the New City (Revelation 21:10). Further study of the 21st chapter of Revelation reveals the repeated use of the number twelve, which is the number of government; thus we know that the twelve loaves of bread on the Table in Moses' Tabernacle speak of government. Out of the New City God and the Lamb govern the universes in eternity. The Book of Psalms removes all doubt concerning the eternal location of spiritual Mount Zion: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King*" (Psalm 48:2). The north side is a very significant place, for it contains many secrets and mysteries. If we are to understand the placement of the Table of Shewbread in the Heavenly Tabernacle, we must first study the North place.

Our study involves three periods of time, each distinct from the other, yet related in some respects. God always works through a threefold witness, and this is true here also. We shall see the North place (the location of the Table of Shewbread in the Heavenly Tabernacle) in the prehistoric age, our present world, and the future Perfect Age.



1. Prehistoric Age

From the very beginning in the prehistoric age, God placed His Throne in the North position of Heaven. God created angels to inhabit Heaven, and He created them with a free will so that they could freely choose to serve Him. The Word of God calls attention to one particular angel named Abaddon (Revelation 9:11), whose name means destruction. Abaddon lived in the prehistoric heaven. Prehistoric man lived on the prehistoric earth and was more closely kin to the animal creation than his successor, modern man. There are many aspects of this prehistoric heaven and earth that are hidden and obscure, for God has not chosen to reveal all of their histories to us. Nevertheless, we have a few glimpses in Scripture that unveil a number of interesting truths, and we are not left totally in the dark on this subject. Keep in mind that the Hebrew word, Abaddon, means destruction. The translators of the Old Testament chose to use the word *destruction* rather than Abaddon, but in the original language the word Abaddon is used. The name Abaddon appears four times in the Old Testament. Let us call your attention to just a few facts concerning him, since the study is too large to cover in detail at this point.

a. Naked

Hell is naked before him, and destruction [Abaddon] hath no covering (Job 26:6).

As it was in the case of Adam male and female, sin always strips away God's glorious covering of light and leaves the awareness of nakedness. This was true of Abaddon as well. Both hell and Abaddon were naked—empty of any covering of glory or hiding place. Their wills were open, naked, and exposed to the eyes of God. Because of his sin and rebellion in Heaven, Abaddon has had no personal covering since the time when God cast him into the

Bottomless Pit. “Hell and destruction [Abaddon] are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?” (Proverbs 15:11). God’s eyes are opened to inspect the nakedness and the sin of the angels in the Bottomless Pit. And what is more, God is interested in the hearts of all men, for they, too, are “before the LORD,” open and exposed to His sight.

b. Ignorant

Destruction [Abaddon] and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears (Job 28:22).

The question asked in this chapter concerns the matter of wisdom and understanding. “Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?” (Job 28:20). Back in verse twelve the question is the same, “But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?” Man knows not, nor is wisdom found in the land of the living. As human beings, we know nothing of the travailing pains in the loins of God when He brought wisdom to birth. In Proverbs we clearly see that wisdom, or Jesus in spirit and soul form, was the first to be brought forth; He was the first begotten of God’s creation.

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth (Proverbs 8:22-25).

Further testimony is added as to the location of wisdom and understanding. “The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me” (Job 28:14). Even death and Abaddon have to acknowledge that they know of wisdom and understanding only by the hearing of the ear. There is no wisdom in destruction (Abaddon), in the Bottomless Pit, or in hell.

Wisdom (Proverbs 8) is none other than the spirit and soul form of Jesus. He is the only begotten of God and we read of Him, “Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;” (Proverbs 8:30).

If God so harshly judged Abaddon and his followers, who knew of wisdom only by the hearing of the ear, how much more shall we, who know so much about the Wisdom of God, the person of Jesus Christ, be held accountable? “...of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:2,3).

As far as Abaddon was concerned, he was totally ignorant of the wisdom and understanding found in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ. Redemption is confined to Jesus Christ, and ignorance of Him shuts off the hope of salvation.

Ignorant of wisdom and understanding, Abaddon was also ignorant about the matter of faithfulness. “Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction [in Abaddon]?” (Psalm 88:1 1). How could he possibly teach us anything about faithfulness when he was not even faithful with the portion of God’s Word that God had committed unto him? If we are to know anything of God’s wisdom, understanding, and faithfulness, we cannot expect to find it with Abaddon and his cohorts. We must seek these things from the Lord Jesus Himself, who is wisdom personified.

c. The Fire of Adultery

For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction [Abaddon], and would root out all mine increase (Job 31:12).

The context, beginning with verse nine, deals with literal adultery and concludes with the thought that “It is a fire...” We know, then, that Abaddon burned with the lustful fire of adultery in the spiritual realm. From the fierceness of God’s fire of judgment against adultery, we have an indication of the enormity of this sin, in the natural realm and in the spiritual realm. The fire that God uses to judge natural and spiritual adultery comes from the very depths of God’s wrath and anger, and it reaches all the way to the Bottomless Pit to burn against the fire of adultery in Abaddon.

d. Insatiable

Hell and destruction [Abaddon] are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied (Proverbs 27:20),

Destruction is never satisfied. Abaddon was not satisfied with adultery. He let his blazing lust for strange flesh burst forth into the insatiable sin of perversion. This insatiable desire characterizes Abaddon, and it works through the eyes of men today.

If Abaddon had been content in the presence of God, with the Word of God, and with the will of God, he could have had everything that would have made him satisfied, but Abaddon chose the way of rebellion. Because of the sins of disbelief and perversion (with angels), Abaddon and other angels with him were cast out of Heaven and bound in the Bottomless Pit. “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon” (Revelation 9:11).

The sin, in the prehistoric heaven, brought forth God’s wrath and judgment, and the resulting chaos touched both Heaven and earth. Every time angels sin, they always try to force man to sin along with them. Guilty of perverting themselves one with another in Heaven, the prehistoric angels tempted and succeeded in defiling prehistoric man as well. Then prehistoric man, in turn, was guilty of perversion with animals. The satyrs referred to in Isaiah 13:20-22 were the result of this unlawful union. These perverted creatures existed in the prehistoric world. Their souls were bound in the Bottomless Pit, and their spirits were left loose and are at work in our present earth, in the spirit world. We find many evidences of this strange mixture between man and beast as depicted in the gods which the Greeks and Romans worshipped. We can understand, then, why God so strongly forbids this particular sin.

With perversion and sin comes judgment, chaos, and emptiness. When Abaddon and his fellow angels sinned in Heaven, God cast them out. He stripped them of their coverings, of their glories, and their possessions.

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:6,7).

The angels’ sin was like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, which was perversion, and they are held in everlasting chains under darkness. The angels mentioned in the Book of Jude are a different group of angels from those mentioned in II Peter 2:4,5. The angels in II Peter were held *by chains of darkness*, and they were designated to *hell*. The angels in Jude were cast into the Bottomless Pit and held *by everlasting chains under darkness*; these are the prehistoric angels. The angels referred to in II Peter 2:4 have to do with those who disobeyed in the days of Noah at the time of the flood, so these angels are related to this present world.

In the beginning, God’s creation was beautiful, fruitful, and certainly not an empty void or wasteland.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1).

...God himself that formed the earth, and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, [empty], he formed it to be inhabited:...(Isaiah 45:18).

I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger (Jeremiah 4:26).

Genesis 1:1 records God’s original creative work, but due to the rebellion led by Abaddon in Heaven, God’s original creation suffered the sudden catastrophic judgment of God. “And the earth was [became] without form and void [empty, without shape]; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2). Such was the condition of the earth after God’s judgment was loosed upon it. In Heaven, the North place became empty. “He stretched out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7). The word *empty* used here is the same word used in Genesis 1:2, meaning empty, void, without form. The prehistoric Heaven and earth suffered chaos because of the rebellion and sin of Abaddon. True to his name, and name means nature, both Heaven and earth tasted destruction, which was brought on by Abaddon.

2. Present Age

Although the North place, the position of God’s Throne, temporarily suffered the destruction and violence of Abaddon’s rebellion, God reconstructed the North place and established His Throne there again. The earth was also

reconstructed (Genesis 1:3-19). The early creative days were a time of reordering or rearrangement of part of the creation that already existed. But on the fifth and sixth days, God moved in a new creative act to create animal life and human life. Present-day man has no connection whatsoever with the prehistoric man. Adam male and female were a new creative act of God and did not descend in any way from the prehistoric time.

So, again, God's Throne rested in the North as it had from the beginning. Although the North had become an empty place (to lie waste, desolation, desert, without form, void, empty, vain) God stretched it out again and ruled once more from the North place. But again, came another angelic rebellion in Heaven, this time led by Lucifer, "the son of the morning."s Isaiah 14:9-17 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 give some insight into Lucifer's rebellion in Heaven. Chosen out of the ranks of the angels with star glory, this morning star held an exalted position in Heaven. Lucifer held a position of ministry *above* his own personal stature of glory. He was the anointed cherub who covered the North place. Lucifer was exalted by gift, to be the covering cherub of God's angelic Bride; however, his exalted ministry filled him with pride. Stationed in the North upon the holy mountain of God, privileged to walk up and down in the will of God, he was in a position to behold, inspect, and know the will of God. Furthermore, he walked in the midst of the stones of fire, which were the spirits and souls of men as they lay in seed form within the loins of God. Lucifer was "the seal of the sum," the seal over the Holy Mountain, the seal over the Stature, the protector of God's angelic Bride. He was full of wisdom, perfect in beauty, and clothed with a tenfold covering of stones and gold.

The holy mountain, the angelic Bride, and Lucifer, all were a covering for the empty place, left by Abaddon's sin, in the North. Lucifer's curiosity about this place caused him to withdraw his covering; so he began to look around and investigate the empty place. Eventually he began to traffic and travel among the other angels for the purpose of spreading his evil knowledge that he had gained by gazing upon Abaddon's sin.

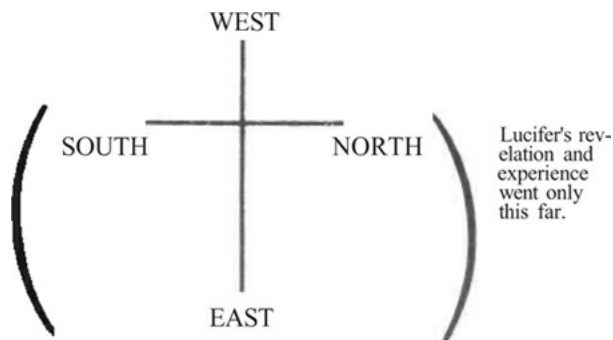
Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned;...Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness;... Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick.. (Ezekiel 28:15-18).

Lucifer's pride in his newly acquired knowledge was his downfall. He was no longer content with his exalted position, but he desired to be equal with God.

How art thou fallen from heaven, 0 Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High (Isaiah 14:12-14).

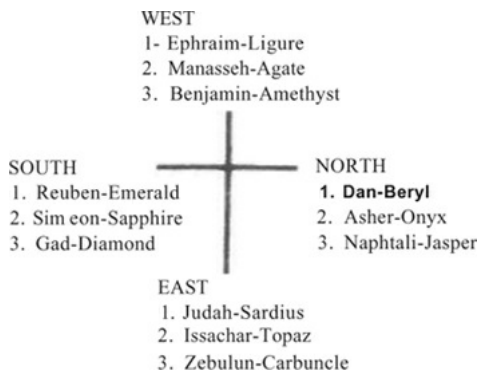
Pride perverted, corrupted, and twisted Lucifer's will. Out of his pride of revelation he said, "I will ascend into heaven." He felt he deserved more; consequently he despised God's appointed position of exaltation and rulership. His pride of redemption declared, "I will exalt my throne above the stars [angels] of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." It was his pride of satisfaction that concluded "I will be like the most High." His desire to be like God was concentrated on God's power, for he cared little to be like God in nature, like Him in mercy, kindness, and love. His insatiable drive for power made him merciless, cruel, and heartless, which were qualities completely foreign to the nature of God.

Although Lucifer's sin was also rebellion against God, his sin did not equal that of Abaddon. Therefore, God did not again destroy the North place as He had with the first rebellion. When Lucifer contended for the Throne of God, God simply moved His Throne from the North place to the West side. Lucifer was ignorant of this realm of God, for he knew the stature of God only as far as the North side.

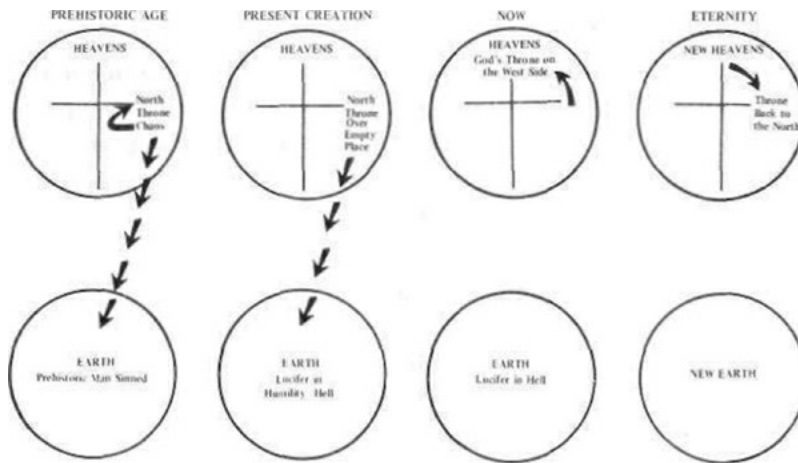


By moving to the West position, God still maintained a higher and superior place over that of Lucifer. There were three stones on the West side of which Lucifer was totally ignorant. Fallen Lucifer was able to retain a portion of the wisdom and power of his original covering of nine stones, plus the gold, but he knew nothing of the three stones that God possessed in the Westerly portion of His stature. Lucifer has limited power because he possesses only nine stones and his gold. But God as the ALL powerful Being possesses all twelve stones. The nine stones and the gold of Lucifer's former covering are seen as the ten horns of aggressive and defensive power on the seven heads of the Dragon in Revelation 12:3. These stones and the gold, the ten horns, are the weapons of Lucifer's spiritual warfare. During the tribulation, the Antichrist will stand up in the full power of fallen Lucifer. The Dragon, the mature stature of fallen Lucifer, will infuse his power, strength, and nature into the Antichrist. Even now, Christians feel the attack of these perverted horns, or stones of power, as we contend with our enemy in spiritual warfare.

We understand more fully the meanings of these nine stones of covering, when we understand the nature of these same stones as set forth in the Old Testament Tabernacle. Twelve stones, each representing one of the twelve tribes of Israel, were carried in the Breastplate of the high priest. Since name means nature, the names of these stones reveal their natures.⁶



When God moved to the West side, He still kept His higher position, and Lucifer was left in the low place; the one which he so despised! But his humiliation did not stop there. Lucifer was cast out of Heaven, into hell, to the sides of the pit. The degree of exaltation Lucifer sought after is the same degree of the depths of degradation and shame that Lucifer knows in his judgment by God, Hell was not low enough. He was cast into the very pit of hell itself, which is the place for all those that have been lifted up with spiritual pride.



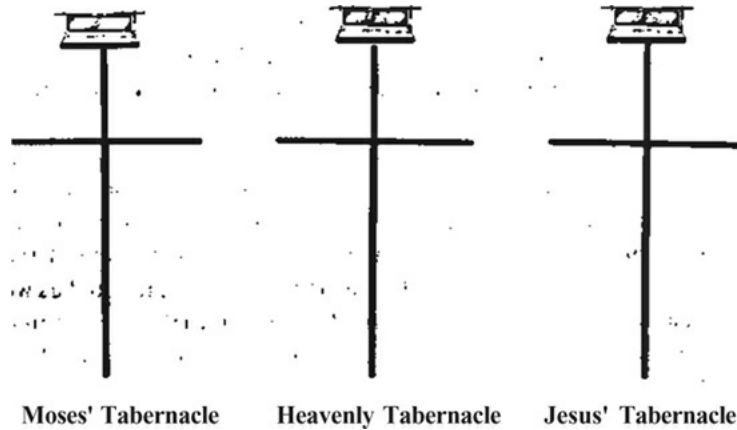
3. Perfect Age

Following the tribulation period, and the millennial reign, God is going to have a new Heavens and a new earth. This does not imply destruction of the present earth and heavens, but it speaks of a sanctifying and cleansing that will make all things new. After this renewal, the New City, the Heavenly Jerusalem, will descend out of heaven and move back into the North position again. God's Throne is going to be inside of that New City. God is going to go right back to where He was before all of His creatures (earthly and heavenly) disobeyed Him and sinned against Him. The New Earth will be established, and upon it will be those who will inhabit it for eternity, and the New Heaven with its inhabitants, will be established as well. Every redeemed person will spend eternity in one of these three places; the New Heaven, the New Earth, or the New City. The wicked spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

This brings us back to our study of the Table of Shewbread in the spiritual Tabernacle in Heaven. The twelve loaves of bread upon the Table represent the Lamb of God. In John 6 Jesus declared "I am the bread of life:...I am the bread which came down from heaven... I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." This is governmental bread (twelve in number) and as we partake of Him, we gain governmental strength that we might first govern our own selves, and then we will be able to govern others out of *the* New City.

The Table of Shewbread is not specifically mentioned in Revelation, but Mount Zion with the New City, in which abides the Lamb of God (the Shewbread), is revealed. This New City is not open to all! Inside the City, there will be a *living* Table of Shewbread, the Lamb Himself. Once again the North place will contain the Throne of God. The North represents the cold breath of God, the humility side of God; "Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north"(Job 37:9). In keeping with this, we see the Bridal City, in the North place, adorned in her jasper dress, the icy garment of humility that God has formed around her. Out of this place of humility, God and the Lamb, assisted by the Bride, will minister throughout eternity. Man finds it easy to accept God's exaltations, but oftentimes he refuses God's humiliations. In due time, every living creature must, out of necessity, have concourse with God through His humility. It appears as though God's purposes and plans have been frustrated and thwarted, but this is not so. He permits it only for a season, for it furthers His purposes, and ultimately the triumph of His will is established and forever settled.

VI. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT - The Headship of Jesus Christ



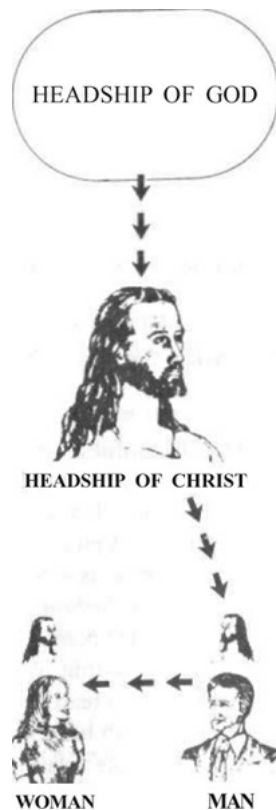
The Ark of the Covenant of the Mosaic Tabernacle was in the Holiest of Holies, the highest position in the stature of the Son. It was above all the furniture in the Courtyard, and it was above **all** the furniture in the Holy Place. The Ark of the Covenant is the picture of the Headship of Jesus Christ,

John saw the **Ark** of the Covenant in the Heavenly Tabernacle and described the power and impact of the Son's Headship in Heaven.

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:19).

Although the Headship of Jesus Christ is a great and mighty force, it is, nevertheless, subordinate to the Headship of the Father. We see this truth pictured in the fact that the Ark of the Covenant {the Son's Headship}, in **the** Mosaic Tabernacle was covered with a Mercy Seat of pure gold (the Father's Headship). There is no humanity (wood) in the Father's Headship; it is completely divine.

God has established the order of the Headship of the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Headship of the Father. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (I Corinthians 11:3). Here we see the divine order for the Headship:



God is the head of Christ, and Christ is the head of man. There is no way that man can come under the headship of God and by-pass the Headship of His Son, Jesus Christ. God has established the Headship of His Son over His creation.

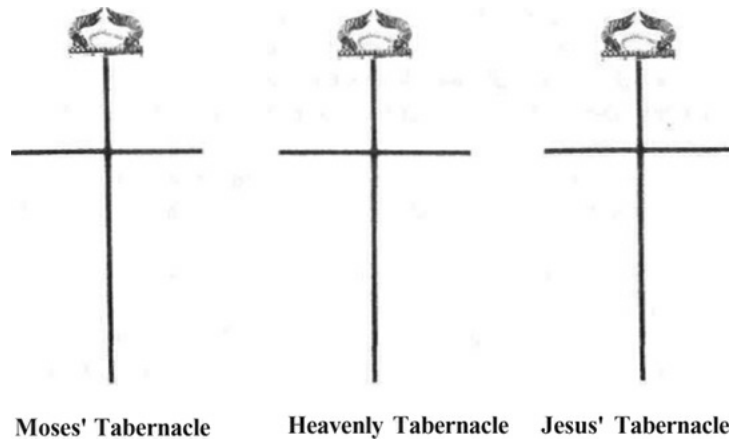
Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:20-22).

But God has also established His own Headship over the Son.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all (I Corinthians 15:27,28).

God has drawn out this beautiful divine order of the Headship of the Father and of the Son in the Mosaic Tabernacle and in the Heavenly Tabernacle. We see the Ark as a picture of the Headship of the Son, and the Mercy Seat as a picture of the Throne of God, the Headship of God. How precious it is to know that we can allow the Ark of the Headship of the Son to be formed in us with its hidden Word, secret Name, hidden manna, budded rod (Hebrews 9:4). With His Headship formed within us, we have authoritative power on one hand to rule over all creatures, and yet on the other hand that we have humility power to be in complete surrender and subjection unto Him. Oh, to be like Jesus! It was the continual testimony of Jesus in His earthly journey that everything He did was because of the Father's Headship which was inside of Him.

VII. THE MERCY SEAT - The Throne of God - The Headship of God



Let us look at the Throne of God. “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither...” (Revelation 4:1). John was invited by the trumpet Word of God to come up into Heaven and inspect God’s Throne and its environs.

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald (Revelation 4:2,3).

Suddenly John was in the Spirit, and he was ushered into the Heavenly Tabernacle, The appearance of the One who sat on the Throne, the Mercy Seat, was like that of jasper. The word jasper means polished and prevailing. The jasper stone represented the tribe of Naphtali. *Naphtali* means the fighting of the enthroned one against his enemies. The One whom John saw sitting upon the Throne had all prevailing power. Jasper naturally comes from the North side, for this was the position of the tribe of Naphtali. Although the Throne of God is seen temporarily on the West side, the presence of the jasper indicates that the Throne belongs on the North side. It is little wonder that the New City will be dressed in white jasper, the icy breath of God, for jasper belongs to the North.

In eternity, when the throne is moved from Heaven to the New City, it will once again sit on the North side. The Bride’s jasper dress is not unveiled until she comes down out of Heaven to take her position with her spiritual husband, Jesus Christ, as He sits with His Father on the Throne on the North side. How beautifully all these things fit together in the Word of God!

The appearance of the One upon the throne was also that of the sardine stone which represented the tribe of Judah.

The word *sardius* means to remove, to scrape. The name *Judah* means the one to be praised and proclaimed. Round about the Throne was a rainbow with the appearance of the emerald stone. The word *emerald* means a break and a fracture. The tribe of Reuben carried this stone; *Reuben* means, behold ye a son. It is the beauty and glory of the crucifixion, (the beauty of the Son as God fractured Himself in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ) that encircles the Throne of God. So the glory of the Lamb encircles the Throne of God in the Heavenly Tabernacle.



Who would not want to be under such magnificent, glorious Headship of God? But without the Ark, the Headship of the Son, there is nothing for God’s Headship to rest upon. When Moses set up the Old Testament Tabernacle and placed all the furniture in its proper place with the Mercy Seat resting upon the Ark, then God

entered with His royal glory and took the throne and ruled in the midst of Israel. Likewise in our own spiritual hearts, when we allow the stature of Jesus Christ to be formed, and His Headship to be established, which brings us into surrender and subjection under His feet, then we will experience the glorious, powerful Headship of His Throne in our lives.

Here, then, is the Heavenly Tabernacle as seen in the Book of Revelation. The Heavenly Tabernacle was the blueprint from which Moses patterned the Old Testament Tabernacle, which in turn, was a visible portrayal, pattern, shadow, type of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

We have two other temples recorded in the Word of God. Solomon's Temple, built in Jerusalem in Canaan's land, is a foreshadowing of the millennial temple which will be built during the reign of peace of Jesus Christ and His Bride. The temple referred to in Ezekiel 47 is the literal temple that will be rebuilt during the millennium. These two temples follow the identical pattern of the Mosaic Tabernacle but are built on a far greater scale.

We have another Tabernacle or temple in view that must be built in us personally, spiritually, if we are to be in the Bride of Christ. What is seen in the Mosaic Tabernacle is what we will experience spiritually as we grow up in stature, unto our Head which is Christ, whose head, in turn, is God. The pattern in all these is thoroughly consistent, because they are all patterned after the Heavenly Tabernacle which is also a picture of Jesus Christ, the Lamb.

4B. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

3B. R. Hicks, *Lucifer*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1970)

6B. R. Hicks, *Lucifer*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana. 1970),

CHAPTER SIX

THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPET JUDGMENTS

The eighth chapter of the Book of Revelation begins with the opening of the seventh seal, which takes place after the tribulation period. There is silence in Heaven for about the space of a half hour when this seal is loosened. This silence precedes the second coming of Christ. All of Heaven stands still and hushed in respect for the event that is about to take place. The armies of the Lamb are moving into position according to their proper rank. The time has come for the KING OF KINGS and the LORD OF LORDS to make His final and triumphal entry to the earth.

AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets (Revelation 8:1,2).

Let us review again the principles whereby God works in the Book of Revelation. Sometimes He starts from the beginning of the tribulation period and weaves threads of truth through to the end. For example, the seals are treated in this manner.

(See sketch on following page.)

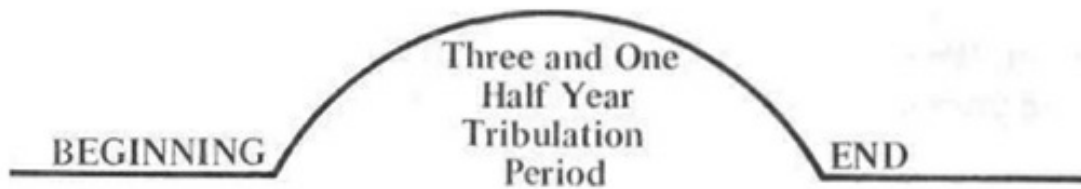
Beginning of Tribulation

Tribulation

After Tribulation

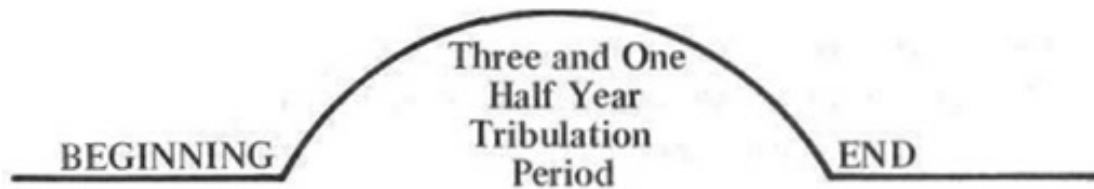
5th Seal -
Souls Under Altai

6th Seal 7th Seal



1st Seal - Antichrist
2nd Seal - War
3rd Seal - Famine
4th Seal - Death & Hell
5th Seal - Souls Under Altar in Heaven

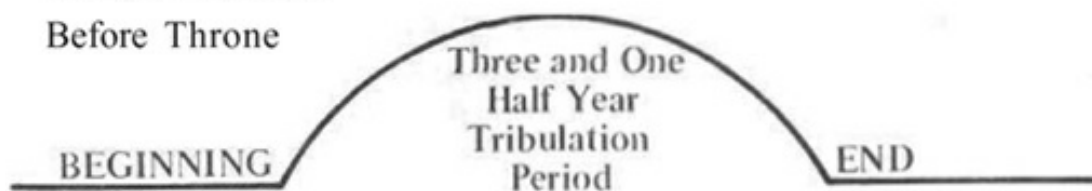
THE 144,000 SEALED



144,000
Sealed Israelites
on the Earth

THE WHITE ROBES

HEAVEN
White Robes seen
Before Throne



When the seven trumpets are blown from Heaven, there is a continued chain of providential judgments loosed upon the earth. One trumpet is linked to another; when one ends the other begins. Although they may differ in nature and in time, they all make up one wise, well-connected, and uniform design of God's judgments when they are poured out from Heaven on the earth, from the beginning of the tribulation to the end of it.



The trumpets are delivered to the angels who are to sound them. The angels are employed as the wise and willing instruments of God's providence, and they are furnished with all their materials and instructions from God. To prepare for this, another angel must first offer incense. But let us observe first the ministry of the different groups of seven angels. Groups of seven angels are seen four different times in the Book of Revelation.

- 1) Seven angels minister to the seven churches (Revelation 2:3).
- 2) Seven angels minister the seven trumpet judgments (Revelation 8).
- 3) Seven angels minister the seven vials (plagues) (Revelation 15 & 16).
- 4) One of the seven angels ministers to show the New City (Revelation 21).

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne (Revelation 8:3).

The scene here takes place at the Golden Altar in the Heavenly Tabernacle. The angel has a golden censer with much incense (representative of the Name of Jesus) to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the Golden Altar. The prayers of the saints must have the incense of the Name of Jesus Christ to make them acceptable and effectual. Jesus Christ has made provision for our prayers. He has given us His incense, His censer, and His altar. The prayers of saints that come up in this cloud of incense have never been denied audience or acceptance. When these prayers were accepted in Heaven, they produced great changes on earth.

What are these prayers that the angel offers at this time? Notice, it does not say ALL the prayers of the saints, but it states "prayers of ALL saints." Every Christian has, at one time or another prayed "Dear Lord, do something about this wicked world we are living in. Move among the wicked and the ungodly. May you get glory to Your Name out of this world somehow, some way." It is this kind of praying that is going to be offered upon the Golden Altar, and the Name of Jesus is going to be mixed with it. As we pray, mingling and offering up our prayers in the Name of Jesus, our prayers ascend into the nostrils of God as a sweet smelling savor. Because "we know not what we should pray for ..., [the Holy Ghost helps us] but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

Do you see this twofold aspect of prayer? We pray out of the part of our heart that has been sanctified and cleansed, and working with us and for us in the Holy Ghost who prays through us in intercessory and travailing prayer. He always prays according to the will of the Father. And as we pray on earth, our Great Intercessor and High Priest, Jesus Christ, intercedes and prays for us in Heaven. We see this same twofold aspect of prayer in Revelation 8:3,4.



And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand (Revelation 8:4).

What beautiful cooperation is seen in Heaven. The offering of these prayers and incense was not accomplished by the angel alone. The High Priest gives the angel the necessary incense (the Name of Jesus). The angel, in turn, blends it with the prayers of all saints, and offers both upon the Golden Altar. The prayers and the incense ascend as smoke and as fragrance into God's nostrils. God receives the offering, because the prayers are well mingled with the Name of Jesus

Are you ever tempted to think that your prayers are unheard and ineffectual? Take heart, for God bottles up our spiritual tears and writes them in a book. The tears we have wept to know Him, the tears we have wept out of love for Him, the tears we have poured out rejoicing over His precious Word, are going to contribute to the formation of the Bride's jasper dress with its pearly adornment (the New City). In eternity the Bride will be clothed with jasper and pearls, which are her own tears of humility, frozen, as it were, to form the jasper walls and the gates of pearl. The light from the New City which comes from its crystal shining jasper walls from the precious stones of its twelve foundations and the lustrous gates of pearl will shine down upon the earth so that the nations might walk in its light.

Not all of our tears are wept out of love for the Bridegroom. Some of our weeping is over the injustice, the crimes, the wars, and the sufferings of this old world. These tears are the ones that God is reserving for use at the Golden Altar in the Heavenly Tabernacle. When He is ready to pour forth His judgment upon the earth, our tears will be released, and God will move to answer the prayers of all saints. All our prayers, whether they be the prayers coupled with tears shed for righteousness and judgment to prevail on this earth, or whether they be the fiery prayers of intercession and travail that right might triumph over wrong, are being stored up in Heaven. The High Priest is saving them, and at the right time God is going to move in answer to the many prayers of ALL saints. These prayers will be mingled with the incense of the Name of Jesus, so God will receive them. Then they will be cast down into the earth in the form of hailstones and fire.

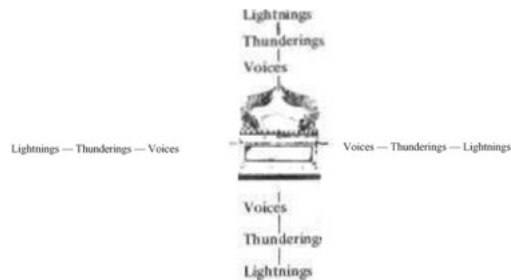
And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake (Revelation 8:5),

A censer is a bowl-like object suspended from chains by which it can be carried. This was how the Old Testament priest carried fire from the Brazen Altar in the Courtyard throughout the rest of the Tabernacle. Fire was placed in the censer and carried into the Holy Place to be mixed with the incense at the Golden Altar, to symbolize the union of the Holy Ghost (fire) with the Name of Jesus (incense) in prayer. Likewise in the Heavenly Tabernacle the angel carries a censer of the Holy Ghost Fire to the Golden Altar where he offers the "prayers of all saints" and the "much incense" unto God. Then he takes the remains, as it were, of the fire, the incense, and the prayers and begins to cast them upon the earth. Judgment time has come.

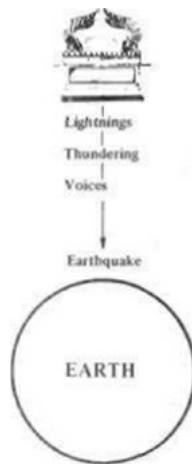
Immediate action takes place both in Heaven and earth. As soon as the angel casts the fire (that filled the censer) upon the earth, there are *voices*, *thunderings*, *lightnings*, and an earthquake. A similar reference is seen in Revelation 4:5.

And out of the throne proceeded *lightnings* and *thunderings*, and *voices*...(Revelation 4:5),

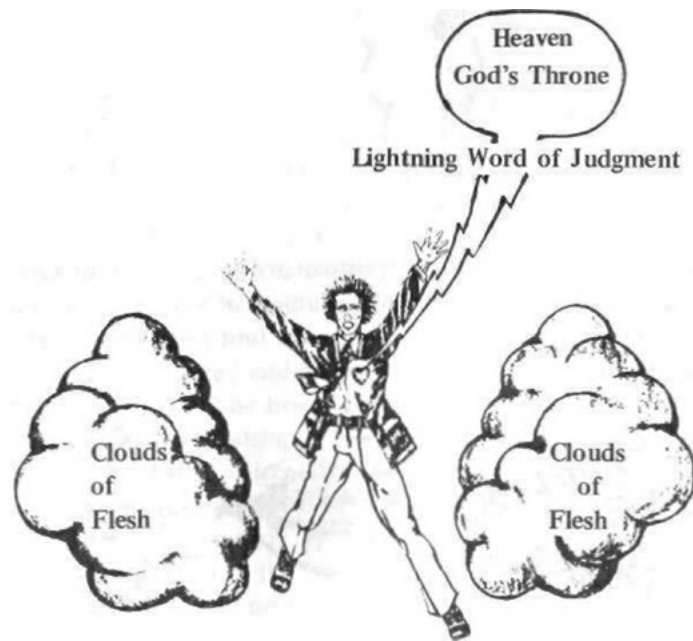
Chapter 4



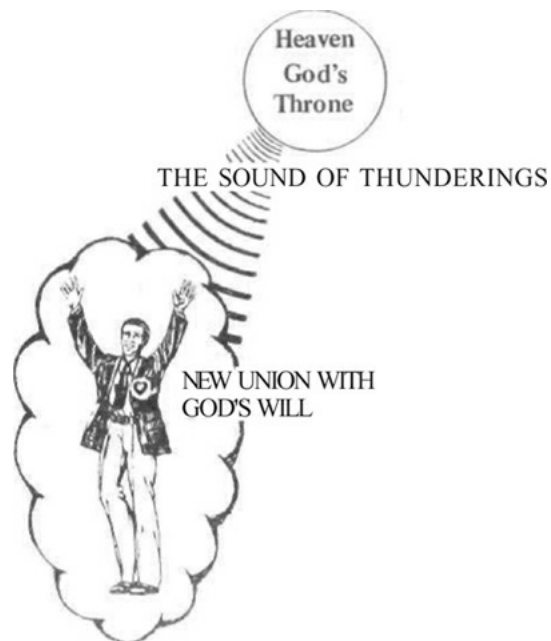
Chapter 8



Notice the order differs here in chapter eight from the order given in chapter four. The order in chapter four is the order in which we *can* experience judgment from God's Headship *now*, spiritually, while we have opportunity to grow and lay hold of the prize of being in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we refuse to accept His Headship now, the account in chapter eight shows the order in which we *will* experience judgment from His Headship. Lightnings, which speak of separation, come first. The natural types the spiritual. Lightning in the natural splits the clouds and brings a separation between them. Likewise, in the spiritual, as we pray, offering up the incense of the Name of Jesus, and give ourselves to Holy Ghost intercession and travail, out of God's Throne will proceed these lightning judgments which bring separation into our lives. If we accept the lightnings of God's Headship, they will separate us from the unrighteous, the unclean, the ungodly things in our lives. Then we can know the thunderings of union.



In the natural, after lightning has passed through the clouds, then they roll back together again, and a loud clap of thunder is an audible witness that a new union has taken place. Likewise in the spiritual, after we have experienced some separation, we can know a new degree of union with the will of our precious Lord.



Ultimately, if we continue in spiritual growth unto full maturity, we shall then become a part of the voices of worship, which are able to praise Him for His Word from the foot realm of the stature to the head realm.

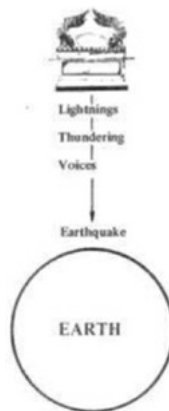


The voices of worship proceed from out of the Throne. The word *out* signifies up, away, and forth, which proves they proceed from all four points of the Throne. This confirms that the Bride has grown to the Ark, the Headship of the Son, and to the Throne, the Headship of God. The voice of the Bride is able to praise God for His Headship in ALL directions. Yes, there are the voices of the Bride, Believers are positioned in the Heavenly Tabernacle according to whatever degree of spiritual growth they have attained on their earthly journey. Therefore, we see some at the Brazen Altar (also under the Altar), at the Laver, the Golden Altar, the Candlestick and the Table of Shewbread. The voices coming out of the Throne of God and the Lamb can be none other than those of the Bride, for only she has been promised a place IN the Throne (Revelation 3:21).

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great (Revelation 19:5).

Again, a voice is heard speaking out of the Throne. Although they are many, they speak with one voice, for the Bride of Christ is one: "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her" (Song of Solomon 6:9). This cannot be God, Himself, speaking, because this voice says "Praise OUR God." This is the voice of those who have been redeemed, and they acknowledge Him as their God. These are believers who have grown all the way up in the stature of Christ and entered into a oneness of relationship with the Heavenly Bridegroom. The Bride is and will be able to praise God and the Son for their Headship in *blessing* and *in judgment*. In chapter four, the individual voices of the Bride are heard giving praise for the blessing of God's Headship, and in chapter eight, she is praising Him for the judgment of His Headship. Let us look again at the diagram which shows the order of God's Headship, when He is pouring out judgment on the rebellious.

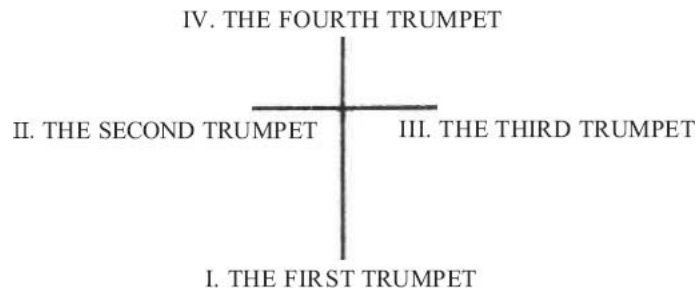
Chapter N



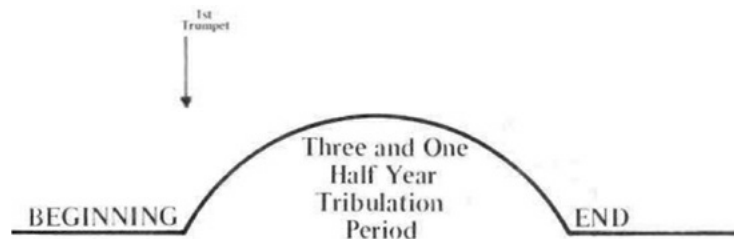
In chapter eight, the voice of the Bride will speak out to help minister judgment upon the earth. She begins her rule and reign with her husband during the tribulation period. This is why her voice precedes the thunder and lightning. The earth must be covered first with praise for the judgments of His Headship, The thunder follows, or the union of His judgments with the earth. Then the lightning of His separating judgment upon the earth is felt. The immediate witness of this union and separation of His judgment is seen as an earthquake. When an earthquake takes place, the earth is divided, separated and changed into a new union. For example, a mountain may be joined to a valley and thus separated from its former lofty position. The earth will not be able to by-pass the lightning and thunder of the Headship of God. How glorious it is to grow in the stature of Jesus Christ and grow unto the blessing

of the Headship of God, until we develop a voice that can praise Him for His Headship in all directions (both blessing and judgment). This earth has bypassed and will bypass His Headship of blessing, yet they *shall not* bypass His Headship of judgment, and the voice of the Bride from the Throne will praise Him for it.

Let us consider the stature of the first four trumpet judgments.



I. THE FIRST TRUMPET



And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up (Revelation 8:6,7).

During the tribulation period, there will be seven trumpet judgments sounded forth, releasing judgments out of Heaven upon the earth. Sin does not go unnoticed by God. Even as God judged the prehistoric heavens and earth because of sin, so God is not going to let sin go unpunished in our present world. The first four trumpets release judgment that touches man's sustenance — those things that bring life, pleasure, and satisfaction unto man. The last three have to do with judgment on man himself.

This is God's usual procedure for correction: God puts His hand first upon our substance and our sustenance by touching our prosperity, our pleasures, the things of our pride that feed us physically or mentally. If we fail to take heed to this form of the Headship of His judgment, then He begins to touch us personally, in our physical bodies. Job's experiences followed this same pattern. It is one thing when God touches our substance, but it is far more serious when He touches us physically. God's Word states, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). We acknowledge there is a suffering IN the will of God, but there is a far greater suffering OUT of the will of God. Even though we may suffer some attacks of the Devil, we know that he cannot take our life until God is through with it. God will simply turn the attacks of the enemy into stepping stones which help us mount up higher in God.

The suffering in the tribulation period will not help the people mount higher in God. They have rejected God and are busily engrossed in worshipping the Antichrist, who sits enthroned in the temple in Jerusalem. God never abrogates His divine principles. When the first angel sounded, the first trumpet and the events which followed, were very dismal. The first trumpet judgment touched man's sustenance, the trees and the green grass.

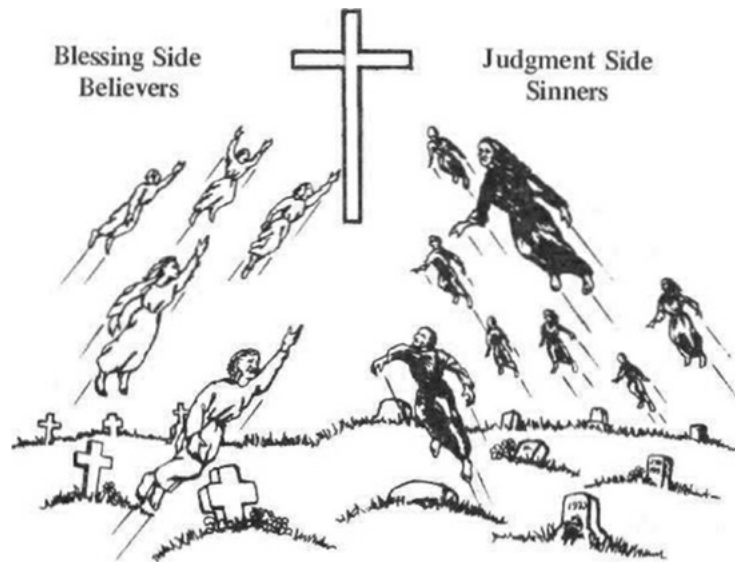
The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth...(Revelation 8:7).

Before we can understand what kind of hail, fire, and blood this is, we must consider some related background material. Turning to John 12 we read:

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die (John 12:32,33).

Jesus refers here to His impending death, by crucifixion, as a lifting up from the earth. Because of His Cross-death, He said, "I will draw *all* men unto me." What people sometimes forget is that there are two sides, two aspects to the Cross of Jesus Christ; there is the blessing side and the judgment side. Because Jesus Christ died and arose from the dead, every human being is going to be resurrected out of the grave. Whether a man be a sinner or a saint, it matters not; all are going to get up out of the grave. Our acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour is the determining factor in whether we stand up on the blessing side or the judgment side of the Cross. All believers will be resurrected on the blessing side; sinners will stand on the judgment side.

CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST



No one is going to escape the Blood of Jesus. His Blood is going to give either life and blessing, or judgment. Let us refer back to Matthew 27 for further light on the subject.

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made by the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children (Matthew 27:24,25).

Pilate sought to withdraw from the demand of the populace that he release Barabbas and crucify Jesus Christ. Therefore, he washed his hands of any involvement. But they cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children," They cried out for the judgment side of the Blood to be upon them and their children. God hears what we say and He takes us at our word, and so He did in this case. The judgments, during the tribulation period, are going to be unleashed in their greatest fury upon the city of Old Jerusalem, for it is God's principle that those with the most light who sin will also suffer the greatest judgment. This is true with the Jewish nation and their city, Jerusalem, which was once holy. It will be the center of all the judgment during the tribulation period on earth.

Hail and fire mingled with blood is cast down upon the earth as the first trumpet sounds. This is the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which they had cried to be upon them. The Blood of Jesus was slain and resurrected and deified: therefore, it has been made omnipresent. His resurrected Blood has been mingled with fire, because it has been mingled with the glory of the Father. His Blood has also been mingled with the hail. Hail speaks of the humble breath, the cold breath of God, that Jesus Christ experienced as He hung upon Calvary's Cross. The fire and glory were joined to His Blood on resurrection morning. As the first trumpet sounds, the omnipresent Blood of Jesus, mixed with the fire of the resurrection glory of the Father and mixed with the hail of humility, comes down out of

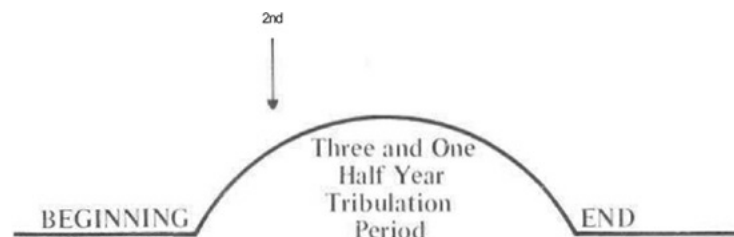
Heaven to smite the grass of the earth with the Headship of God's judgment.

The hail, fire, and Blood were cast upon the earth "and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass *was* burnt up." It is interesting to note that the past tense is used. Although these events are prophetically given of the future, John sees it as though it actually happened. As far as God is concerned, it is already done. The Headship of God's judgment is sure. During the tribulation period, the literal grass of the earth and a third of the trees shall be burned. This burning does not mean that all the grass and a third of the trees are consumed and reduced to ashes; instead, it means that the heat is so strongly applied that all the life goes out of them. The desolation will be similar to that left by a protracted drought, which leaves everything brown, lifeless, and utterly dried up. Here we see the thunder of union of His Headship of judgment upon the grass and trees; then the lightning of His Headship of judgment separates the life from them.

The judgment that God metes out upon the literal earth depicts the spiritual judgment that He puts on our personal earth, the self-life, the carnal life. Even Christians graze upon a lot of earthly grass, worldly grass, things that give fleshly pleasure and satisfaction. But when we meet the Lord in the prayer closet, He begins to apply the Blood, lire, and hail, as it were, in judgment against our green grass, our sustenance. Later, when we go back to some of those things, we are sometimes amazed to see how tasteless and unappealing they have become. It is as if all the life has gone out of them; they have become burnt grass, dead grass. The judgment of God has visited them.

A third part of the trees was burned also. The Devil has many trees full of green apples, spiritually speaking. In the book *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of Pilgrim's sons experienced this degree of judgment. He had to take a good purgative of the Word of God to get sanctified and purified from all of Beelzebub's green apples that he had eaten. If we will come to the Lord and expose ourselves to His precious Blood, His fire, and His hail of humility, God's judgment will take care of everything that we, as Christians, are feeding upon that is not pleasing unto Him. He will take the life out of those things with His burning Word. The confirmation of deliverance is when these things taste like dry ashes to us. There are many things that we feast upon that are not necessarily wrong or evil in themselves. Some may even be good things, but as we go on in greater spiritual union with the Lord, He becomes increasingly jealous over us. The Lord wants us to learn to choose between *good* and *best*. Many good activities, such as sewing, playing music, casual reading, and other forms of self-expression or self-improvement, all take up our time and draw our attention away from the Lord. As we go on for God, He jealously judges the things we once feasted upon. He permits them to live no longer, because He wants to replace these things with *Himself*. More and more our sustenance is found in Him. He leads us into greener pastures, which are far more satisfying than anything this old world has to offer. As we progress in our spiritual journey, we can look back at many things we have left behind. They were once satisfying to us, but God's Blood, Fire, and hail smites them, takes the life out of them, and leaves only the dried up remains as a witness of His Headship. More and more, as our green grass is burnt up, we find that Jesus is all that we need and all that we want. He is the *best*.

II. THE SECOND TRUMPET



And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed (Revelation 8:8,9).

The second angel sounded his trumpet and again the alarm was followed by terrible events. As we have already noted, the trumpets have to do with the Headship of God's judgment upon the world. Always when God is going to reveal His Word in a special way He lets it be accompanied by trumpet vibrations, something that will stir and shake the people by way of preparation. How grateful we must be for the trumpet of the Word of God that shakes us up, making us stand back in fear and respect of God, causing us to humble ourselves in preparation for greater

revelations from God. This is how the Word of the law came to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. This is how the revelation came to John on the Isle of Patmos. He heard the trumpet voice of God. God's Word also sounds like a trumpet in our spiritual ears if we will but take heed unto it.

Frightening events transpire with the sounding of the second trumpet. The Word does not say it was a literal mountain that was cast into the sea, but rather, "as it were" a great mountain. Careful study of the Word of God reveals that a mountain symbolizes a kingdom. As this mountain is cast into the realm of the earth, God is casting in some of His Kingdom, His rule and reign. In other words, God is taking a new authority, a new Headship of judgment over the earth.

Let us consider a few examples in Scripture where God uses a mountain to represent a kingdom.

And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD. Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain (Jeremiah 51:24,25).

God likens Babylon unto a mountain. The kingdom of Babylon is clearly called "O destroying mountain," and He says that His judgment upon them will make Babylon "a burnt mountain." This same thought is used in the Book of Daniel. King Nebuchadnezzar was given a vision of the stature of the Gentile world powers: namely, the gold head of the kingdom of Babylon, the silver breast and arms of the Medes and Persians, the belly and thighs of brass of Greece, then the legs of iron of Rome, and finally the feet of iron and clay, representing the ten kingdoms coming out of the Roman empire. Gentile government is now a mixture of iron and clay. It is the season for the Antichrist to appear on the scene to take the reins and to control the thinking of the vast majority of the world.

Regardless of how mighty and strong and impressive these fleshly kingdoms appear, it takes just a small stone, cut out of the mountain of God's Kingdom to bring them down. Daniel 2 tells of a stone cut out of a mountain that is going to fall on the feet of the Gentile powers of this world and crush them forever. This stone is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ that will come at the end of the tribulation period. It will grow until it fills the whole earth in the millennium dispensation.

Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth,...And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. For as much as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure (Daniel 2:35-45).

We know that the first four kingdoms have already crumbled; the last ten-toed kingdom of the world Gentile powers will also crumble when smitten by the stone that is cut out of a mountain in Heaven. The whole mountain, the Kingdom of God, is not going to come to the earth, but only a stone out of it. That stone is Jesus Christ. His Kingdom will grow until it becomes a whole mountain which fills all the earth. So we have seen that a mountain is used in God's Word to represent a kingdom. When the second trumpet sounds, a great mountain (kingdom) burning with fire was cast into the sea.

The Headship of God's judgment is cast upon the earth which proceeds from His Kingdom in Heaven. There are two sides, as we have said, to the merciful Headship of God: blessing mercy and judgment mercy. When we were sinners, lost and undone, God moved upon us with His blessing mercy, drawing us in repentance to the foot of the Cross. His blessing mercy worked in our wills and minds, and we experienced a translation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Countless times since that blessed day of salvation, God's mercy has moved upon us in blessing! How we should praise Him for the privilege of knowing Him on the blessing side of His mercy. However, if man fails to accept the blessing side of mercy, then God moves in judgment.

We often see God's judgment mercy *cut down* an individual in the prime of life, rather than permitting him to continue on in his sin. God moves in judgment mercy and sends him to hell. Imagine what a grotesque creature man

would become if he were permitted to live on and on and continuously increase in wickedness.

In Noah's day, judgment mercy moved God to destroy all but eight people. What great mercy God manifested in that tremendous judgment! If that generation had been permitted to continue on in its wickedness, eventually there would not have been even one righteous individual to carry the Promised Seed, It is precious when one begins to understand the operations of God. When that burning mountain comes into the sea, judgment Blood is released there. This is judgment Blood coming from the Kingdom of God.

And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed (Revelation 8:9).

The judgment Blood ministers death to the creatures of the sea by smiting one third of them. This will take place literally in the sea of this earth as a witness of God's Headship in judgment and wrath under the sounding of the second trumpet.

Not only will this be literally fulfilled, but we can experience this spiritually now as we go on for God. As we come under the Headship of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, at the Ark, and the Headship of God the Father at the Mercy Seat or Throne of God, He will destroy many bad spiritual creatures that inhabit our mental attitudes and dispositions. Not all creatures of our carnal natures are destroyed at once, for we could not endure that. He destroys a portion of them, a third, as it were, at a time. Take, for example, the octopus of possessiveness, with its long tentacle-like arms, which are equipped with multitudes of suction cups. The natural octopus has great power to embrace and latch onto things. Its hold is so powerful that the only way to free something from its clutches is to sever the leg from its body, or to deal a death blow to the head. How well the natural types the spiritual. Does this not aptly portray fleshly characteristics common to us all? We latch onto things in this life, and if it kills us, we are still determined to hang onto them. In fact, we cannot turn loose of this possessiveness by our own volition. Before we are delivered, the power of God must smite it with death. Realizing this, we can come to the mercy side of the Blood and confess to Jesus Christ, "Jesus, I can't let go of this thing. I can't bend my will. I'm helpless, but I claim Your mercy Blood. I surrender to Your Headship and agree to take the judgment side of Your Blood. God, apply the judgment fire and release me from this thing." It works. Shortly you feel the love of the thing that holds you beginning to shrivel up inside. It simply dies. God graciously pours out the Headship of His judgment, and the victory comes.

There are the octopus legs of hate within us also. The carnal octopus represents the fleshly loves and the fleshly hates that live down in the depths of the sea of our carnal mind, our fleshly nature. There are many things in us that we hate doing, hate being, hate obeying, hate becoming. But, beloved, keep in mind, there is a Headship of the Father and of the Son, a Kingdom of fire mingled with judgment Blood available to us all. There is deliverance, a severance, a cutting off, a putting to death of these things within us that hinder the reign and rule of the Kingdom of God within our hearts. There is a way to overcome. Invite the death-ministry of the Kingdom of God, His judgment fire mingled with Blood to slay this creature.

Remember, on the Mercy Seat in Moses' Tabernacle, the blood was mingled with the fire of the Shekinah glory. Likewise in Heaven, the Blood of Jesus Christ has been mingled with the glory of the Father on the Mercy Seat, the Throne of Grace. What a glorious powerful Headship of the Father and of the Son. His Headship can and will set us free.

The watery depths are also inhabited by the great sea turtles. Whenever threatened, turtles can easily pull themselves inside of their hard shell for safety and protection. We have this same "hard protective shell" in our carnal nature. When the self-life is threatened by the light of God's Word, or by the wooing of His Spirit, then it quickly withdraws within its own hard shell and pretends not to see or feel. "I don't see where this can be wrong. My conscience doesn't bother me," we say. But once our eyes are opened to acknowledge the truth, we have the privilege of crying out to the Lord for deliverance. When His Headship of judgment, with its glory fire and Blood, begins to work in us, that old turtle-spirit that shrinks from the light of the Word and the power of the Spirit will die.

We must drink freely, first, of the Mercy Blood to strengthen our spiritual man. Only then will we have the strength to open ourselves to the judgment ministry of the Blood of Jesus. We all cringe and withdraw at the thought of death and suffering of any kind. However, when the spiritual man is strong within, it is possible for us to surrender ourselves for the judgment ministry of the Fire and Blood on our self-life.

In the carnal sea of our fleshly man, or nature, swims the swordfish, which so aptly represents the human tongue

with its cutting ability.

And there is the eel with its ability to slither away. We have some mental attitudes within that are “as slippery as an eel.” God means to give us a spiritual backbone with which we can stand in the face of every opposition and trial, but our fleshly nature would much rather slither away when it is a time to take a stand and declare ourselves.

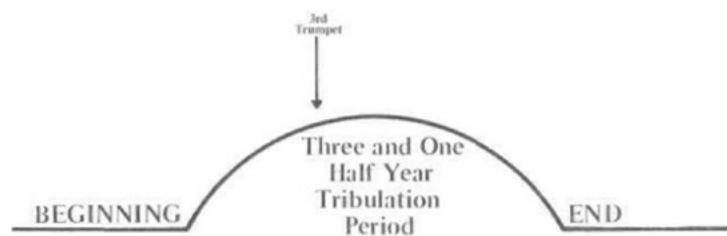
The shark represents the devouring spirit of the flesh. This vicious and insensitive spirit finds no kinship with the Spirit of God. This creature of our sea must also be destroyed, if we are to be a part of the Kingdom of God reign throughout eternity. God requires these things within be killed.

Rest assured, He is faithful to smite our substance, our sustenance, the things in which we take pleasure, delight, and pride. He is faithful to minister mercy judgment as well as mercy blessing, because He yearns over us and desires for us all to come to a oneness of relationship with Him. God longs for us to share His Spirit, share His will, share His love.

A third part of the ships are destroyed by the judgment of this second trumpet. The word *destroyed* is interesting; it means rotted. God’s judgment works a miracle. The ships rot instantly and totally disintegrate in the sea. God’s judgment is literal and visible. Therefore these ships shall actually fall apart in a moment of time. Spiritually speaking, these ships represent the carriers that bring us many of our fleshly pleasures and delights. Perhaps these ships are our material possessions, or they could be our loved ones, our human relationships. Whatever form they may take, they represent that special supply of joy to the carnal man that is outside of the will of God. The human heart finds its multitudinous satisfactions in various ways. The fleshly heart always seeks its gratification apart from God; but these are *ships* that must be destroyed if we are to reach full maturity in Jesus Christ.

What a great privilege it is for the spiritual man to drink of the blessing of the mercy Blood of Jesus, and for the carnal man to drink of the judgment of the Mercy Blood. Did He not say, “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him” (John 6:56). The carnal man is dead in trespasses and sin, and needs the cleansing life of the mercy Blood of judgment. The spiritual man also needs the growth and life of the mercy Blood of blessing of Jesus. The carnal man, when cleansed, can agree with the spiritual man to ask the Lord for judgment of the creatures in his sea and the ships that bring pleasure and satisfaction to him.

III. THE THIRD TRUMPET



And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter (Revelation 8:10,11).

Devastating effects followed when the third angel sounded his trumpet. When men fail to heed the first and second trumpet of God’s Headship through His judgments, God follows through with the third trumpet judgment of His Headship. It is then that Wormwood is cast into the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters. Wormwood is called a *star*, which is the name often used to designate an angel. The name is capitalized to indicate that Wormwood is a proper name. A clearer example of an angel being called a star is seen in the next chapter.

AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a *star* fall from heaven unto the earth: and to *him* [personal pronoun] was given the key of the bottomless pit (Revelation 9:1).

Had this been a literal star it would have burned itself out before reaching the earth, or it would have buried itself in the earth upon landing. This star must be an angel, for he is given the spiritual responsibility to hold the key to the Bottomless Pit. In like manner, the star angel, called Wormwood, has been given a ministry of bitterness and gall. He falls like a flaming, burning lamp out of Heaven to judge the rivers and fountains, but God does not judge them all. Only a third of the rivers and fountains is touched and turned into bitterness by the angel Wormwood. The angel moves from river to river and from fountain to fountain, until one third of them is so contaminated that they kill those who drink from them.

God is still smiting man's sustenance. He has not yet touched man himself. Rivers and fountains represent life with its varied pleasures and satisfactions. In spite of the bitter judgment, man continues to reject God's Headship and asserts his own headship and independence from God. Many men die from deliberately and fearlessly drinking the bitter waters. The story has been the same from the Garden of Eden. Man's headship of judgment brings death to him. God's perfect will is to use His Headship of blessing to bring man to life. If these rebellious men had repented and come under subjection at God's judgment on their sustenance, instead of drinking the bitter waters, they would have been alive when Jesus returned to establish His millennial reign upon the earth.

Beloved, out of the judgment of our carnal mind flows thoughts and attitudes which can be compared with rivers and fountains. In Amos 5:24 we read: "But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." This Scripture refers to God's righteousness and likens it to a mighty stream, or river, which has a force strong enough to wash all of our sins into the Sea of Forgetfulness behind the back of God. God does not take pleasure in wickedness; He takes pleasure in uprightness and in righteousness. Instead of taking pleasure in the river of God's righteousness, we sometimes prefer to splash around in our own deceitful river of self-righteousness. But since it is devoid of any cleansing power, we are still defiled when we come away. Neither does our own river give us any lasting satisfaction.

Fountains speak of the fear of God. 'The fear [reverential trust] of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death' (Proverbs 14:27). Our natural man has some fountains of fear. Unfortunately, they are not directed toward the Lord. "The fear of man bringeth a snare; but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Proverbs 29:25). When God judges something that our flesh takes pleasure in, turning it to bitterness, we can feel the fountains of fleshly fear spurting forth. We may think, for example, "What will my friends say if I stop going swimming? What will they say if I tell them that the Lord has convicted me? Why, they will think I'm crazy, or they will accuse me of being a self-righteous fanatic. I'm *afraid* to tell them. I'll go, but I'll just sit on the beach." Beloved, we cannot play around the bitter water without getting some of it in our mouth. Our fountains have no sweet reverence for the Lord or for His will. Our fountains show no evidence of fear of displeasing the Lord. Fleshly fear of man is totally lacking in the quality that makes us fear falling into the hands of an angry God.

If we allow the Headship of God to smite our natural fountains and rivers of pleasure and satisfaction, then His Headship of blessing will lead us to spiritual rivers and fountains of pleasure. During the tribulation man will be blasphemous toward God's judgment, belittling its effect on the waters and will drink in defiance of death. However, man's defiance cannot displace the power of God's judgment. Men will choose to drink of their own judgment of death rather than to turn to God. Because of men's unbelief, they drink arrogantly and die. This is God's third judgment upon them.

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light (Psalm 36:8,9).

Abundant blessings are promised to the children of God! Spiritually, under God's Headship, we can drink of the rivers of God's pleasures and drink of His fountain of life. The particular word *pleasures* used here in Psalm 36 is only used twice in Scripture. The other time it is used is in the marital relationship between Sarah and Abraham.

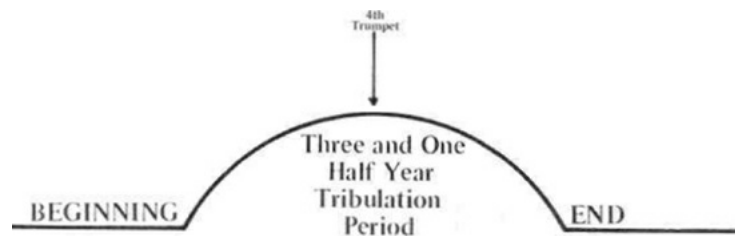
Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have PLEASURE, my lord being old also? (Genesis 18:11,12).

Verse ten explains what Sarah was questioning: "And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him." She laughed, thinking within herself, "Am I going to be able to experience the matrimonial river of pleasure again,

seeing that I am old?" When this pleasure was supernaturally restored to Sarah, she begot Isaac, which means joy and laughter. Likewise, when we allow our will to be married to the Headship of the Son and of the Father, we have the opportunity to drink of His matrimonial rivers of pleasure and delight that beget supernatural joy and laughter in our souls. However, there are many things to which one can marry his soul, and his will in this world. These worldly things will produce earthly pleasure. But the spiritual pleasure of His Headship is found in studying our Bibles, praying, praising, and serving Him in His will. True satisfaction and pleasure are found only in the Lord Jesus Christ. If we insist on rejecting the Headship of the Father and of the Son in our lives and continue drinking from our own rivers of pleasure and fountains of satisfaction, then God will pour out Wormwood and turn them into bitterness and death.

When judgment touches the rivers and fountains of pleasure, it is a turning point for many believers, for this is where some backslide and lose out with God. After having their rivers and fountains turned bitter by God's ministry of judgment, they become more angry with God and turn from Him. Others accept the Headship of God in their lives for a season, and turn from the bitter fountains and rivers of their pleasures. Later, however, they turn back and start drinking the very waters that God once turned into bitter waters in their lives. Then spiritual death sets in. This is true of individuals and also of denominations. As a dog returns to its vomit, they turn back to the things that God had previously made bitter. They embrace them in a new marriage union, as it were, and take pleasure in the bitter waters.

IV. THE FOURTH TRUMPET



And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! (Revelation 8:12,13).

The fourth angel sounded, and the alarm was followed by further calamities. The first four trumpets judge the substance and sustenance that nourish man and give him strength and pleasure. In the first three judgments, God's Word specifies the agency through which God administers His judgment, but in the fourth trumpet God is silent. No explanation is given about how this judgment is administered. Only the statement is given of the fact that the third part of the sun, moon, and stars will be darkened.

Not until the sixth seal is opened, after the tribulation period, does the sun turn totally black, and the moon turns to blood, and the stars fall from Heaven. No wonder men will cry for the rocks to fall on them and will seek any cover or means of escape. What a dreadful time this will be. We have evidence in the earth now of what happens when a meteorite strikes the earth. What will it be like when the stars of Heaven begin to bombard all the earth?

When the fourth trumpet sounds, only one third of the solar system is affected. Again, it is God's gracious visitation to warn man of His judgments and give him another opportunity to repent, to forsake his own way and turn back to God. After man spurns His love, mercy, and grace, God has no other recourse but to use the rod of judgment so that man, in fear, may bow his knee and look unto his Creator for help.

Likewise in the spiritual realm, God smites and darkens our natural light, the light of our carnal reasoning. Too often we prefer to walk by the natural light of our own sun, moon, and stars, rather than to humble ourselves to walk by the light of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ.

God does not destroy our natural light in one blow. As with the fourth trumpet judgment, He does it progressively, because He desires, through added darkness, to turn our hearts toward Him. We all experience times

when our minds are clouded over with darkness and confusion. When we are unable to think our way clearly through to a conclusion and decision, we should find it easier to turn to Jesus for guidance and help. It is in times like this that He is smiting our natural light, seeking to push us to Himself for light. Then we should pray, "Dear Jesus, please be my light, my guide. I cannot find my way without You." It is necessary that we acknowledge the insufficiency of our carnal light, the light of our natural mind, to lead and guide us. Only then can He replace our natural light (our sun, moon, and stars) with His divine light, the light of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ.

Let us take an example of this principle of how man walks by his own sun, moon, and stars. The Book of I Kings records the meeting of Elijah, the prophet of God, with Ahab, the seventh king of the northern kingdom of Israel.

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? (I Kings 18:17).

According to his own light, Ahab thought that Elijah was responsible for the drought that had already lasted for three and one half years. When people are walking by their carnal light, they blame all their troubles on the people who are walking in the glorious light of God's Headship. Mightily anointed by God, Elijah was quick to straighten out this matter.

And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table (I Kings 18:18,19).

Elijah spoke out of the clear light of God's Word rather than out of the ignorance of his own carnal light. He walked and communed with the Sun of Righteousness; therefore, he spoke as a prophet of God. Because of the clarity of his light, Elijah spoke boldly, ready to challenge the whole group of Baal's prophets. With all the children of Israel gathered together as witnesses, Elijah gave the prophets of Baal ample time to demonstrate their relationship with their god's headship.

And they [prophets of Baal] took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made ...And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded (I Kings 18:26-29).

Their failure was conclusive. Elijah mockingly cried, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." Then Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord that had been broken down from misuse. He used twelve stones to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The wood was laid in order, and the sacrificial bullock was placed upon the altar. Then Elijah commanded that twelve barrels of water be poured on top of the sacrifice. The water soaked the wood and the sacrifice and ran out and even filled the trench around the altar. Elijah knew what it took to gain complete deliverance. He knew it took blood (sacrifice), fire, and water, the three foundational gifts, given to us through Jesus Christ. After the blood and the water were present, Elijah began to pray for the fire to fall.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench (I Kings 18:36-38).

When Israel saw all this they fell on their faces crying out, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the

God...” Elijah was still walking by the light of the Sun of Righteousness when he slew the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. Then he went to the top of the mountain to pray; and by faith, he heard the sound of abundance of rain. Seven times Elijah sent his servant to look toward the sea for any sign of the coming of the rain. Since Elijah was walking by the light of the Sun of Righteousness, he saw and heard things other people could not see or hear until they came into visibility. At last, on the seventh time, the servant reported seeing a little cloud like the size of a man’s hand.

...And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel (I Kings 18:44-46).

The story did not end here. Irate Jezebel threatened to have Elijah’s life within twenty-four hours. The anointing of the Lord had lifted. Therefore, Elijah reverted back to his carnal reasoning and acted according to his own light. It was not the light of the Sun of Righteousness that caused him to flee into the wilderness where he prayed “O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” The angel of the Lord awakened him twice out of his slumber to feed him and to instruct him to eat and to prepare for the journey that lay ahead of him. In the strength of that meat and drink, Elijah journeyed forty days and forty nights to mount Horeb.

At mount Horeb (where Moses had seen the glory of the Lord), Elijah hid himself in a cave. He was walking under the partial light of his own sun, moon, and stars, mingled with the partial light of the Sun of Righteousness. While in the cave, the Word of the LORD came to him saying, “What doest thou here Elijah?” In other words, “Who led you up here? Which sun did you follow to get here?” Elijah answered, “Lord, the nation of Israel has torn down your altars and slain your prophets and I, only I am left.” The Lord’s response to all this was “Go forth and stand upon the mount before the LORD.”

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, When Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? (I Kings 19:11-13).

Following the spectacular threefold witness of wind, earthquake and fire, Elijah heard “a still small voice.” The Hebrew word *still* means, a dumb voice, and to be astonished. The word *small* means crushed, broken in pieces, crushed to powder. The sound of the still small voice of God was audible, yet indistinct, as if in broken syllables. Obviously, the voice was not totally without speech, for Elijah heard the still small voice of God. The Sun of Righteousness was shining forth into the darkness that held Elijah so full of despair and hopelessness. God spoke not with the voice of thunder, but He spoke in humility form first — as a still small voice.

Although the Word was small, it was powerful enough to arouse Elijah and call him forth from the cave. Wisely, Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle which showed his humility, lest his curiosity would provoke him to look upon the wind, the earthquake, or the fire. Expectancy filled the prophet’s heart. The first little ray of light from God’s Headship had begun to penetrate his soul. Again the LORD spoke, this time with a clear, plain voice. God reiterated His question “What doest thou here, Elijah?” According to Elijah’s own light, he was the only one in all of Israel who remained true to the Lord. This goes to show that we can outwardly humble ourselves and cover our heads with humility, and yet not extinguish our own light. It takes the truth of the Word of God to deliver us from our own carnal reasoning. It takes the Sun of Righteousness to shine into our souls before our sun, moon, and stars are really extinguished.

When the light of God began to shine, Elijah started getting back on the right track. He was again walking according to the rays of light shining forth from the Sun of Righteousness, the Word, the Christ.

God gave Elijah three direct commands: (1) Anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, (2) Anoint Nimshi to be King over Israel, (3) Anoint Elisha to be prophet in thy room. Almost as an afterthought, to shed forth more light, the

Lord added, "Yet, I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Now God's light shone with full light upon Elijah, and his natural light was extinguished. It takes the Word of God to put out the natural light of our carnal reasoning.

How useless and meaningless our opinions are. We ought not to speak out in judgment or advice until we know we are speaking out of the light of God. Our own light must be put out before we can rightly speak from the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

How graciously the Lord followed through in providing light for Elijah's need. On the occasion when Elijah called fire down from Heaven, his words and deeds were spoken and performed out of the divine illumination given him. However, he took a side trip to Mount Horeb, because he was confused by the light of his own sun, moon, and stars. But the Lord mercifully led him back to walking in His divine light again.

During the tribulation and the fourth trumpet judgment, God will smite the light man receives from the literal solar system by darkening these light-bearers, one third at a time. Even as God spiritually smites our carnal light in order to bring us to seek His divine light, so, in that day, will He smite the natural light of men, that perchance they will turn unto Him.

We have seen the first four trumpet judgments which are loosed against man's surroundings and which affect his sustenance. They are as follows: (I) The First Trumpet, trees and green grass burned (one third of trees and all of the grass); (II) The Second Trumpet, sea, creatures, and ships destroyed (one third part); (III) The Third Trumpet, rivers and fountains bitter (one third of them); and (IV) The Fourth Trumpet, sun, moon, stars darkened (one third of them).

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS (Revelation 9:1-21; 10:7; 11:15)

As we have already noted, the first four trumpets were confined to judging man's sustenance—that which nourishes him and brings him strength and pleasure. The last three trumpet judgments are visited upon man himself. They touch him physically and personally. God's principle of operation is always this: first He touches our substance. If repentance is not forthcoming, He then touches us personally in the physical realm. All of this is done to give man an opportunity to return voluntarily to God and to acknowledge his need for God,

V. THE FIFTH TRUMPET



And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit (Revelation 9:1,2).

When the fifth trumpet sounds, John sees a star fall from Heaven to the earth. This cannot be a literal star falling out of Heaven. Instead, the Scripture refers to an angel who possesses the star glory. Surely this is not a fallen angel, as some suppose. God would not trust a wicked angel with the key to the Bottomless Pit. Rather, this star angel is an ambassador from Heaven who is commissioned with a specific task to fulfill. Tin's angel unlocks the Bottomless Pit, the abyss.

Although designated as the *Bottomless* Pit, it is not bottomless as far as God is concerned. Its many, many layers make it seem bottomless to those who are cast into it. The pit is opened to release upon the earth the most vicious and terrifying demon attack ever known to man. As the pit is opened, smoke bursts forth with such intensity that it darkens the sun and the entire atmosphere.

And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power (Revelation 9:3).

God knows that man can perceive the spiritual nature and disposition of these perverted creatures only if they are likened to natural things that we already understand. These fierce and dreadful creatures are described, then, as locusts, although they are not literal locusts. Natural scorpions carry their attacking power in the poisonous hook-like stingers in their tails. In like manner these demon spirits have tails of power. When the scorpion moves about, he keeps his tail arched above his back ready for instantaneous attack. The sting of the scorpion is noted for its searing painfulness. The natural locust is not equipped with a stinger tail as is the scorpion, but these locust-demons have the power of the scorpion, the power to sting and afflict with excruciating pain.

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads (Revelation 9:4).

The grass and trees have already suffered the death-dealing judgment of God under the first trumpet. One third of the trees and all the grass is so scorched and burned that all the life has been removed. However, the roots of the grass were spared. Hence, the command, here, to not hurt the grass from below the ground was because the grass had already been judged above the ground. Under the fifth judgment, it is not the ministry of the demons to touch man's sustenance but to touch man himself. The judgment becomes more intense and strikes closer to home. God is still giving man another chance to repent and turn to God by applying pressure upon pressure. Although this judgment is a dreadful one, it is still another operation of God's infinite mercy toward man.

Four judgments have already been unleashed against man's surroundings. The work of the locust-demons is limited strictly to those human beings "which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." They have no power to hurt those who have the seal of God in their foreheads. Their perverted, twisted, stinging words cannot penetrate the seal and enter into the minds and hearts of the sealed ones. God's electing, effectual, distinguishing grace will preserve His people from total and final apostasy.

In Revelation seven, we read about the 144,000 Jews who are going to be sealed during the tribulation period with the seal of God in their foreheads. Because of His promise to Abraham, God preserves a remnant of the children of Israel. The remnant is spared the suffering meted out upon men under the fifth trumpet judgment.

And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man (Revelation 9:5).

The locusts have no power to kill, but they do have power to torment. The word *torment* means to torture, to toil in pain, to vex, and to toss. God is not interested in destroying men; He only wants to bring them to the acknowledgment of the truth so that they might bow their knees and confess that the Antichrist is *not* God. He wants them to confess that God is God.

Keep in mind that Antichrist sets himself up as God in the temple of Jerusalem and demands the worship of all of his subjects. God uses the various judgments in much the same way as a vise is used. He applies the pressure of judgment in order to squeeze out the truth, to force the people to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Eventually every knee is going to bow of things in Heaven, of things in earth, and of things under the earth. How tragic it is that men so willfully oppose themselves by rebelling against God. They forfeit all hope of Heaven and glory. Yet in the end, they must bow and worship and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord. Refusing to do so by their own choice, they are ultimately forced to bow by God Himself.

This same principle applies to us spiritually now. God permits us to experience the attack of demons and devils, even to the afflicting of our bodies in order to bring us to our knees in worship before Him. His judgments come that they might show us where we are using our bodies to serve the flesh and the Devil instead of God, or where we are giving praise and glory to the creature instead of the Creator. When one finds himself in a tormenting situation, it is time to ask the Lord, "Where am I failing to acknowledge Your Lordship, Your Headship, in my life?" Each time we do business with God over a new area of our self-life, we take one step higher in God, Demons, particularly, try our mind and our will. As we grow bigger in God, we become more aware of this area of spiritual warfare. We live in a world of spirits, and God permits them to try us for our own good.

And in those days shalt men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them (Revelation 9:6).

The Greek word *desire* is a very strong word meaning a vehement desire. Man's suffering is so intense that he seeks death with a fervent intensity, but to no avail. Death eludes him, and his suffering continues. He wants desperately to die; yet he is unable to do so. What a vise in which man finds himself!

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men (Revelation 9:7).

These locusts are of a monstrous size and shape. They are equipped for their work as horses prepared for battle. They are also like warrior horses, which charge into battle. We know they are rulers, for on their heads is something

comparable to crowns of gold. These are not literal crowns, but “as it were” crowns of gold. These perverted creatures have great authority, and are assured of victory in their mission to torment man. It is hard to visualize a demon that resembles a tiny poisonous scorpion and a little locust, which also has the appearance of a mighty warring horse. Yet these are the pictures that God uses to acquaint us with this vicious ruling class of demons.

“Their faces were as the faces of men.” These creatures are a strange mixture of animal and human. They have wisdom, sagacity, and understanding, because their faces are like that of a man. These are some of the ruling spirits from the prehistoric world, the world which God judged because of its sin of perversion.

And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions (Revelation 9:8).

A woman’s long hair is her glory, her covering, her beauty. “But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering” (I Corinthians 11:15). The locust-demons have the beauty of the long hair of women to allure, ensnare, and defile the minds of men. They have teeth, as it were, of lions, or in other words, cruel, ferocious, crushing, gnashing teeth. What a strange mixture—the beautiful tenderness of women and the gnashing cruel teeth of the lions. What awesome creatures these are.

And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle (Revelation 9:9).

Equipped with powerful defense and protection, these creatures wear breastplates like that of iron, impenetrable. They make a mighty noise in the world, flying about from one country to another. And the noise of their motion is like that of an army with chariots and horses running to battle. This noise will be heard everywhere for five long months, and no corner of the earth shall escape their presence or their sound.

And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months (Revelation 9:10).

At first the locusts seem to soothe and flatter men with their fair appearance, but they have a sting in their tails. The cup of their abominations contain something that looks luscious at first, but they will bite like a serpent and sting like an adder.

This word *hurt* means to injure, to knock, to push, to thrust, to hit, and to give mental pain. This is going to be an attack against man, against his body and against his mind. What a horrible time this will be. Man refuses to heed when God sends His judgment on his substance and sustenance, the grass, the trees, the rivers, the seas, the sun, the moon, the stars. God’s message of judgments does not penetrate their hearts. Men do not hear nor receive. God has no other choice but to press the matter even more intensely than before. His very nature of mercy will force Him to continue pouring out His judgments in anticipation of man’s repenting.

While the judgments are poured out from Heaven, the Antichrist rules as God out of the temple in Jerusalem. His magic image and number is everywhere, mesmerizing the minds and spirits of men. People feel a strange peace, an unnatural and unreal joy. Do you think God is going to stand by and do nothing? Of course not! So while men are talking peace, thinking that they have found Utopia under the powerful leadership of the Antichrist, God steps in on the scene to turn things upside down.

Let us rehearse the sequence of events once again. In the beginning of the tribulation (after the Rapture of the overcomers has taken place), the Antichrist will slay a great portion of those who confess their faith in Jesus Christ. These are the martyred Christians who are silenced for their testimony and are seen under the Great Altar in Heaven.

Carnal Christians will miss the Rapture of the Wedding Party of Jesus Christ. When they see they have missed the Rapture, some will awaken and take a stand for Jesus Christ. Their testimony and confession of faith will wound the Head of Deceit of the Beast (Antichrist). “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon ...the beast,..Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” (Revelation 13:3,4).

Temporarily, the Antichrist suffers a deadly wound. This happens when some of the Christians who have missed the Rapture, begin to scream that Jesus Christ has come, realizing that they have missed Him. Wrecks, plane crashes, and fires will occur all over the world when the overcoming Christians are caught out at the Rapture. The devastating effect of all these things, plus the witness of the Christians who are left behind, will deal a death blow to

the Head of Deceit of the Antichrist. The people of the world will begin to doubt that the Antichrist is Christ. But he will use his supernatural powers on people and will slay a great portion of the Christians to silence their testimony against him.

When the Christians who testify against him are removed from the scene, the Antichrist quickly recovers his prestige and honor with the people, and they receive him as Christ. After his deadly wound is healed, the Antichrist's Head of Deceit will continue to control the people of earth until the end of the tribulation period. Seemingly, all is well. Held under the magic spell of the Antichrist, people feel at peace, secure, and comfortable. In spite of the havoc wrought by the loosening of the seals and the first four trumpet judgments, men continue to resist God and His judgments. However, when the locust-demons are loosed out of the Bottomless Pit, their peace and security will disappear. People will suffer both mental and physical anguish. God is trying again to turn their attention to Himself from the Antichrist.

Let us consider a similar situation in the Old Testament Dispensation.

Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; (Deuteronomy 8:15).

And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died (Numbers 21:5,6).

In both cases the scorpions and serpents were sent among the children of Israel by God Himself. Israel sinned by murmuring and speaking against God's appointed leaders. We ail murmur and complain at one time or another, but when we do, we are really murmuring against God and not just against our circumstances. Is He not the Head over all things in the life of every Christian? Yes, He is. God has no other recourse but to afflict us. He uses affliction to awaken us to our sin of murmuring and turn us in repentance back to God. Although many of the Israelites died on this occasion, many others were salvaged when they turned to God in repentance and acknowledged their sin.

How careful we must be of this murmuring and complaining spirit. It often begins with murmuring against the leader, but soon the complaining is directed against the Bread (the Heaven-sent Manna). This opens the door for spirits of rebellion, spirits of unbelief, and spirits of pride, for example. When God turns the serpent and scorpion spirits loose against us, it pushes us back into a corner where we must make a decision either for or against God. Thank God for the ministry of these spirits. They expose our worship of the Self, the antichrist spirit that is within us. God resorts to any and every means to bring man unto Himself. How grateful we must be for His faithfulness and love.

We see another similar situation recorded in Ezekiel. The scorpions and serpents referred to in these Old Testament texts are not the same scorpions that come out of the Bottomless Pit. As overcoming and victorious Christians, we need never face the ones that will come up during the tribulation. However, we do have some scorpion and serpent spirits with which we must contend here and now.

And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiff-hearted, I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house (Ezekiel 2:3-6).

Notice how gracious the Lord is. God says that the children of Israel have already rejected Him, so Ezekiel should not be surprised when they reject him also. Still, God says "talk to them." Even though Ezekiel meets scorpion, spirits in these people, he is not to fear but to stand his ground. And we are no better. We, too, meet scorpion spirits in people, in those who are rebelling against God, but we need not fear but keep our trust and

confidence in God.

Let us return to our study in Revelation to see the identity of the king and commander of this hellish squadron of perverted demons.

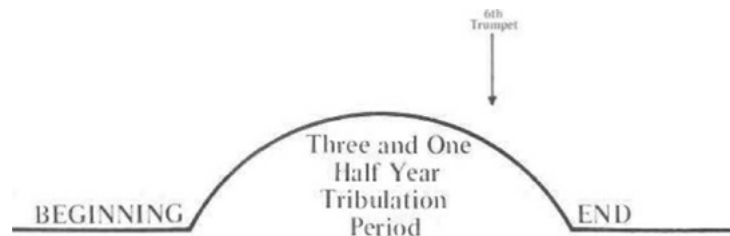
And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter (Revelation 9:11,12).

The king, ruler, leader of these dreadful creatures is none other than Abaddon (Apollyon), the perverted angel from the prehistoric world. In these infernal regions, he is a prince and governor. He has the power of darkness under his rule and command.

Abaddon (Apollyon) means a destroyer. Destruction is his business, his design, and employment to which he diligently attends. He is very successful and takes a perverted pleasure in sending out his emissaries and armies to torment and hurt mankind.

One woe is already past and two more shall follow. Two more events of horror shall visit mankind, and no man shall escape. So horrible are these torments, that man will seek to die. They will try to escape by taking their own lives, but death will elude them. Dreadful, dreadful days! With the end of one woe, another begins. May we all earnestly seek to be overcoming Christians so we can be counted worthy to escape these woes and judgments.

VI. THE SIXTH TRUMPET



And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates (Revelation 9:13,14).

The fifth trumpet loosed the locust-scorpion-like demons that attacked man with their torturous sting and tormented them for five months. With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, judgment increases severely. The death which eluded them, even though they earnestly sought it, under the fifth trumpet, now is imposed upon them under the sixth.

Let us consider the preface of this vision, and then the vision itself.

As the sixth angel sounds, a voice is heard from the four horns of the Golden Altar, which is before God. We have already seen that the earthly Mosaic Tabernacle followed the pattern of the Tabernacle seen in Heaven. In Revelation six, we saw souls under the Brazen Altar. In chapter fifteen we saw souls standing on the Sea of Glass, the Heavenly Laver.

Now, in chapter nine, we hear the voices of the souls who are living at the Golden Altar of Incense. Horns speak of power (aggressive and defensive) but, being inanimate objects, they have no ability to speak. We understand, then, that the voices speaking “from the four horns of the Golden Altar which is before God” have to be the voices of saved persons who have grown to this degree of spiritual stature. And even here, there are distinctions made according to spiritual maturity. Each of the four horns indicate a particular area of prayer power attainable by believers as they become personally acquainted with Christ as He is revealed in each of the four gospels! Matthew gives the revelation of the King; Mark reveals the Servant; Luke brings the revelation of the Son of Man; and John unveils the revelation of the Son of God? In chapter four and fourteen we are told of the voices that proceed out from the Throne of God. These are the voices of the Bride of Christ. All this confirms, again, the fact that God is going to divide human souls in eternity according to the degree of spiritual stature attained in this life. Here, in

chapter nine, we see those who attain to the position at the Golden Altar, and even here they are positioned around the four horns as an indication of the degree of prayer power they possessed in their spiritual experience ingoing on for God.

In verse fourteen the sixth trumpet angel is commanded by the voice issuing from the four horns of the Golden Altar to “Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.” The power of judgment is restrained until God gives the word for it to be turned loose. Although the trumpet has sounded, the angel cannot go forth until the voice speaks the command. Again, we see the complete harmony of action, the unity of operation, as Heaven moves in judgment upon the children of men.

Even though the King James translation has “the four angels which are bound *in* the great river,” other translations render it *on* the river or *at* the river. The latter translation is more accurate in meaning. The angels are not in the river or underneath the water, but they are standing *at* the great River Euphrates. This particular river is significant because it represents part of the boundary line of the Promised Land. It is part of the original grant given to Abraham. But before Israel, as a nation, could possess Canaan’s land, (Beulah land or the Bride’s territory) and thereby enter into spiritual marriage relationship with the Lord, certain enemies had to be conquered. We find ten of the enemy nations listed in Genesis.

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites [wailing and mourning], and the Kenizzites [hunters], and the Kadmonites [projected], and the Hittites [terror], and the Perizzites [open country], and the Rephaims [house of giants]. And the Amorites [proud boasters], and the Canaanites [peddlers, gossipers], and the Girgashites [live in clay houses], and the Jebusites [to loath humility] (Genesis 15:18-21).

Israel had to war against these enemies literally, but we must overcome them spiritually. If we study the meanings of the names of these enemies, we get a clear picture of the carnal attitudes and dispositions that we must overcome if we desire to become one with Jesus Christ and be His Bride.

The KENITES are the wailers and mourners who complain when they fail to get their own way, or when God allows suffering to come to them. When these enemies are driven out, then we can praise and give thanks for everything and all things.

The KENIZZITES are the fleshly hunters that track down the faults and failures of others in order to criticize.

The KADMONITES are the projectors. They force their ideas and opinions on others; they project themselves by seeking the high place and the attention of others.

The HITTITES are the terrorizers. Through wrath and anger they threaten all who oppose their will.

The PERIZZITES live in the open country. They are our mental attitudes that rebel against being fenced in with responsibility or restrained by the Word of God.

The REPHAIMS are the giants. They bully other people and throw their weight around to get their own way.

The AMORITES are the proud boasters who call attention to all their great deeds, their possessions, their talents and abilities.

The CANAANITES are the peddlers and gossipers. They make it their business to attend to the business of others.

The GIRGASHITES are the lovers of clay; they love to live in earthly things instead of living in the heavenlies with Christ.

The JEBUSITES are the loathers of humility; they would rather die than to stoop in humility to help someone else.

The River Euphrates was a boundary line for the enemies of Canaan’s land. God does not require us to conquer all the enemies of the world, so to speak, but He has set a boundary around those enemies who would keep us from possessing Canaan’s land and inheriting the prize. Thus we might say that Euphrates was a blessing to Israel in that day.

However, when Israel receives the Antichrist as her Messiah, the Euphrates will then become a boundary of judgment. It is from here that God will punish Israel and the rest of the world that receives the Antichrist.

And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for

to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them (Revelation 9:15,16).

God has some angels stationed here at the River Euphrates. Four of them are special leaders, who are especially prepared angels, ready for this particular task and this very moment. Notice how explicit God's timing is, "...prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year..." Not only are they exactly timed, but their power is also limited to the destruction of the third part of man. God is so merciful to limit His judgments upon rebellious mankind. God is not haphazard in His programing.

A prepared army of horsemen, numbering 200 million, stands under the leadership of four angels. These four angels are not the four angels seen holding the four winds on the earth referred to in Revelation 7:1, for *their* ministry is especially to protect and hold back destruction until the 144,000 Jews have been sealed with the seal of God in their foreheads. To the contrary, the four angels here in chapter nine are sent forth for death and destruction. This army shall execute a third part of the inhabitants of the earth.

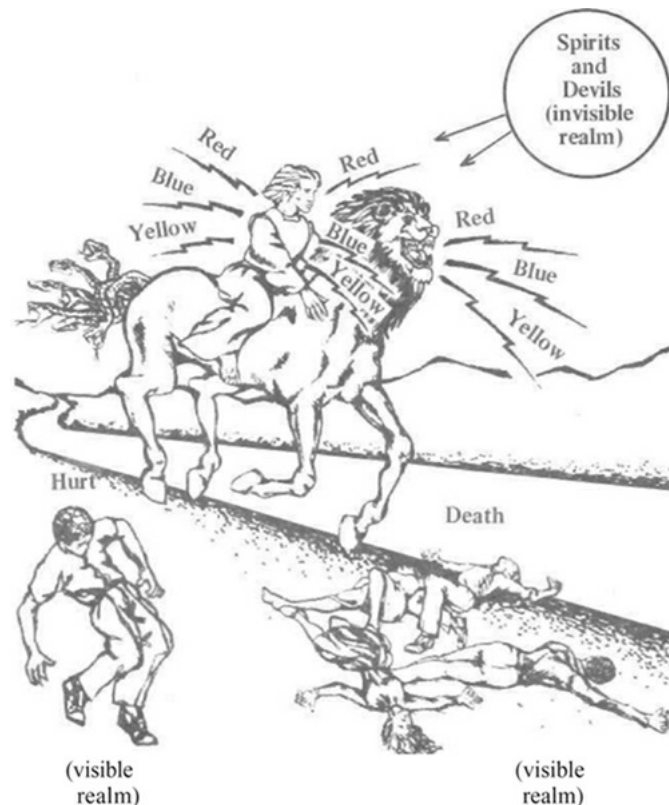
And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt (Revelation 9:17-19).

The formidable equipment and dreadful appearance of these horses and horsemen is frightening. The horses are fierce, like lions, and eager to rush into battle. They war with their lion mouths and with their tails which are like serpents with many heads. In spite of their unusual appearance, these horses are *not* wicked, perverted creatures from the prehistoric age. To the contrary, they are especially prepared by God to war against and destroy all those who have been corrupted by the thoughts and workings of the perverted creatures who had been loosed out of the Bottomless Pit. Beloved, for every degree of evil and wickedness that it is possible to possess, God has a degree in the spiritual realm that is stronger because it is pure, holy, and undefiled. These horses are not perverted. They are especially prepared and endowed with power to make war against and to overcome the sin of perversion in the spirit realm and in the natural realm during the tribulation period. Likewise, the riders who sit upon them are clad in bright and costly armor, with all the ensigns of martial courage, zeal and resolution.

Notice that the breastplates which clothe the riders are breastplates of fire, of jacinth, and brimstone. Some translations render it as "red as fire, blue as smoke, and yellow as brimstone." The horses war against human beings, but because this warfare also involves devils in the spirit realm, their riders, the angels, must be protected by breastplates.

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts (Revelation 9:20,21).

Mention is made of the worship of devils here in verse twenty; so the horsemen, even though they are angelic beings, need protection and power to come against the devil spirits involved in this warfare. Their breastplates are clothed with the red fire of the Holy Ghost, the blue smoke of God's holy hatred against sin, and the yellow brimstone of God's powerful light of wisdom. This pertains to the warfare in the invisible realm, the realm of the spirits.



In the visible and physical realm, the warfare against human beings is carried out by the horses. These horses have heads with the appearance of lions. God uses the lion to show the aggressiveness of His holy hatred against sin. Since these horses have lion heads, then we know that their minds are governed by and filled with a nature to hate sin. This accounts for the devouring and ferocious power of their warfare. Out of their mouths “issued fire and smoke and brimstone.” The same substance on their breastplates that protected the riders is the same substance that comes out of the mouths of these ferocious horses. The breastplates are defensive. They hurt no one but are for the protection of the wearer. The hurt is done with the power of the horses’ mouths and the power of their tails. Death is administered from the mouth, and the power to hurt comes from the serpent-like tails with their many heads.

God often uses horses to picture power in warfare. But on other occasions, God uses them to accomplish other purposes. Let us consider a few examples.

A. HORSES OF FIRE FOR SEPARATION

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and *horses of fire*, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (II Kings 2:11).

This story is a familiar one. It was time for Elijah and Elisha to be separated, but Elijah’s protege, Elisha, was reluctant to let his master go. Elisha was determined to let nothing separate him from Elijah, for a special blessing had been promised to him if his own eyes beheld the prophet’s departure from this world. As Elijah and Elisha walked along, suddenly a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire, appeared and separated the two prophets and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into Heaven.

It was God’s time for each of the prophets to enter into a new realm of the Spirit, so that each could fulfill God’s particular calling in his life. The Prophet Elijah is ordained to be one of the two witnesses who will prophesy and finally be killed at the end of the three-and-one-half-year tribulation period. God’s Word says that it is appointed unto man *once* to die (Hebrews 9:27). Therefore, it was necessary for Elijah to be lifted above death until the hundreds of intervening years between his day and the tribulation period would come to pass. It was time, too, for

Elisha to enter into a new phase of ministry, a phase which would have been impossible if the prophets' natural relationship had remained the same. God used fiery horses to effect the separation that Elisha had refused to accept any other way. After the chariot and the horses of fire had finished their work of separation, the whirlwind carried Elijah up to Heaven. What a grand exodus this was for Elijah; he was suddenly whisked away into the glory and the presence of God! The separation was also good for Elisha, because he received Elijah's mantle and a double portion of the Spirit that had rested on Elijah.

B. HORSES OF FIRE FOR PROTECTION

And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, [pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha (II Kings 6:15-17).

Although Israel was besieged by the Syrian army, Elisha was quite unconcerned because his spiritual eyes saw the fantastic array of horses and chariots of fire which covered the mountainside. Lacking the spiritual vision that his master possessed, the servant was frightened. He could see only the enemy. Elijah prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened to see the encircling power of the Lord's fiery protection, and the servant was comforted. Elisha prayed again and God imposed a literal blindness on the whole enemy camp. The bands of Syria troubled them no more at that time. What spectacular means of protection was provided on this occasion-horses and chariots of fire.

C. HORSES OF FIRE FOR WARFARE

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? (Job 39:19).

This is the horse of faith described here. When this horse of faith is formed within us, we can surely ride into battle, resist the forces of the enemy, and come forth triumphant. In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation we see the Bride of Christ coming back with her Bridegroom, literally riding upon white horses of faith, coming forth to conquer once again.

The horse of faith has a neck clothed with thunder. There is no thunder unless there is fiery lightning. So this horse stands clothed with fire as well as thunder around his neck, ready to charge into battle.

D. HORSES OF FIRE FOR DESTRUCTION

The horses described in Revelation nine are loosed at the River Euphrates for death and destruction. These are horses of judgment. God has already judged man's sustenance; now He judges man personally. Intensified pressure of suffering is applied to cause men to repent and turn their hearts back to God, but even this does not avail to touch their stubborn, rebellious wills.

And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone...And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts (Revelation 9:17-21).

Even though one third of mankind has been killed in this sixth trumpet judgment, the other two thirds of men continue in their resistance against God. Their spiritual life is completely taken up with the worship of devils and their man-made idols of metal, stone, and wood. As far as their natural deeds are concerned, they continue in their wickedness, undeterred from their murdering, practicing of witchcraft, giving themselves to fornication, and pursuing their thievery. Although they have survived six trumpet judgments, their pattern of behavior fails to change. Their vain worship of the Antichrist and his image continues on.

It is interesting to notice that the fire, smoke, and brimstone that constituted the breastplate of protection for the riders was the same fire, smoke, and brimstone that ministered death to wicked men. As long as the fire, smoke, and brimstone was on the breastplate, it ministered defensively to protect the hearts of the riders. But when that same fire, smoke, and brimstone issued out of a mouth and head that was anointed with holy hatred against sin, the aggressive aspect began to wage an overcoming battle against wickedness. On one hand it spelled life, and on the other hand it spelled death. So it is with all the things of God. We find this truth specifically stated in II Corinthians.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? (II Corinthians 2:14-16).

So the world experiences another terrible visitation of the judgment of God, but to little avail. Mankind persists in his independent, self-willed way. In spite of greatly intensified suffering, man continues to reject God. He still prefers the vain, the false, the imitative over the humble Lamb, over the truth and reality. Forgiveness and grace stand, in the tribulation, as an open door into the presence of God, but man rejects and repels the ONE TRUE LIVING GOD.

When the seventh trumpet sounds in Heaven, it sets in motion a great deal of activity which completes the mystery of God, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (Revelation 10:7). The actual sounding forth of the trumpet is recorded in chapter eleven.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

Inserted between the sixth and seventh trumpets, like a parenthetical insertion, is chapter ten which is of great interest to us. Although we are ready for the seventh trumpet in our study, let us stop to consider the tenth chapter, for it contains things that must come to pass before the seventh trumpet can sound at the end of the tribulation.

⁷B. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

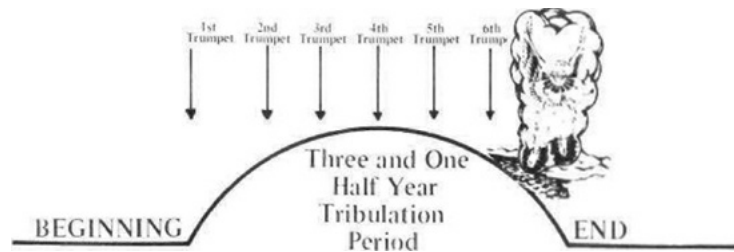
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MIGHTY ANGEL (Revelation 10:1-11)

Our first revelation of Jesus Christ was as King during the Church Age. Now we are studying the second revelation of Jesus Christ as the SLAIN LAMB who unveils the tribulation period.

Various word pictures are drawn to give us an understanding of God's dreadful judgments during the tribulation period and the order of their occurrence. For example, the seven seals are revealed first. The first five seals show what will happen on earth during the tribulation period. At the end, and after the tribulation period, the sixth and seventh seals are loosened. Then the seven trumpets are introduced to bring the judgments out of heaven upon the earth which gives a second picture of what will happen during the tribulation time. The first five seals and the trumpet judgments take place simultaneously. It is the Lamb who loosens the seals and the trumpets. We have studied the first six trumpets.

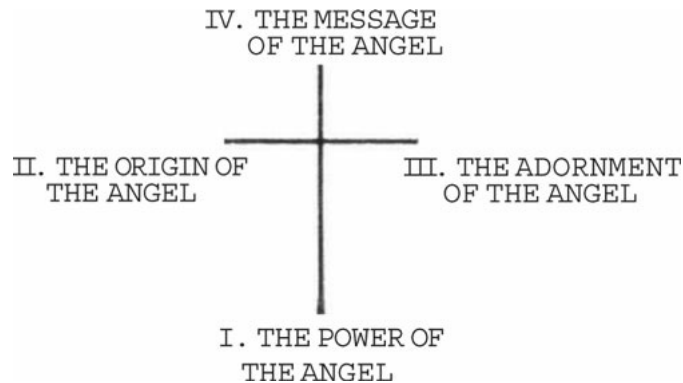
Let us pause here to consider another vision shown to the Apostle John before the seventh trumpet blew. The following diagram shows when this vision occurred in relation to the tribulation period.





THE MIGHTY ANGEL

The person who was principally concerned in communicating this discovery to John was a mighty angel from Heaven. Concerning him, we shall note the following stature of truth:



And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (Revelation 10:1).

Notice that it is stated *another* angel. Obviously John had seen a mighty angel on another occasion. We find that the first mighty angel is mentioned in Revelation 5:2. The same Greek word is used in both instances, but in the fifth chapter the English translators chose to use the word *strong* instead of mighty. Nevertheless, their meaning is identical. These were angels with special prevailing and overcoming power. Let us consider the power of this mighty angel introduced in chapter ten.

I. THE POWER OF THE ANGEL

“And I saw another mighty angel...” The word *mighty* means powerful, forcible, strong, valiant. Obviously this angel has already striven with fallen Lucifer and prevailed against him. Here is an angel who has been tested and Has overcome.

The angels were tested during Lucifer’s rebellion in Heaven. As Lucifer went up and down among the angels of Heaven for the purpose of recruiting them to his cause, some cast their lot with him. Another group of God’s angels (as this mighty angel), rose up and warred valiantly to overcome Lucifer’s temptation.

God does not send forth an angelic representative with such a singular commission unless that angel be a valiant overcomer, unless he has already proven his merit and worth. This is a *mighty angel*, sent forth with the Word of God. It is his privilege to introduce more of the Word of God to John the apostle through “a little book” that he brings to him. As a result of taking a stand for the truth, for the Word of God, in the midst of the angelic rebellion, this mighty angel is entrusted with this glorious and honorable commission.

Since this matter of being a *strong one* is so significant, let us consider the matter more thoroughly. Turning back to chapter five we read:

And I saw a *strong* [mighty] *angel* proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? (Revelation 5:2).

On this occasion, God is ready to introduce the LAMB. Surely He would not employ an angel that was not valiant, strong, and mighty in overcoming power. The introduction of the Lamb seems strange. The angel cries with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book?” Had this been carnal man making the introduction, he would have walked up with all his pride and said, “I am introducing to you one of the greatest Lambs of all the universes.” But God’s wisdom is much greater. Had He magnificently proclaimed the Lamb with flourish and splendor, it would have provoked no humility in the hearts of the spectators in Heaven. When the strong one, the mighty valiant angel, stands out and cries “Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals?” everybody confesses, “I am not worthy; I can’t open them...not me.” This is God’s way of focusing all of Heaven’s attention upon the worthiness of the Lamb. By acknowledging their own unworthiness, they elevate the Lamb to His rightful glory. As John weeps because none is worthy to open the book, one of the elders declares “the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loosen the seals thereof.” John turns, expecting to see a Lion, but instead a Lamb stands before him, as if it were freshly slain. The hosts of Heaven are caught up in rapturous praise, worship, and adoration of the Lamb, the only One in all of Heaven who is worthy.

We find the same Greek word for *mighty* used in the first Epistle of John. Again its implication and meaning conveys the thought of overcoming power.

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are *strong*, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one (I John 2:14).

If God expected the angels to take a stand for the Word of God and to overcome the Wicked One, how much more is He going to require the Bride of Jesus Christ to do the same.

Prevailing strength is not confined to the angelic realm. In the Apostolic church there were Christians who were strong to take a stand for the Word of God and who were able to overcome the wicked one. Today we can certainly do likewise. The followers of Jesus Christ who press upward into the mature stature of Jesus Christ will show themselves “strong and mighty” and ultimately lay hold of the prize, the Bride of Jesus Christ.

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE ANGEL

AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven... (Revelation 10:1).

He came from Heaven, the place of God’s Throne, the place from which power is supplied. If we want strength to overcome the enemy, then we, too, have to fetch it from afar. Earthly power is completely inadequate to assure one of victory over the enemy. We need not despair, however, for there is power available from the Throne of Grace in Heaven that assures us of victory over all the enemy. We must pray it down. Did Jesus not say, “AH power is given unto me in heaven and in earth...”(Matthew 28:18)? This power is within our reach, but we must bring it from

afar through the exercise of prayer.

III. THE ADORNMENT OF THE ANGEL

The word *adorn* means to furnish ornately, to decorate with ornaments, to beautify. Beloved, the mighty angel presents an impressive sight. He has a great responsibility, and he comes furnished, decorated, and beautified with the ornaments which he needs to accomplish his task.

A. CLOTHING

The first aspect of the angel's appearance is the fact that he was clothed with a cloud. This cloud is a cloud of glory. In Revelation 1:7 it is said of the Lord that He will come with clouds. In other words, He will be clothed with clouds, as it were. The Word of God tells what realms of glory clouds will clothe Jesus Christ when He comes again: He will be enfolded by the glory of the Father, the glory of the angels (Matthew 16:27) and His own glory (Matthew 25:31).

God has always used His glory to cover His Word. In the Garden of Eden, God clothed Adam male and female with His light and glory. He gave them this glory by gift in anticipation of the time when they would receive His Word of truth. When they accepted the Serpent's word in preference to God's Word, they lost their glory garments and stood naked before their Creator. God could not restore their original garments because He cannot glorify disobedience and sin. Nevertheless, He did provide the naked pair with clothing made from the skins of the animal sacrifice which God offered for their sins.

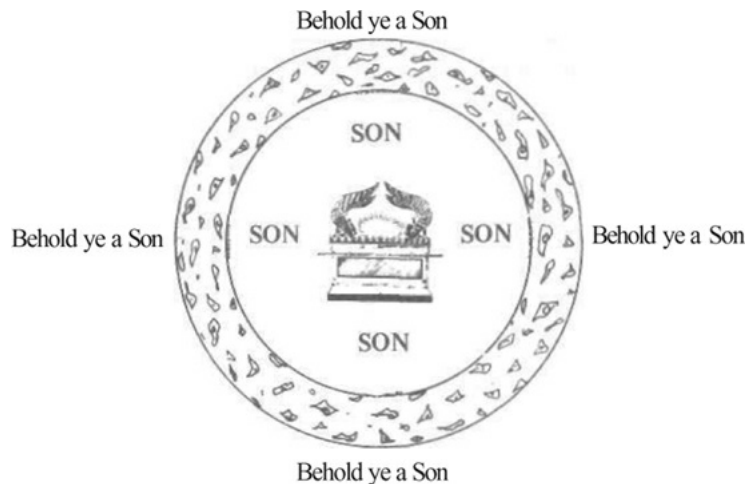
When the Mosaic Tabernacle was reared up, and the Ark which held the written Word of God was set in its proper place, the glory of God filled the Tabernacle and clothed the Ark and the Word with clouds of glory. Likewise, in Solomon's temple, when the Ark was set in its proper place, clouds of glory covered the Ark and the Word contained in it. Later, when the Word of God was ready to enter the womb of the Virgin Mary to be made flesh, Mary was overshadowed, or clothed, with the power and glory of the Highest. Later, when Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, the veil of flesh was pulled back to permit Peter, James, and John to look upon the glory that clothed the Word that was within the man, Jesus. In like manner, this mighty angel was clothed in a cloud of glory that enveloped the Word, the truth, which he had so valiantly taken a stand for in the midst of the angelic rebellion.

The Word of God "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my pathway." When we are clothed with the Word of God, we also carry its glory, its light. As Christians, we need not walk in darkness, for we are called to walk in light, and in resurrection glory. Each time we take a stand for the Word and overcome the tempter, then the glory of that portion of the Word clothes us anew and covers our pathway with light. God promised to protect Israel with His light of glory: "The glory of the LORD shall be your reward." God has glory to cover the whole man-front and back and all around. If we just take a stand for the Word of God, we can be strong to overcome the Wicked One. Then we, like the mighty angel, will be clothed with the glory of the Word.

B. HEAD

...and a rainbow was upon his head...(Revelation 10:1),

Some translations of this verse say: "A rainbow was *round* about his head." In chapter four we see a rainbow round about the Throne of God: "...and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald" (Revelation 4:3). The emerald stone was the stone of the tribe of Reuben. The word *emerald* means a break, a fracture. Reuben means "behold ye a son." By combining these thoughts, we realize that regardless of which way we approach the Throne, we must come through the Son, the Son who was broken and fractured for all mankind.



Now we understand better how the angel had such prevailing power against Lucifer. He had the same kind of rainbow round about his head as the rainbow that encircled the Throne of God. The emerald rainbow declares, "Behold ye a son." It implies the Headship of the Son. The rainbow encircling the angel's head kept him always mindful of the Headship of the Son of God. When his conduct is most mysterious, it is still perfectly just and faithful to the Lord's Headship. The mighty angel's head, his mind, is clothed with the rainbow of God's covenant of mercy to His Son. God's covenant to His Son made Jesus Christ the Head over all things, and that all things should be under His feet. The mighty angel knew that all of his strength and power came by humbling his mind and his will at the feet of the Son, and letting Jesus Christ exercise His Headship and authority in every situation.

We also have the opportunity to let our head be encircled by the emerald rainbow of the Son's Headship. When our head is surrounded by the emerald rainbow, there is no place that the enemy can penetrate. Our defense is "Behold ye a Son." In other words, "I am living and moving under the Headship of Jesus Christ. I'm obeying His will." How mighty and prevailing we can be when we are surrounded by the Headship of the Son of God. Regardless of what comes across our pathway, His Headship is our refuge and our defense. When our head is surrounded with the rainbow of His Headship, we are gloriously conscious that the Son is the *Head* over all things. This knowledge enables us to thank and praise Him for *all things* in our lives. If God be for us, who can be against us? Beloved, nothing can defeat a mind that is encompassed with the emerald rainbow. No wonder God could entrust this mighty angel with the most significant mission of giving the Word of God in the little book to the Apostle John.

What a beautiful principle is set forth here to display the wise design of God's actions. God will not trust us with the revelation of His Word to give to others unless we have first been clothed with the glory and light of it, and have come under its Headship. This was the experience of the mighty angel.

Let us look at some examples in our lives. When the Devil comes against our mind to tempt us with self-pity, it has no effect if our mind is encircled by the emerald rainbow. Our mind will be encircled with the light of truth that Jesus Christ is Head over all things in our lives. When our minds are thus enlightened, we understand everything that happens is for our good and for God's glory. Thus, instead of words of self-pity we will speak continual praises and thanksgiving for every thing. How can we possibly feel sorry for ourselves when we are aware of the broken, fractured, wounded body of Jesus? In addition to the physical breaking that His body suffered, Jesus also suffered brokenness in His spirit and soul. He paid a tremendous price to give us His Headship.

Certainly the angel in the tenth chapter of Revelation was no ordinary angel. He was sent with the Word of God. He was bringing the Word of the KING of KINGS and the LORD of LORDS, who later, will be revealed on the White Horse in chapter nineteen. Only an angel who has willingly taken on the rainbow and come under the Headship of the Lord, could be entrusted with the delivery of the full stature Word. What remarkable adornment! This angel's head was adorned by subjection to the Headship of the Son. His mind was girded round about with "Behold ye a Son," behold ye the Headship of the Lord.

With this same thought in mind, the Apostle Peter exhorts us, in I Peter 1:13, to gird up the loins of our mind. With a girded-up mind, a mind girded about with the Headship of Jesus Christ, we can never become bitter, unforgiving, or complaining in any circumstance. Recognizing His Headship in all things, realizing that His purpose

is to work all things together for good, we can stand unconquerable in every attack. May we, even as the mighty angel, seek to possess around our heads the emerald rainbow, which signifies the subjection of our minds to the Headship of the Lord.

C. FACE

...and his face was as it were the sun...(Revelation 10:1).

Even as the countenance of the Resurrected Christ “was as the sun shineth in his strength” (Revelation 1:16), so the mighty angel displayed a similar countenance. His face was bright and full of luster or majesty. His face clearly radiated the divine glory with which he was invested. The angel’s face was filled with glowing warmth and light as he bore forth the Word of God. He carried a little book in his hands. Without the revelation of this book, the Book of Revelation would have ended with nine chapters. The little book in the angel’s hand contained the remaining Revelation. Just as the angel’s countenance bore witness that he had personally received the Word of God, so also do our countenances bear witness to our rejection or reception of the Word of God.

For example, the angry countenance of Cain bore witness that he had rejected God’s Word and had chosen to bring his own offering of the fruit of the ground rather than the required blood. The fire of God consumed Abel’s sacrificial lamb but it failed to light upon Cain’s offering. When this happened, Cain became greatly angered and his countenance fell.

On another occasion, Isaiah’s countenance bore witness that he had received the Word of God. Upon hearing the voice of God saying “Who will go? Who can we send?” Isaiah lifted up his countenance unto the Lord and said, “Here am I, send me.” Likewise, we have the same choice to reject the Word and have an angry countenance, or to receive the Word and have a bright countenance. We all have the privilege to come in God’s appointed way and lift up our faces in surrender and obedience to Him. Only then can our countenance be clothed with the warmth and light of the quickened Word.

D. FEET

...and his feet as pillars of fire: (Revelation 10:1).

We see the similarity between this angel’s feet and those of the Resurrected Christ. It is said of His feet, “And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace...” (Revelation 1:15). These were fiery feet with judging, cleansing, and sanctifying power. In relation to the seven churches, this was the King that “walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks” (Revelation 2:1). The angel’s feet were like pillars of fire, to show that all his ways were pure and steady. He was immovable from the will of God. This he had proved by prevailing over the angelic rebellion.

God has provided pillars of fire for the feet of His Christian soldiers. “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15). The preparation of the gospel is the Blood of Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. In reference to this experience, Jesus prophesied saying, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). These then, are anointed feet, feet aglow with the fire of the Spirit of God upon them. We know that they are sanctified feet, because fire sanctifies and cleanses.

We have been looking at the mighty angel who was entrusted with a full stature of the prophetic Word. Before the angel could be entrusted with this open book, something had to have happened to his body, his head, his face, and his feet. What a spectacular and glorious being he was as he appeared in vision before the Apostle John. This mighty angel will appear literally at the close of the tribulation period, but the principles whereby he gained his strength and glory are available now to all sincere believers who are pressing on into the “Kingdom of God relationship” with the Lord Jesus Christ.

We can know, now, the spiritual benefits of being clothed with the cloud of glory imparted into our hearts through the revealed Word of God. We can know the Headship of the Lord as we permit our heads to be encircled by the emerald rainbow of the Son of God. There is light, power, and warmth for our countenance and fire for our feet. We can be visible witnesses of the power and glory of the Word to those to whom we are sent to share the Word of God.

E. HAND

And he had in his hand a little book open...(Revelation 10:2).

His hand was adorned with the Word of God. It is vitally important that we also have our hands adorned with the Word of God. We recall, in the Old Testament Dispensation, how the children of Israel were exhorted by God to write the Word and put it on their hand and on their forehead, that it be a frontlet before their eyes (Deuteronomy 6:7,8). It not only served as a constant reminder of the commandments of their God, but it also kept their vision of God renewed. Let us utilize the Word of God in the same way, for we have need of this in our times, even as the children of Israel did in their day.

..and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth (Revelation 10:2).

With feet of fire and God's Word in his hand, this mighty angel of God stood in a remarkable position. He set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth. Surely this was no ordinary messenger, but one who is able to span both earth and sea. His right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth shows his absolute power and dominion over the world. In spite of the power and dominion that he has, he is not exalted in his mind. We know this from the Greek word that is translated *set* which means to set in a passive or horizontal position. It means to bow, to kneel down, lay aside, lay down purpose, set forth, settle down, sink down. Although the angel stands erect as far as the world is concerned, his will is set in a horizontal position as far as God is concerned. He is surrendered to come under the Headship of the Son and to obey His will. These pillars of fiery feet will not be removed from the earth, nor from the sea until he has done the will of God.

F. VOICE

And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:...(Revelation 10:3).

The word *roareth* in the Greek means to bellow with excitement, with anger or pain. This angel is not bellowing because of pain or anger, but from excitement, an excitement born out of the fact that in his hand he holds the open book, the open Word of God.

...and when he had cried, [bellowed with excitement] seven thunders uttered their voices (Revelation 10:3).

Even the thunders have something to say. They uttered their voices to bellow forth the Word. When they hear the excitement of the angel over the open book in his hand, they cannot remain silent. They, too, bellow out to preach the Word that they know.

And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not (Revelation 10:4).

The awful voice of the angel is echoed by the seven thunders who give seven, solemn, awe-inspiring ways of discovering the mind and will of God. John hears and understands what the thunders say. His immediate reaction is to begin to record their utterances, but a voice from Heaven forbids him to publish what he has learned from the seven thunders. The Word John hears and understands when the seven thunders utter their voices, is strictly for John, personally. This is part of his reward, as the servant of God, who has suffered for the revelation of the Word of God. God is indebted to no man. In the message of the seven thunders, God gives unto John secrets of the New City; secrets he is not to tell, because they are to be revealed in eternity.

There are many things that we can know in the Word of God, relatively speaking. Since we know that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then we can know the principles relating to the seven thunders which will be revealed in the New City. Although we do not know exactly what the message of the seven thunders will be, we do have a clue about them if we go back to yesterday. By studying the voice of thunder in the Old Testament Dispensation, we learn, at least in part, some of the implications of the seven thunders.

We have another clue from nature. The natural and visible things of this world are pictures and demonstrations of the invisible things of God.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (Romans 1:20).

Let us observe some principles of lightning and thunder, for example. When lightning strikes, it parts, or separates the clouds. When the clouds roll together again, they make a clap of thunder which demonstrates their new unity, their new oneness of relationship. The thunder is not the new unity, it is the *witness* to the union which brings new unity into being! This is a principle of operation in natural lightning and thunder, and it illustrates what we so often experience spiritually when the lightning of separation strikes in our lives. God uses these separations to bring us higher, spiritually, into a new experience of unity with Him. Out from each new experience of unity comes forth the thunderings, bellowings of excitement. We utter words, thundering words, of PRAISE and THANKSGIVING because of our new union with Him.

Since thunder speaks of unity, then we understand that each of the seven thunders speaks of a particular degree of unity that the Bride of Jesus Christ will learn through union with her Bridegroom. This prepares her for complete revelation of unity which will be revealed in Eternity.

The Old Testament tells us more about the voice of thunder. Each example of thunder teaches us something about the thunder of unity. Unity finds its complete fulfillment in the New City, where God and the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, dwell in a oneness of relationship with His spiritual Bride.

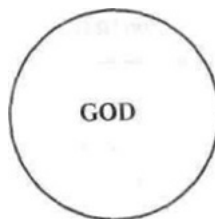
1. Unity of the Word

In order to understand and appreciate the significance of the unity of the thunder mentioned in this verse, we must consider the oneness and the triune aspects of God.

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off (Exodus 20:18).

We have learned there is ONE GOD, but He has chosen to manifest and reveal Himself also as the TRIUNE GOD: Father, Word, and Holy Ghost. The power of the unity of the Word is fantastic within the Godhead. We see the Word of God standing in the vertical position of authority and command, and we also see the Word in the horizontal position of humility.

GODHEAD IS ONE



Deuteronomy 6:4

Zechariah 14:9

Malachi 2:10

Romans 3:30

I Corinthians 8:4

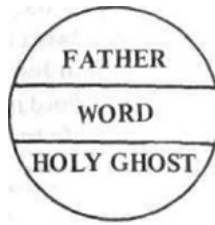
Galatians 3:20

Ephesians 4:6

I Timothy 2:5

James 2:19

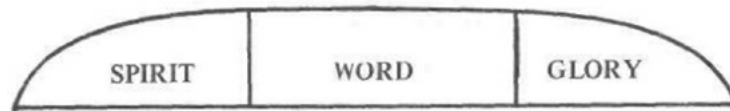
MANIFESTATION OF GOD IS THREE



I John 5:7

Let us divide these three, in order to see how the Word of God abides in the form of a cross in the Godhead.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE FATHER IS THREE



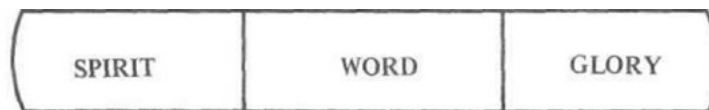
Matthew 10:20
The Father has a
Spirit.

John 12:28
The Father has a
Word.

Romans 6:4
The Father has
Glory.

Thus we see that the Father is Spirit, Word, and Glory. Now let us divide the WORD so that we may see, within the Word, the same divine order of Spirit, Word, and Glory.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE WORD IS THREE



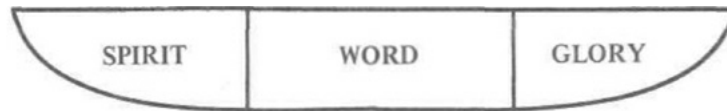
I Peter 1:11
Christ is THE
Rock, and the Rock
is a God of truth or
Word.
(I Corinthians 10:4
Deuteronomy 32:3,4)
Therefore, this Rock,
This Christ has a Spirit.

John 4:41-6:63
Now the Christ, the
Word within Jesus,
gave Him Word of
truth and life to
speak.

John 1:14
Colossians 1:27
The Word also has
Glory.

Now let us divide the Holy Ghost so that we may see, within the Holy Ghost, the same divine order of Spirit, Word, and Glory.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE HOLY GHOST IS THREE



John 14:17,26

The Holy Ghost is a Spirit of Truth that is sent to teach us all things.

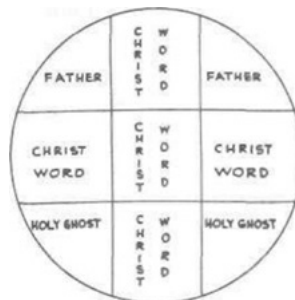
Acts 13:2

The Holy Ghost spoke with words in the church to lead and guide believers in the will of God.

I Peter 4:14

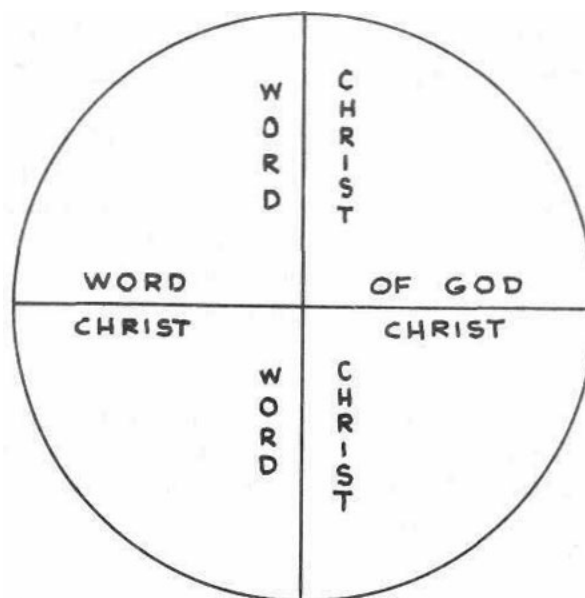
The Holy Ghost has Glory,

This illustrates how God is ONE; He is THREE, and how as Three, each third can be divided into threes. If we add the three manifestations of the Godhead, together with the three manifestations in each of the divisions of the Godhead, we see the number twelve. Since the number twelve permeates the New City, the Wife of the Lamb, then we, too, must be filled with all of these aspects of God, if we want to be a part of that great City. For the moment, however, let us concentrate on the Word in the Godhead.



We see that the Word occupies the form of the Cross (the horizontal position and vertical position) in the Godhead.

When we get to the New City, we will understand fully what the first voice of the seven thunders bellowed forth in excitement. This was excitement over the unity of the Word, the unity between the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.



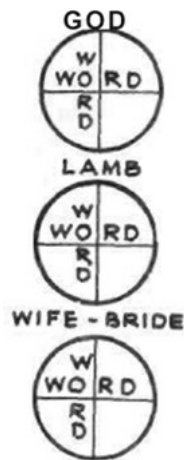
The Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai establish a threefold relationship of man: first to God, then to Jesus Christ, and finally to other men, which prefigures the unity of the Word and man in the New City. If we categorize the Ten Commandments as God gave them, they fit together as follows:

1. Man's relationship to God
2. Man's relationship to the Sabbath Day (Jesus Christ)
3. Man's relationship to man

The Sabbath Day is a day appointed to man for rest. In the Old Testament Dispensation, men rested from their labors on the seventh day of the week, even as God rested from His creative work on the seventh day. In the New Testament Dispensation, Jesus Christ is our Sabbath Day, our day of spiritual rest, the day in which we rest from the works of the law. The observance of the seventh day under the old Covenant prefigured its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who ushered in the true rest of man, the spiritual rest. Jesus did not say "Come unto the *seventh day* all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and the *seventh day* will give you rest." No, He said:

Come unto *ME*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).

In the Ten Commandments, God was saying that when we get the right threefold relationship established between ourselves and God, and Jesus Christ our Sabbath Day, and our fellowmen, then we will have arrived unto perfection. That same unity of the Word is seen in the New City between God and the Lamb and the Bride, who will be His servants.



And all *the people saw the thunderings*, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off (Exodus 20:18).

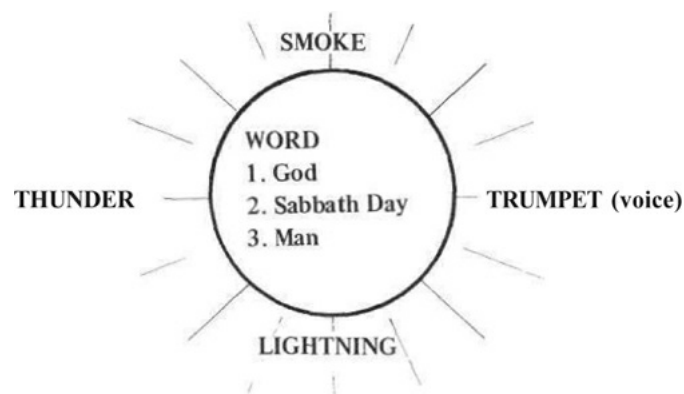
The children of Israel *saw* all of this. The Hebrew word *saw* means to discern, to enjoy, to experience, to perceive, to have visions. They were not ready to approach the unity of the Word so fantastically demonstrated before them, for they drew back in fear, and stood afar off, as Moses drew near into the thick darkness where God was. God had just spoken the Ten Commandments. He had just given the UNITY of the Word in relationship to God, to the Sabbath Day, and to man. This was the first time that the Word of the Father, the Word of Christ, and the Word of the Holy Ghost had come together to speak God's Ten Commandments to man. With this new unity of the Word, came the thunderings, the lightnings, the noise of the trumpet, the mountain smoking.

When Moses received the law, the demonstration of the unity of the Word was seen in an inverted order from the order of our usual experience. Generally the pattern is: first the lightning of separation, and then the thunder of unity. But on this occasion God lifted them above their personal stature of spiritual experience. Before the lightning struck, they saw a vision of the thunder. In other words, they saw what it is like to walk in unity with the Word of

God. By gift they saw it, experienced it, and enjoyed it. Then came the lightning of separation. There is always a price tag for union with God, which is separation. Then they saw the noise, or the voice of the trumpet. The trumpet was used at the coronation of a king. Thus we understand that the trumpet blew to show Israel that she must be separated from her own carnal headship and accept God as King over her. (No wonder the thunders bellowed forth in the Book of Revelation. It was the proclamation of a king, the King of all Kings!)

Mount Sinai was, itself, a smoking witness of God's presence and His holy hatred for sin. Israel was a type of the Bride, and God gave her the pillars of smoke at the Brazen Altar, at the Altar of Incense, and at the Mercy Seat, to demonstrate God's holy hatred against sin. When God brought Israel out of Egypt with pillars of smoke, He did it to demonstrate that she was a holy nation, separated unto God, and that she was to have a holy hatred against sin. The Bride in the Song of Solomon comes out of the wilderness experience with pillars of smoke. In addition to being clothed with God's holy hatred against sin, she was perfumed with His fragrance of humility and faith (Song of Solomon 3:6).

Here, then, was the first unity, the unity of the Word. Each time the Word comes together in new unity, the lightning, the thunder, the voice of the trumpet, and the smoke are witnesses of this fact.



This unity happened yesterday at Mount Sinai. Since God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then we can expect to experience, spiritually, the lightning, the thunder, the voices, and the smoke. We can also expect it to happen in the tomorrow called Eternity.

Yesterday the UNITY OF THE WORD was manifested and experienced by the children of Israel. Tomorrow this same unity will be seen in the New City. So then, today we can expect to know the Unity of the Word in our personal experiences. Certainly the Bride of Jesus Christ will experience the lightning of separation, the voice of union, the voice of the trumpet which crowns God as sovereign King, and the smoke of God's holy hatred against sin. How else can she be prepared to work in marriage relationship with the Lord throughout eternity?

We do not know all about what the seven thunders uttered, but we can rest assured that they uttered truth about the unity of the Word of God. No wonder when the angel stood with the little book, the Word of God, open in his hand, that he bellowed with excitement. Neither could the seven thunders contain themselves, for they knew the seven unities of God. Although this unity of the Word of God is not completely revealed to us now, we can learn the horizontal, humility side and the vertical, authoritative side, principle wise. We can get joined to that part of the Word which will cause us to humble and surrender to God's will, and also we can get joined to that part of the Word which will cause us to stand firm and immovable in the will of God. If we become acquainted with this measure of the unity of the Word in this life, we will be prepared for the complete revelation when we get to the New City. Then we will understand fully how God is One, Three, Twelve, and Infinite. In the New City there will be a voice of thunder coming out and shouting over the unity of the Word.

2. Unity of the Excellency of His Powerful Headship

We are studying the principles of what the seven thunders uttered. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If we want to know what He is going to say by the seven thunders out in eternity in the New City, then we can look back to yesterday in the Word of God and see what the thunders have uttered in the past. Since the natural types the spiritual, we know that thunders speak of union and unity, as the lightning speaks of separation. The seven thunders, then, speak seven messages of union. The first was the unity of the Word, and our second unity is found in

the Book of Job.

The Bible is its own commentary. We often mistakenly turn to other books to seek explanation of God's Word; whereas God has provided all needful explanations within the pages of His own Word—the Word explains the Word. If God says something in one place in the Word, rest assured that His Word has explained that very thing in another place. This is why we need the Holy Ghost to teach and to lead us to the truth in order that we might rightly divide the Word of Truth. This leaves no room for human suppositions and errors.

The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour. At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roareth: *he thundereth with the voice of his excellency*; and he will not slay them when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvellously with his voice great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend (Job 36:33; 37:1-5).

In verse thirty-three, attention is called to the noise of thunder. When God thunders in the midst of a natural storm, the cattle of the field seem to discern the unity of His excellency. In humility they remove themselves from the fields, their throne, as it were, and seek shelter under the trees. They leave God to the excellency of His triumphant power in the storm.

Likewise, we see the same principle in the life of Jesus, who continually bowed to the excellency of God's Headship in His life.

Elihu (a picture of Jesus Christ, our mediator) comments, "At this also my heart trembleth and is moved out of his place." In other words, when Elihu heard the noise of thunder, the new union, the new marriage relationship, his heart started trembling and moved off the throne to let God possess the throne of his heart. Likewise, with us, when we experience a new union with the triumphant, victorious power of Jesus Christ, our hearts tremble, and our wills surrender up the throne of our hearts in a new way to Him.

Then he exhorts, "Hear attentively." Hear the noise of the thunder of unity. God wants us to prepare ourselves to live in the New City. After the lightning "a voice roareth," a voice belloweth; "he thundereth with the voice of His excellency..." Here is the second unity, the thunder of His Excellency, His Majesty. The word *excellency* in the Hebrew means a swelling up, a mounting up, and growing up, an increasing, a triumph, the union of triumph and victory! Beloved, man thinks his carnal power is sufficient to exalt himself above the place of humility, from the place of being under subjection to God. Our proud human will cannot exalt itself above the excellency of God's power. The excellency of the power of God's Headship will grow and increase and mount up until it fills the universes.

The union of triumph and victory will be heard in the New City, but we must know the union of triumph, here and now so that we might be prepared for the New City. The Book of Exodus records the Song of Deliverance of the children of Israel as they walked through the Red Sea.

And in the greatness of thine excellency [in the union of thy thunder] thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble (Exodus 15:7).

The verses that follow this verse tell us that God not only loosed the congealed (frozen) waters to drown the pursuing Egyptians, but that there was also a great storm in the sky. Lightning and thunder terrified the enemies as they were in the Red Sea. God triumphed over them with the union of His excellency, with the union of His majesty, and with the union of His conquering power.

God promised the unity of the excellency of His powerful Headship to His natural wife, Israel. She will experience this during the Perfect Age upon the New Earth.

The sons also of them that afflicted thee [natural Israel] shall come bending unto thee; and ail they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Where-as thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through *thee*, *I will make thee an eternal excellency*, a joy of many generations (Isaiah 60:14,15).

Speaking prophetically, the Lord promises "to make thee an eternal excellency," This is because they are in

unity with the Headship that has triumphant power and majesty. If it can happen in Eternity, it can happen today as well. Every time we step up into a new union with the Word and with the will of God, we have a new thunder of power, a new excellency, a new triumphing power to run on with the Lord.

We are in this life for two reasons! First, for what we can *become* in the Lord; second, for what we can *do* for the Lord while we are here. Fastening our eyes upon the prize, the New City, the Bride of Jesus Christ, let us run with all our might to obtain the prize, and while we are running, let us shine for Jesus that others might see and follow us in the race.

No wonder the thunders bellowed with excitement. When we have unity with His Word and with His excellent power, it is exciting. We are limited in this natural body in expressing this thunder of unity that fills our soul, but we shall have a glorified body in the New City; therefore, we shall not be restrained in our praise and adoration of Him. Praise God for this union of the Word and the excellency of His powerful Headship that makes us triumph over all the enemy. Thank God for the battles of life, for they force us to lay hold of new degrees of union with Him. May we allow the thunder of new unity with the Lord sound forth in our lives that the world may see that there is a reality in following Jesus Christ.

3. Unity of Warfare

I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth (II Samuel 22:4-8).

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The LORD also *thundered* in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils (Psalm 18:8-15).

If we consider these prophetic portions of Scripture found in II Samuel 22 and Psalm 18, we will realize they could in no way apply personally to King David, who spoke these words. For these thoughts go beyond human experience. These words apply to Jesus and His relationship with His Father. They relate to the time when Jesus was delivered from Hell and raised from the dead.

But first let us consider the type and shadow of Jesus being delivered from Hell. The shadow is seen in Israel's journey through the Red Sea. Her first experience in Egypt was with the blood of the lamb, a picture of the Blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on Calvary's Cross for sin. Later, when Israel crossed the Red Sea, it was a picture of the waters of death and Hell that Jesus walked through for us. It pictures also the waters of death that we enter into when we are buried with Jesus Christ in Water Baptism,

It is important for us to understand Israel's encounter with the Red Sea, because it gives us insight to many interesting truths. Great was Israel's dilemma. They were hotly pursued by the Egyptians in the rear. They were walled in on either side by mountains, and they faced an uncrossable Red Sea which lay before them. Yet God had not forsaken His people.

The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea (Exodus 14:14-16).

Moses, the servant of the Lord, did as he was commanded. He stretched forth the rod, and *the* sea was divided. The rod, used to open the Red Sea, was the very one upon which God had already invisibly put the name of Aaron. Later in Israel's journey, the name of Aaron, the high priest, was visibly written upon it (Numbers 17). The rod, with

the name of Aaron joined to it, signifies the power and authority of the Name (nature) of Jesus, our great High Priest. Symbolically, the Red Sea speaks of the waters of death that Jesus Christ parted. The body of Jesus went to the grave, His spirit went into the hands of the Father, His soul went to Hell. Jesus, the name of the man, accompanied by Christ, the Word, divided the water of death.

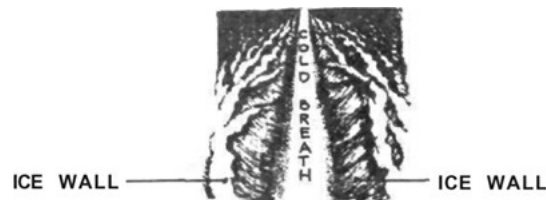
Others, before Jesus, had been resurrected from the dead. However, they did not have the power in their own name or nature that would take them through death and bring them up with resurrection life and power. Those, who were resurrected before Jesus, came out of death because someone, anointed and vested with the power and authority of the Lord, spoke and loosed the chains of death for them. Jesus Christ is the only Name that has the power and authority within itself to stand before the gates of Death, Hell, and the Bottomless Pit and say: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shalt come in...Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah" (Psalm 24:7-10).

Beloved, at His command the gates opened and Jesus Christ walked through those everlasting doors to wrench the keys of Death and Hell from the Devil's hand. Then He walked back out through the place called Death. Hallelujah! Jesus Christ is the only Name that has power to open up the waters of death for us, spiritually speaking.

When we stand before situations of life that mean complete loss and destruction to us, the Name of Jesus (the Nature of humility and surrender to the Father's will) is the only Name with power which will open up death and make a way for us to come forth with new life and glory. It takes the Name of Jesus to divide the waters of death for us today, even as it took the name of Aaron, the high priest, on the rod to part the waters of the Red Sea in Israel's experience.

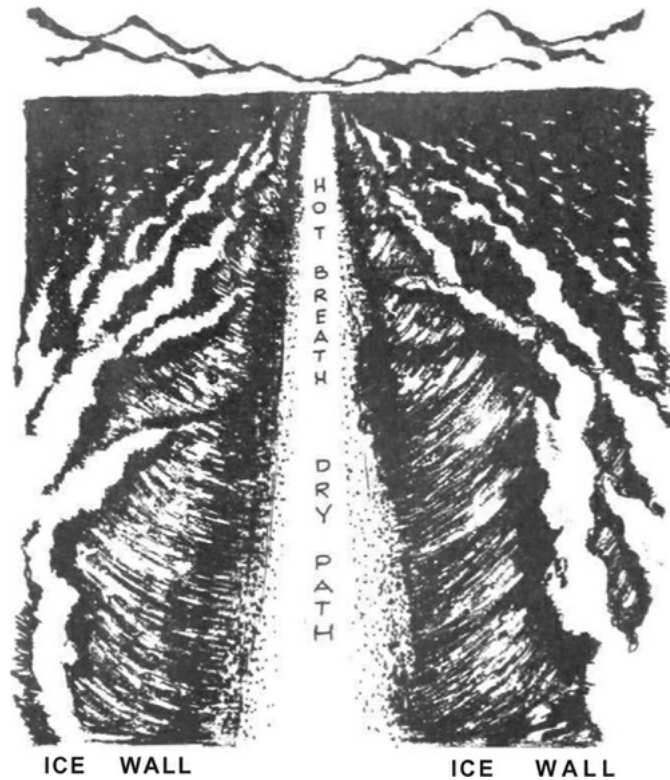
And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left (Exodus 14:21,22).

In addition to Moses putting forth his rod with the name of the high priest upon it, God also blew with the blast of His nostrils. We shall see, as we study further, that the Word of God has two sides: the cold breath, and the hot breath. First of all it was the cold breath of God that blasted forth to congeal, or freeze, the separated waters which caused them to stand up as a heap, or a wall, on either side.



And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were *congealed* in the heart of the sea (Exodus 15:8).

The Hebrew word *congealed* means to thicken as curdled milk or frozen water. It was the cold breath of the Word of God that froze up the Red Sea into walls of ice after the name of the high priest, Aaron, had been plunged into the Sea. And in the midst of the two walls of ice, God put a dry path.



How amazing! On either side were the frozen walls of ice, created by the cold breath of God; and passing through the center was the hot breath of God. The rod with the name of the high priest on it, and God's cold and hot breath, made it possible for the Israelites to cross over with dry feet.

Let us rehearse the facts again. When God sent the blood experience to Israel, it became a lightning experience of separation. Every Egyptian house knew the separation caused by death, as God moved in judgment, but the Israelite homes were spared because they sat under the protection of the blood of the Passover Lamb. Nevertheless, Israel knew separation also, for this was the beginning of her exodus from the land of Egypt. After Israel began her journey by taking the initial steps of separation from Egypt, God sent the cloud and the fire to lead her into further separation.

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; (I Corinthians 10:1,2).

The separation progressed until Israel reached the third phase of her separation from Egypt, separation by the water. Although the revelation concerning the name upon the rod was not yet manifest, nevertheless the authority of the rod worked in her behalf, and the waters parted before the children of Israel. All of these details in Israel's experience provide a picture of Jesus Christ going through the waters of death and the fire of Hell for us.

Now we are ready to continue explaining the prophecies of II Samuel 22 and Psalm 18. These verses explain how that after the Son Jesus, the High Priest, went into the waters of death, He called upon His Father, who blew with the blast of His nostrils, freeing Him.

Now, King David never went to Hell, but Jesus Christ did. Notice what King David said: "I will call upon the name of the LORD" (II Samuel 22:4). The name LORD used here is the mysterious tetragram name in Hebrew, made up of the four letters JHVH, which is the secret Name of God. We insert the vowels and get the name JeHoVaH, which, in the King James version, is always translated as LORD, with each letter capitalized. This was the secret name (LORD), which was written in the Ark of the Covenant, and also inscribed on the crown of the high priest. Only the high priest knew how to pronounce this secret Name, which was passed on from one high priest to the next. King David could not have known this Name (LORD), but Jesus did because He was the High Priest. Jesus

knew the proper name of Jehovah and could call, could cry, unto that Name,

Encompassed about with the sorrows of Hell and snared by the cords of death, Jesus cried out to the LORD and to His God, and was heard in Heaven. God moved in anger, for he was "wroth." The earth shook and trembled, even as did Heaven. The earth also quaked when Jesus died on the Cross, and again, when He was resurrected from the dead.

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:51-53).

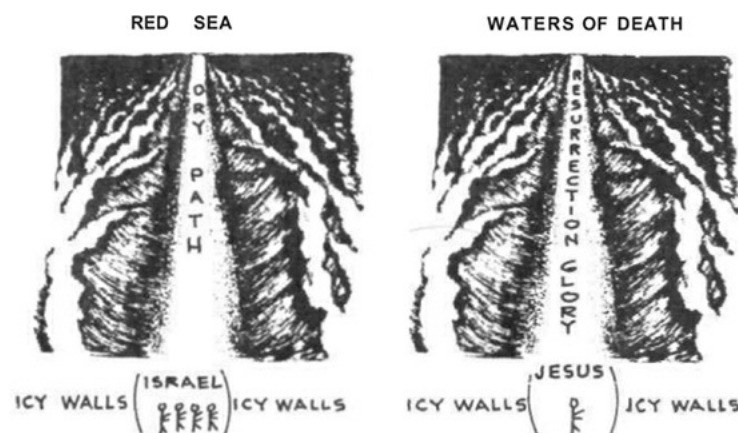
Jesus' vicarious death upon the Cross was complete. Now His soul was held captive in Hell, but in His distress He called, and His Father heard Him and delivered Him.

The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils (Psalm 18:13-15).

Here is further clarification on the voice of the LORD. The LORD gave His Word, hailstones (cold breath) and coals of fire (hot breath) when He heard the cry of His Son from Hell. Jesus cried out of Hell, and the LORD'S voice, His Father's voice, thundered from the Heavens. With the blast of His cold, icy breath, He pushed back the waters of death, and the foundations of the world were seen.

As we have said before, thunder speaks of unity, and thunder always follows separation. Jesus experienced separation in His spirit, soul, and body in the Father's will on the Cross; and then came the thunder of a new union with the Father's will even in Hell. The voice of the LORD first gave His hailstones to part the waters of death that encompassed the Son, and then gave His coals of fire, His resurrection glory to bring up His Son. The Father raised Jesus by His own resurrection power and glory. "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Romans 6:4).

The same principle of operation is seen in Jesus' death and resurrection that is seen in Israel's experience at the Red Sea. The waters were parted by the blast of the nostrils of God. First the cold breath froze the water into icy walls on either side. Then the hot breath dried up the passageway through to the other side.



In this life we will not fully understand the mystery of how God's hot and cold breath can dwell together, but this shall be revealed completely in the New City. However, we can personally experience the cold breath of humility in His Word, and the hot breath of exaltation in His Word, now, as we grow in spiritual stature and relationship with Jesus Christ.

Failure to understand this beautiful principle of humility and exaltation is the reason why many people backslide

from God. People slip back from God because they are strangers to His humility. They fail to understand that God accomplishes His principles of separation by the circumstances and situations which He brings into their lives. God's wise design and major ministry is to separate us from the creature and bring us into full union with the Creator. Therefore, He brings us into many trying situations in order to separate us from creature love, creature comfort, creature trust, creature dependence, so that He can bring us into a fresh new union with Himself.

When the lightning of separation strikes, it is time to seek the Lord in new confession and repentance. A fresh application of the precious shed Blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse and forgive our inordinate affection toward the creature. Separation makes room for a new infilling and refreshing in the Holy Ghost. When this comes, there will be a new union of the thunder sounding forth. Then God will release His cold and hot breath to take us through the waters of His Name, Death, and Life, bringing us up to a new place in God, a newness of resurrection life. This is not a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but we must go through it daily as we continue to walk on with God.

No wonder the seven thunders uttered their voices as they beheld the open book of the Word of God in the hand of the mighty angel. The first three unities are representative of: (1) the UNITY of the Word of God, (2) the excellency of His majesty and powerful Headship, (3) the unity of His warfare against the enemy. If the union with God and the Lamb is so exciting and marvelous now, how much greater it will be when it is revealed in the New City. The Bride will be full of joy and rejoicing, then, because she has already prepared herself through the thunderings of unity in her life on earth.

4. Unity of Glory

There is a thunder out of the glory of God. For the present time, God separates the glory so that we may be able to understand the different degrees of glory, but in the New City (the New Jerusalem), we will see the mystery of the ONENESS of God. It is impossible for us to grasp the Oneness of God with our limited understanding, but those who lay hold of the prize (the Bride of Christ) shall see and know how the Father and the Word and the Holy Ghost dwell together in one glory.

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters (Psalm 29:3).

The God of glory thundereth. Although the complete revelation of the unity of God's glory and all that it encompasses is reserved for the New City, it is possible to understand a measure of the unity of His glory now, by observing the separations of that glory. Jesus referred to the various aspects of glory when He said, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). There are three glories mentioned here: the glory of the Son (Word), the glory of the Father, and the glory of the angels. The glory of the Son is the Word glory, which settles down upon us when the revelation of the Word of God is brought forth by the Spirit of God. The Father's glory is the resurrection glory that lifts us out of crucifixion and death into new realms of light and life. Angels are spirits; therefore, the glory of the angels refers to the glory of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God.

How excellent are His anointings of glory. We have often known the strain of ministry in the face of extreme physical weariness. However, when the anointing of the glory of the Holy Ghost comes, we mount above every physical obstacle. When the Holy Ghost glory rests upon us, every hindering factor is swept away in the surge of His power and blessing.

We learn now of the glory of God through the separation of His ministries of glory in our lives, but in the New City, the glory of God will be seen in its great ONENESS of unity. This is why the voice spoke out of Heaven, telling John not to write what he had heard the seven thunders utter. We must first learn the glory of the Father, the glory of the Word, and the glory of the Holy Ghost. Only then will we be ready to look upon the unity of glory found in God.

Yes, there is a thunder of glory. Thank God that we can experience and know a sufficient measure of it in this life which prepares us for the greater revelation that is yet to come. When we know the unity of this glory, it sets us free from all desire for the glory of this world. The glory of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost is more thrilling and more satisfying than anything this world has to offer.

5. Unity of Obedience

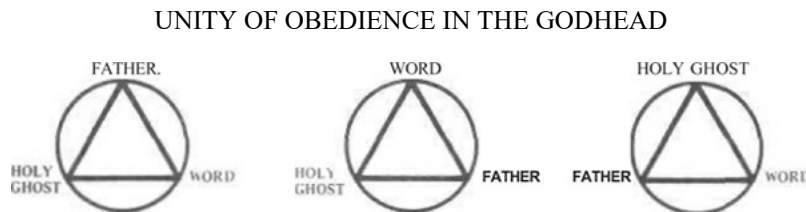
Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; *at the voice of thy thunder they hastened away*. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them (Psalm 104:6-8).

There is a thunder, or a unity, of obedience. We must learn this thunder now. Psalm 104 refers to something that happened yesterday, but God has the same principle for us today, and it all is a preview of what God has for us in the New City tomorrow.

At the voice of thunder the waters hastened to obey. The ocean bottom has its mountains and valleys, and in obedience to the voice of thunder, they took their appointed places. What a beautiful illustration of obedience to the voice of thunder. Many of us approve the voice of thunder when it sounds in our lives commanding us to go up into the high places, but how resentful we can be when we are committed to the low place. We must experience separation many times in our proud will before we are ready to leap in obedience to the voice of thunder, the voice of unity, the unity of obedience. When this unity is formed in us, it matters little whether we are exalted or humbled, displayed or hidden, known or unknown. Our delight is found in simply doing the will of God. When God's voice thunders in the unity of obedience, it is our delight to comply, whether it be to "go up by the mountains" or "go down by the valleys."

We can never know a oneness of marriage relationship with the will of God unless this thunder of the unity of obedience be first formed in us. God, Himself, has this unity of obedience. Yes, God also can obey. Let us consider Him in His triune representation.

Sometimes the Father has the preeminence and stands in the authoritative position of rulership, while the Word and the Holy Ghost are subordinate in operation. At other times, the Word may be in the ruling position while the Father and the Holy Ghost are in subjection. And then, we may have a third order when the Holy Ghost is ruling while the Father and Word are subdominant.

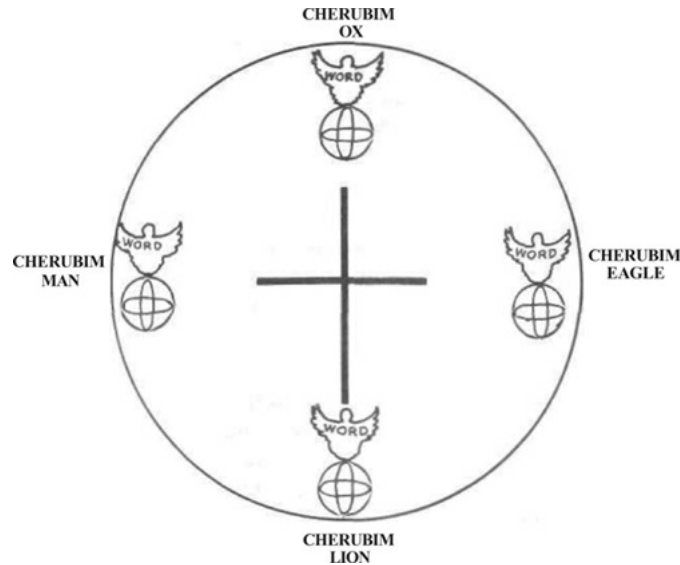


There is no friction in the Godhead. Instead, there is perfect unity of obedience. They work together as One, for they are One.

This is not true with us as human beings. We were created after the likeness and image of God; therefore, we are also a threefold being. We are made a spirit, soul, and body. We are one, and we are three. Sometimes our soul (conscious mind) takes the ascendancy and assumes rulership over the spirit and the body. For example, sometimes the body is desperately tired and cries for rest, but the soul overrides the body's protests. Conversely, there may be times when our spirit greatly longs for prayer, but the faculty of reason in our soul opposes that thought and refuses to cooperate. Then there are times when the body overrules the soul and spirit by over indulgence in food or drink, and thus stifles the activity of the spirit and soul. At times the soul and body agree against the spirit. So we see that man is a divided being, because he does not have the unity of obedience within himself that God possesses.

This same unity of obedience is seen in the cherubims in Ezekiel one. They each had four faces which looked in all four directions.

THE UNITY OF OBEDIENCE OF CHERUBIMS



Regardless of which direction God commanded the cherubims to go, they were all bound together with a beautiful unity of obedience. They could all go the same way, in the same direction, at the same time, in obedience to His command.

When God spoke in Psalm 104:7, the waters heard the thunder of His voice. That thunder of obedience is what caused the waters to speedily take their commanded positions. How wonderful it is when we have some degree of this voice of thunder formed within us. Then, at His command, we leap to obey. With this unity of obedience, we can obey His command, whether it means humiliation or exaltation to us personally.

Instant obedience comes only through change. Our human nature is permeated with rebellion, disobedience, and contrariness. Man is perverse in all his ways in respect to the ways of God. Before we can respond to the thunder of unity of obedience toward God, we must be changed in our mind, in our will, and in our nature. This change comes through the Word of God. We must hear God's Word before we can obey it, Jesus warned us that not everyone who has ears to hear really hears. We must have open spiritual ears to hear the thunder. And when we hear the thunder, we must also hear that obedience of the Word ringing in our soul. Only then can we obey and do God's bidding.

6. Unity of Fear

The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known (Psalm 77:18,19).

This is the thunder of unity of fear. The earth "trembled and shook" in reaction to the thunder issuing forth from Heaven. The Hebrew word *tremble* means to quiver, to stand in awe, fear, shake. The word *shook* means to fear. The literal earth trembled and shook with fear when God thundered, literally, out of Heaven.

We now hear the voice of God thundering, spiritually, out of Heaven, whether it be through the written or the preached Word of God; and our earth, our Self, begins to fear and stand in awe of the Lord. We know that the Scripture says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Fear means reverential respect and awe. When the Father thunders, the Word and the Holy Ghost have reverential respect for His Words and His movings. When the Word does something, the Father and the Holy Ghost respect it. When the Holy Ghost does something, the Father and the Word respect it.

We need to learn this same respect. It is vital that we respect what the Spirit of God is doing in our church services. His work lays the foundation for the ministry of the Word which follows. If we despise the manifestations of the Spirit in our meetings, then we cannot expect the Word of God to be opened unto us. God is not pleased to share Living Word with those who disrespect what He respects. Some Christians have a great love for the movings of God's Spirit, but their interest wanes when it is time for the preaching of the Word. We must be respectful toward the Word of God or we grieve the Spirit. When the Spirit is grieved our services soon become dry and dead. The

glory of the Father will be absent from our gatherings, and the confirming works of the Father will not be with us unless we respect both the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

We need the thunder of this unity, not the tormenting fear of the Devil, but the reverential and respectful attitude, which bears evidence that the thunder of the unity of fear has been formed within us.

7. Unity of Pleasure in Glorifying the Name

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. *The people* therefore, that stood by, and heard it, *said that it thundered*: others said, An angel spake unto him (John 12:27-29).

Man's primary pursuit in life is finding pleasure and satisfaction. He tries every conceivable combination of things in an effort to satisfy himself, but satisfaction cannot be found. There is no real or lasting satisfaction in this world. Most certainly pleasure and satisfaction are not found in the things we possess in this life. True pleasure and lasting satisfaction are found in doing the will of God. Unity with the Lord Jesus Christ produces the only true pleasure and satisfaction.

When the time of Christ's crucifixion was at hand, Jesus did not ask to escape that hour. He acknowledged, instead, that it was for this very hour that He had come. Addressing His prayer to the Father, Jesus said, "Father, glorify thy name..." A voice from Heaven declared, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The word *both* in the Greek means two. The Father declared that He had already, on two occasions, glorified His Name and was about to glorify it again.

What was the Name that Jesus desired to see glorified? In John 5:43 Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name and ye receive me not..." As the legitimate child of His Father, Jesus bore the Name of His Father. The Apostle Paul said, "For this cause I bow my knees unto *the Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, *of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*" (Ephesians 3:14,15). This verse establishes that the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ is the family Name of God in Heaven and in earth.

God's Name, LORD JESUS CHRIST, had already been glorified twice, and it was yet to be glorified again. Let us see how the unity of pleasure was connected with glorifying His Name.

And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was (John 17:5).

Jesus possessed two classes of glory. First, He had an upward glory, which was the glory of the Father. He possessed this upward glory when He existed in spirit and soul form back in the loins of God. Before Jesus came to this earth and took on a physical body. He was clothed with this glory of His Father.

When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son to take on the form of man, being made a little lower than the angels. The second chapter of Hebrews describes the second class of glory which Jesus possessed.

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Hebrews 2:7-9).

As a babe, clothed with the humility of flesh, Jesus came into the world crowned with glory and honor from His Father, the downward glory of humility. The upward glory pertains to exaltation, whereas the downward glory relates to humiliation. Jesus Christ carried this humility glory from His birth, to the Cross, even down into Hell and the Bottomless Pit, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). The grace of God carried Jesus and His vicarious sacrifice even beyond the deepest depths of sin. Grace abounded beyond sin.

This is why the voice of God, speaking from Heaven, could say, "I have both (twice) glorified it, and will glorify it again." His Name was glorified, first, with the upward glory in His pre-incarnate state with the Father, and glorified the second time with the downward glory, when He condescended to be made incarnate, God in flesh. Thus Jesus possessed the upward glory of exaltation and the downward glory of humility.

Therefore, God said, "I will glorify it again"; the Greek word *again* signifies an intensification of the glory. Why did God have to glorify it a third time? Why was it necessary to intensify this glory of satisfaction and pleasure which Jesus the Son of God already possessed? God intensified both the upward glory of exaltation and the downward glory of humiliation, so that Jesus would have enough glory to share with you and me.

The upward glory resurrected the body of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:4). It is with this additional upward glory that He will resurrect both sinner and saint. The believer will go to his reward, and the sinner will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment to receive his just deserts.

God has upward glory and downward for us to experience in this life. Just as Jesus was raised from the dead by the upward glory of the Father, so also, as we die to our carnal nature, do we experience this same upward glory in new resurrection life. It is also comforting to know that the Lord has an extra supply of humility glory to share with us, when we are faced with a particularly humiliating circumstance. When His downward glory touches us, it unites with obedience, and we have grace for our need.

The seventh thunder is the unity of pleasure, the pleasure which comes in doing the will of God, whether it be on the exaltation or on the humiliation side. When this union is made with the will of God, the thunder of the unity of pleasure sounds forth in our life. All seven unities, represented by the seven thunders, are available to us. Let us take advantage of our opportunities in this life to attain these unities with the Word and with the will of God.

The fulness of the unity of God will be seen and known in the New City in the Perfect Age. Only the Bride of Christ will be privileged to see the Oneness of God in its fulness of glory.

G. OATH

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein", that there should be time no longer: (Revelation 10:5,6).

We have already seen the adornment of the angel: his clothing, his head, his face, his feet, his hand, and his voice. We now see the seventh part of the adornment of the mighty angel. He binds himself with an oath that limits and restrains the mercy, longsuffering and forbearance, which God had committed unto him. The time of fulfillment of all prophecy is close at hand. Timewise on the prophetic calendar, the angel speaks right at the end of the tribulation period. When he states "there should be time no longer," he is not saying that time will cease, but that time will no longer be delayed for the seventh trumpet to sound ending the tribulation period. All attention is soon to be focused on the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of God is almost ready to appear as the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, to take vengeance against all rebellion and to set up His righteous rule and reign.

IV. MESSAGE TO THE PROPHET

Although the mighty angel held the open Book, he was not anointed to declare this particular revelation to the world. This required the ministry of a mortal human being,

A. CHARGE FROM HEAVEN

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth (Revelation 10:7,8),

Another angel speaks out of Heaven, charging John to go and to take the open Book from the hand of the mighty angel, who stood upon the sea and upon the earth. Although John received no further explanation concerning the Book, he unquestioningly complies with the command. John could have doubted or feared, but instead he humbles himself to obey.

We need this same degree of unquestioning obedience. Very often we expect to know the reason for God's directions before we move in obedience to His command. This is one of the ways in which God tries us. He

deliberately withholds knowledge and information in order to see whether or not we will be humble enough to obey Him, even though our understanding is not enlightened.

B. OBEDIENCE AND FURTHER REVELATION

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey (Revelation 10:9).

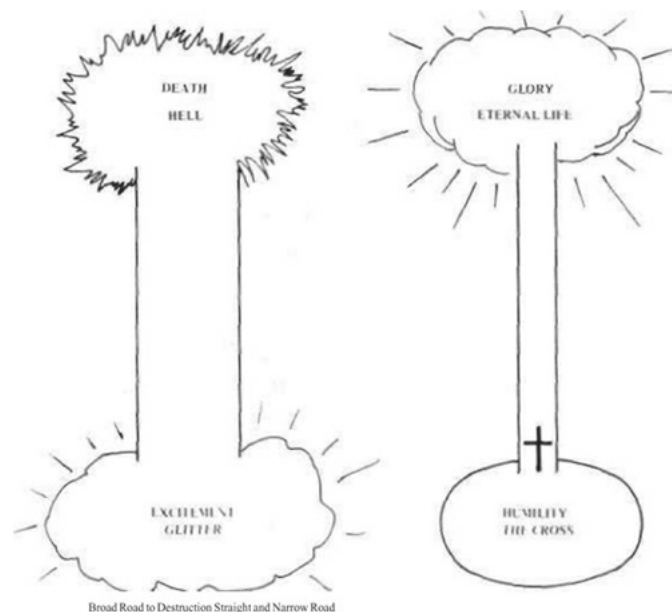
As a result of John's obedience, further revelation came to him. He simply addresses the mighty angel, saying, "Give me the little book." There is no feeling of arrogance nor demanding pride in his request, but rather a sense of humility and obedience.

This is the way we all must come when we are seeking something from the Lord. Arrogance and pride will get us nowhere. On the other hand, a pseudo-humility, which dares not ask the Lord for anything, will also be fruitless. Some people, for example, who seek the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, stand passively with an attitude of "If God wants to give it to me then here I am," If we desire something from the Lord, then we must ask for it. The asking, the seeking, is part of our spiritual exercise. It would be spiritually unhealthy for us, if God did all the work. In fact, it is the goodness of the Lord that permits us to share in His work for the furtherance of His Kingdom, in our own lives as well as in the lives of others. In John's case, God permits an angel to have a part in the ministry by giving him the little Book.

John has no idea of the contents of the Book, but in humble obedience to the command of God, he desires to possess it. When John accepts the Book, further revelation comes to him. Now that the Book is in his hands, the angel charges John with his obligation—"eat it up."

Before John can publish what he has discovered of the contents of the Book, he must first thoroughly digest the message. In other words, he himself, must become a partaker of it. This is a basic principle that works in ministering the Word. We cannot possibly share what we have not experienced ourselves.

To test the sincerity of John's desire to possess the Book, the angel proceeds with further revelation, "...it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." This introduces the inseparable bitter and sweet aspects of the Word of God. Consistent with God's principle of operation, He, first, offers the worst (humility), followed by the best (exaltation). When the Devil presents his way, he glamorizes the beginning with excitement, glitter, and fleshly satisfaction. He does this to hide the end of the way which is destruction, torment, and hell. God, on the other hand, begins with the humility of the Cross-life, and at the end of His way is life, glory, and eternal exaltation.



The word *eat* means to devour, to consume, to live. It is understood that the first phase of eating begins in the

mouth. The second stage takes place in the stomach and belly. Once the food becomes a part of us, it comes out of our mouth again, as it were, in the form of life. When it comes to spiritual eating, some people never get beyond the first stage. They taste the Word, rolling it around on their tongues, but then spit it out before the bitterness of it can work a change in their spiritual belly. They spit it out before it has a chance to turn into honey and sweetness in their lives.

When the angel told John that it would be sweet as honey in his mouth, he was referring to the second and third stages of spiritual eating. The little Book has information in it that will make John's belly bitter. The humility and suffering that will come to John's soul as he is made to know the grievous sufferings and desolations that are yet to be poured out on the earth will be bitterness to him. If we have been suitably affected with the suffering side of the predictions of God's Word, then we will be able to speak the truth in love or in sweetness to others. It is precious when the Word of God flows through our mouth in sweetness and love to others. All people feel a pleasure in tasting, or looking into future events. But few like to digest the sorrow and suffering of prophecy until their bowels are filled with mercy and compassion, which will cause them to speak the truth with love and sweetness.

The little Book contained the remaining revelation of things yet to come, everything that transpires after the tenth chapter. Revelation wise, John received the bitter part first, the full cup of judgment, which was predicted because of the full stature of sin on the earth. How bitter are these judgments. However, the closing chapters leave John with the sweet taste of the revelation of the second coming of Christ when He establishes His eternal kingdom in exaltation and glory.

C. OBEDIENCE AND CONFIRMATION

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter (Revelation 10:10),

We see the same twofold principle operating here through the bitter and the sweet. First we see the personal application in our spiritual experience as described by the prophet's words. Secondly, we see the prophetic order of blessing and judgment. John accepts and partakes of the little Book fully aware of what his experience will be; it will be sweet and it will be bitter. God shows John that when the Word of prophecy passes through his mouth, it will be sweet. When it is in his belly, he will fellowship the suffering of the prophetic words, so that when they flow out through his mouth to others, they will be spoken in sweetness and in love, God also shows, through the sweetness and bitterness, the two classes of prophecy coming forth: the sweet part involves the coming King, His millennial kingdom, the New City and the universal reign. The bitter aspect of his prophetic words is seen in the seven vials of judgment, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the battle of Armageddon, to mention a few.

The revelation of these events was given to John in reverse order: first, he saw the bitterness of God's final judgments, and then he saw the sweetness of the establishment of the Kingdom Age. When it came to John's personal experience, his mouth ate of the sweet revelation first, and then came the bitterness of the final judgment in his belly. John took the Book and ate it up, and he experienced it just as the angel had said. His mouth was filled with the sweetness of the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, which relate the descriptions of the New City, the Lamb's wife, and the pure water of life issuing forth from the Throne of God.

Though John had eaten of these sweet revelations, still there was bitterness in his belly. For from the tenth chapter on, we find tremendous prophecies of the final judgment that is poured out upon the earth. The consummation of the tribulation period which climaxes in the great and terrible battle of Armageddon is contained in these chapters.

Here is a spiritual lesson for us. If we are going to minister a bitter message of judgment to someone else, it is needful that we experience the bitterness of it first, so that we will be merciful to those to whom we minister. Permit me to share a personal experience along this line. The Lord spoke a direct message of judgment from His Word to me for a particular individual. I went to my prayer closet, interceded and travailed in prayer, weeping on behalf of that individual. Why? Because I had eaten of the bitterness of that revelation first, before I sought to minister the message of judgment to whom God had sent it. Only in this way can we minister out of mercy and compassion. Certainly there is no room for gloating or satisfaction in viewing someone else's judgment. God wanted John to feel the bitterness of judgment on those to whom he was called to prophesy. John recorded the prophecy he was given. His message of impending judgment is an open book of revelation to the nations of the world. No king, no nation,

no people can plead ignorance before God, because the revelation has been given. God's judgment is sure.

How good God was with John. He first tried John. Through the message of the angel, God warned him of the bitterness of this Book. Did he still want it? Yes, John took the Book and ate, realizing all the time that it would taste sweet in his mouth, but would be bitter in his belly. God, then, permitted him to taste of the sweetness of the things of the Bride: the reward, the glory, the exaltation. Then God filled his belly with the bitterness of the prophecy that he was to deliver concerning the end of the tribulation period, the battle of Armageddon, and the crushing of Mystery Babylon.

D. Revelation

And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings (Revelation 10:11).

After John eats of the sweetness and digests the contents of the Book, with its bitterness, he receives further revelation. Notice how revelation is mingled with obedience. We realize that there are different degrees of knowledge. There is a natural knowledge that we gain as we read, study, and memorize the Word of God; however, there is a higher degree of knowledge that comes only through divine revelation. This class of knowledge comes as we fast and pray and separate ourselves from the world and crucify our carnal nature. As we go on for God, mingling obedience and revelation, obedience and confirmation, then comes more supernatural revelation. There are many depths and heights of God's Word that can never be attained through natural reasoning power. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14). Some degrees of knowledge come only through spiritual revelation from the Lord.

God now reveals to John the extent of his prophesying. John was to write the revelation down, and through his written word he would prophesy to "many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Some have misunderstood this verse and concluded that it indicates that John will be one of the "two witnesses" seen in chapter eleven. This is impossible, for at the time of the fulfillment of the revelation, John would have already died and already possessed his resurrected body. The two witnesses are going to be killed in the tribulation period, and their bodies will lay for three and one half days in the streets of Jerusalem. Obviously, these two witnesses still possess their mortal bodies, because they are killed. This is not true of John. We shall see, when we study chapter eleven, that these two witnesses are the Old Testament characters, Enoch and Elijah, both of whom were caught up into Heaven before they experienced physical death. Their appointed time for death is the end of the tribulation period.

How grateful we must be for John's obedience, for through it we have received the complete revelation of the end time and of the things to come. Even so, our personal obedience to God, today, will bring further revelation to the lives of other human beings tomorrow. The book of our lives is not finished yet. As each of us continue in obedience to the will of God, we will leave a spiritual legacy that can touch multitudes of lives with eternal results.

CHAPTER NINE

THE TEMPLE OF GOD MEASURED

For correct interpretation of the Book of Revelation we must keep in mind that the visions alternate between Heaven and earth. Chapter ten records a scene which takes place on earth. John had taken the little Book, and had eaten it, letting it become part of himself. As we proceed further into the Revelation, we, today, are partaking of the very prophecy of which the angel said, “thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” Prophecy is not limited to the foretelling of future events, but it also includes the functions of a witness, who can tell forth God’s truth. Chapter eleven records the results of this “prophesying again.”

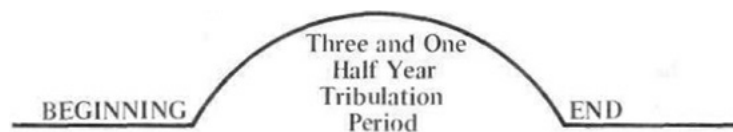
And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Revelation] 1:1-3).

In chapter eleven John’s vision continues on earth. After the apostle receives and digests the Book, he is commissioned and equipped to perform a judicial act of measurement of the Temple, the Altar of God, and those who worship therein. God’s purpose for measuring is threefold: first, to ascertain the size of the Temple and the Altar, then to determine the stature and growth of the worshippers, so that He might reward them accordingly. God measures the size of the righteous and the size of the wicked so that He might give to each one his proper reward. God also measures for destruction. When nations, cities, or individuals have filled up their cup of wickedness, God measures them destruction.

Secondly, God measures for rebuilding, and thirdly, He measures for protection. This threefold purpose is manifested in John’s measuring of the earthly temple, altar and worshippers in Jerusalem. This scene pertains particularly to the Jewish nation. The Temple, the Altar, the Courtyard given unto the Gentiles, the Holy City, all of these speak of God’s renewed dealing with the nation of the Jews. The Church Age, the Dispensation of Grace, is closed. Now the Lord begins to deal with the Jews in particular.

AND there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein (Revelation 11:1).

Let us reconsider one of the methods God uses to unveil the prophetic events on earth during the tribulation period, because this is the same method used again in chapter eleven.

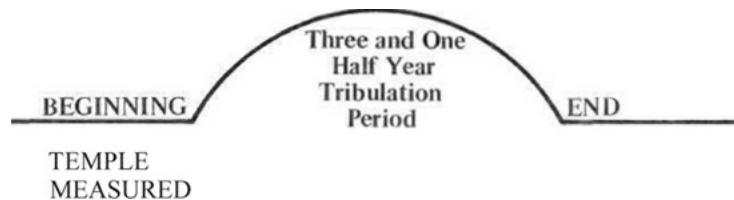


God constantly unveils events in the Book of Revelation, some that take place at the beginning of the tribulation, some that continue through the tribulation, and some that take place at *the* end of the tribulation. Thus we are given a full clear picture of the beginning, the duration, and the end of the tribulation.

In chapter eleven, God starts at the *beginning* of the tribulation with the measuring of the Temple of God, the Altar, and the worshippers of God. God measures His Temple and His Altar for destruction and for rebuilding. After the Antichrist secures his rule and reign in the tribulation, he will go up to God’s Temple, usurp God’s place of

worship, and sit in it as God. “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thessalonians 2:4). For this reason, God will destroy the Temple and Altar, and when Jesus Christ returns again to the earth, He will rebuild the temple in the millennial reign and will sit in the Temple to receive the worship of all the people of the earth, who will come up to Jerusalem to bow before Him. “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles”(Zechariah 14:16). “And speak unto him saying Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zechariah 6:12,13). The Antichrist will be an imposter and an imitator. He will usurp God’s Temple and Altar for a season.

In the *beginning* of the tribulation, we see a group of worshippers of God in the Temple. This is before the Antichrist takes his seat in the Temple. It is certain that when the Antichrist takes his seat in the Temple of God as God, he will not allow any worship of the true God. These worshippers in the beginning of the tribulation are not said to be worshipping Jesus Christ, but they are worshipping God. These are the Jewish remnant who are measured for protection. These are all the same 144,000 who were sealed in chapter seven. They have not, at this time received Jesus Christ as their Messiah, but they are worshippers of the true God. Therefore God seals them, measures them for protection at the beginning of the tribulation period. The sealed remnant will be kept all during the tribulation period and will receive Jesus Christ as their Messiah when He comes at the end of the tribulation period.



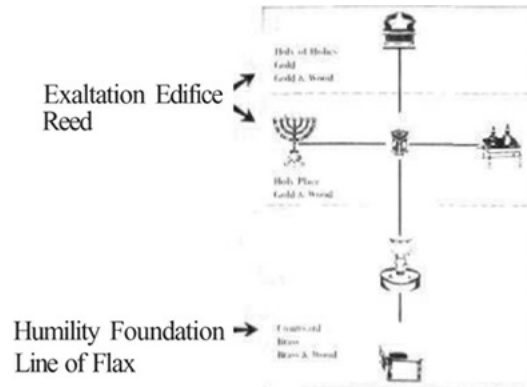
The Gentile court around the Temple was not measured because God will be dealing basically with the Jews during the tribulation period. This period of three and one half years is the last half of the week of years which Daniel prophesied would be reserved for the pouring forth of desolations on the desolate.

Jerusalem is called the Holy City because she has been anointed with the bodily presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of His journey on this earth, and also after His resurrection. When the LORD’s presence is manifested, it sanctifies and hallows whatever it touches. For example, there were 250 men who rebelled against the priesthood of Aaron and offered incense before the LORD all on their own. However, because the LORD was there, their censers were hallowed or made holy (Numbers 16: 37,38). Likewise in the beginning of the tribulation, Jerusalem is called the *Holy City*, because the presence of the Lord has been there. However, since Jerusalem completely forsakes God as her spiritual husband and becomes, as it were, the adulterous wife of the Antichrist, then she is rightly called a harlot and the mother of harlots (Isaiah 1:21; Revelation 17:5). God will judge His adulterous wife, Jerusalem, with stones and fire, and she shall be leveled to the ground at the end of the tribulation period.

Let us consider the instrument that God used to measure. It was “a reed like unto a rod.” Ezekiel describes a similar reed of measurement: “And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate (Ezekiel 40:3). The appearance of the man was like the appearance of brass. In other words, he sparkled like the color of burnished brass. Brass is a symbol of the strength of God’s judgment, God’s verdict, God’s mind and will. The man here is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall build the Millennial Temple (Zechariah 6:13,14). He will build by line and rule, or the line of flax for long measurements, and a reed for short, detailed, artistic, measurements. These two measurements represent the two great measurements that God gives to us to use for building spiritually. The line of flax speaks of the rule of humility, while the reed measures exaltation. Humility is the line to measure the foundational truth that must rest in the low place. No wonder He provides us with so many wonderful opportunities to go through low places. Each valley experience offers us an opportunity to lay hold of the line of flax that will measure out humility truth. The upright growth of the natural reed pictures the exaltation reed that God uses to measure out the truth in intricate detail in the high place. The revealed exalted truth rests on the

foundation of humility truth.

We see the same principle in the Mosaic Tabernacle. The Courtyard furniture was made of brass and wood (the humility, the line of flax). The Holy Place and Holy of Holies furniture was made of gold and wood (the reed, the exaltation). The exaltation of the gold and wood part of the stature, the spiritual edifice, rested on the humility foundation of brass and wood in the Courtyard.



We see, then, that God always measures according to the stature of His Son, Jesus Christ. In order for us to erect a spiritual building, God lifts us up, while we are praying and studying His Word, into the exaltation of His glory and lets us measure the truth of full stature. Does this exaltation give us any room to boast? No. What is the truth concerning our own humility and exaltation? Beloved, humility is measured by how far down one goes in the will of God. Jesus Christ left the glory of His Father's bosom to descend into the depths of the Bottomless Pit. He went down beyond sin to redeem sinful man. No humiliation that we ever suffer in this life can measure up to the humility of Jesus.

What is the truth concerning our exaltation? Regardless of how high we are exalted in this life to shine in either the natural or in the spiritual realm, we cannot stand as high or shine as brightly as Jesus does. Since it is He who lifts us up, it is understood, then, that He is necessarily above us. How do we know this? After His death and resurrection, Jesus, the man, was made Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). He was deified; He was made God. Thank the Lord that He has provided a rule of humility and a measure of truth whereby our personal spiritual building can grow and increase according to the proportions of humility and truth found in Jesus Christ, the perfect Tabernacle.

The literal Millennial Temple that Ezekiel saw by vision will also be measured with the line of humility and the reed, or rule of exaltation. In Revelation 21:15 the Holy City, the wife of the Lamb, will also be measured with the golden reed, or rule of exaltation. "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof." God measures the city to ascertain its size and to confirm that the spiritual city has grown into full stature in the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore, she is worthy to be His wife.

In Revelation eleven, the reed is in Old Jerusalem, the city that had been made holy by the personal presence of Jesus Christ. The word *reed* means the plant or its stem. It also means a rod, a stick, a wand, a cudgel, a cane, a baton of royalty, a sceptre, and a staff. The base or root word carries the thought of correction, for it is defined "to let fall, to rap, to slap, to smite with the palm of the hand." With His reed, the royal sceptre, God will measure the Temple and Altar for destruction. He measures the worshippers for the purpose of sealing and protecting them from the judgment ordained on Old Jerusalem. God is dealing again with the Jews in particular. In fulfillment of often repeated prophecy of the Old Testament, Israel has now returned to her land and is worshipping again in her Temple in the Holy City, old Jerusalem. Back in the land again, Israel seeks to restore her worship of God, although she still fails to perceive and accept the true Messiah, Jesus Christ. Then when the Antichrist appears and sits in the Temple of God, as God, and demands worship from the Jews, all those who have not been measured or sealed for protection will receive the Antichrist, his image, his mark, and the number of his name, except for a remnant from the tribe of Dan. As a nation, Israel will fall under the great judgment of God. For generations, God has called Israel to repentance, but they have refused to hear.

Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the

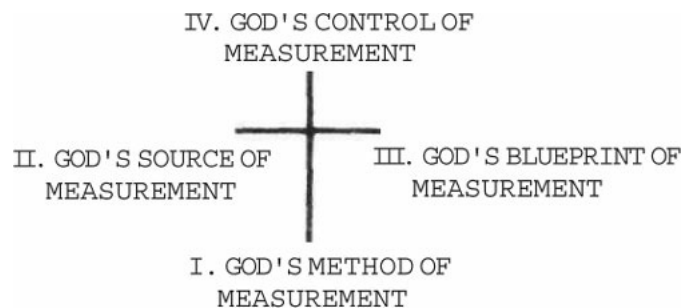
LORD'S anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger (Zephaniah 2:1-3).

God's judgment is His call to Israel to repent quickly, for the Day of the Lord is at hand—final judgment is about to fall upon Jerusalem. It is a time to call upon the true God.

...Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more (Hebrews 8:8-12).

The sealed remnant of Israel will repent at the second coming of Christ and God will make a new covenant of mercy and blessing with them. During the millennial reign of Christ, Israel shall know the blessed state mentioned in Hebrews eight.

To *measure* means to ascertain by size, by a fixed standard, to mete. Let us scan briefly the matter of measurement as recorded in the Scriptures. The subject matter falls into four major points, a stature of truth representative of the Crucified Christ. The stature is as follows:



From our definition of the word *measure*, we readily understand that it is a means of ascertaining size, dimension, shape, and stature. Note also, it means a fixed standard. How true. God's standard of measurement and judgment is eternally fixed, for His measure is the mature stature of Jesus Christ, the living Word of God.

I. GOD'S METHOD OF MEASUREMENT

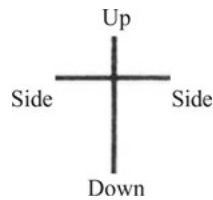
Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again (Luke 6:38).

Three is the divine number of God, and His method of measurement is honest, just and right. Therefore, He expects His children to use a threefold measurement:

- A. Pressed Down
- B. Shaken Together
- C. Running Over

God requires our business dealings with one another to be honest. We are to measure generously. We are not to cheat by giving a light measure. He instructs us to press down when we are measuring; that is, to squeeze for the purpose of compressing and making it compact, that it might be a just and full measure. If we give to others in this manner, God will see that we receive the same class of measure in return. Then a good measure was to be shaken together, that there might be room for more. To shake means to cause to move up and down or from side to side. If we consider the *up-and-down* aspect, we see a vertical bar. The expression from *side-to-side* illustrates the

horizontal position. If we put these two thoughts together, the Cross is clearly evident.



In other words, we are to let the nature of Jesus, which is found in the stature of the Cross, cause us to shake the measure of good that we mete out to others with love. This will prevent us from counting all the good things that we have already done for others, and thereby justify ourselves for ceasing to do more. But the stature of Jesus will fill us with love and cause us to shake up and down, and from side to side, until we have a complete full measure of good to mete out. As we mete to others, God will mete again to us.

God further requires the measure to be running over. To *run over* means to melt, become as liquid, to overflow. The overflow of the cup, bucket, or barrel, for example, runs to the low place and ministers there. How precious to press our measure, shake it together, and then let it overflow to minister in the low place, to the lowly in heart and the poor in spirit. When God measured out His love, it overflowed and came to earth in the person of His Son, who has ministered to us poor and lowly sinners, to save us by His love and grace. Precious Jesus, grant us this method of measurement.

An unjust measure is an abomination unto God. Historically, the measurement of a cubit was taken from the human body. The greater cubit was the length from the elbow to the end of the middle finger and the ordinary cubit was the length from the elbow to the wrists. The cubit, then could vary between 18 inches and 22 inches. How often we use the long cubit in measuring someone else, but when it concerns us personally, we use the short cubit. We do not exact as much from ourselves as we do from others. Jesus gives us warning here, "For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." If we make allowances for ourselves, we must make them for others as well.

Luke 6:38 is a cherished verse among Christians, for it bears a most wonderful promise. If we give to God, God will give back to us, not in small skimpy measure, but pressed down, shaken, and running over. If we give to God or to our fellowmen out of jealousy and strife, out of hatred and envy, or with a resentful and grudging attitude, we will reap exactly what we have sown. This, too, is God's principle of operation.

II. GOD'S SOURCE OF MEASUREMENT

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17).

All good and perfect gifts come from God. We have nothing that we have not received from Him. Therefore, we cannot boast as though we had attained these gifts by the might and power of our own hand. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (I Corinthians 4:7). Let us consider the gifts that God measures to us.

A. FAITH

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith (Romans 12:3).

It is God who measures or metes out faith unto every man. He is the source of faith. He is also the source of the quantity of the measurement, for it is His divine prerogative to measure what He wills. God measures faith unto us according to our spiritual stature and according to the works He has called us to do. There is a measure of faith attained by growth in spiritual stature, and there is a measure of faith given by gift for special works and signs.

B. RULE

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you (II Corinthians 10:12,13).

True rule, or authority, finds its source or origin in God. The Apostle Paul testified that he had no desire to rule over persons or things which were not committed into his care; he did not want to go beyond the line or measure of God's rule, which was prescribed for him. Paul resolved to keep within his own province, compassing only the ground that God had marked out for him. How peaceful to know that God measures out the rule; therefore, we do not desire to rule over anything or anyone that has not been measured out by God. In fact, the only authority we will have in the lives of others is the authority God gives us through His Word. It is God who measures this authority to us.

C. WORD GIFTS

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ...And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Ephesians 4:7-13).

We see that God is also the source of measuring His spiritual gifts unto men. He gave Word gifts to the church for the threefold purpose of perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. These Word gifts are; (1) Apostles, (2) Prophets, (3) Teacher-Pastors, and (4) Evangelists. Since God measures out the gifts unto man, there is no reason to quarrel or to be jealous of one another. Instead, there is every reason to come under the Headship of the bountiful Author and to use what He measures out to us for His glory and for the edification of His people.

In all three Scripture portions, pertaining to faith, rule, and gifts, we find that it is God who is the source of both gift and its measurement. It is He who metes out and divides as He wills.

III. GODS BLUEPRINT OF MEASUREMENT

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of ye are all one in Christ Jesus the fulness of Christ: (Ephesians 4:12).

God has provided all the Word gifts to perfect us and to bring us to the full stature of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's blueprint of measurement. In Revelation 21:15, we see the Bride of Jesus Christ subjected to measurement. God puts His golden reed on her to confirm that she possesses spiritual stature. We must personally pass under His measurement to see if we have built according to His blueprint. If our spiritual building bears the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, then, we will be acceptable in the New City. What a glorious opportunity we have, now, to come daily before the measurement of His stature, His Word, and to let Him decrease our fleshly man, so that our spiritual man can increase. Thus we can be assured of passing the measurement of the reed in the New City.

We must not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. We must not compare ourselves with one another in order to commend ourselves. We need a new vision of Jesus continually in order to compare ourselves with Him, for He is God's blueprint. Our spiritual stature will be measured according to His spiritual stature. Only those who meet the standard of God's requirement will be found in the New City.

IV. GOD'S CONTROL OF MEASUREMENT

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:15,16).

Since Christ is the Head, He controls the measure of every part of His spiritual body. He controls the working of it, the growth, and the measure of the stature of it. If we will humble ourselves at His feet, will speak the truth in love, and will walk in the Spirit, He will take us on to perfection (maturity). "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). It is Jesus Christ who effectually works the measure of stature in us. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Let Him be the Head! He is the effectual worker, who increases the body to the edifying of itself in love. Clearly then, the matter of measurement is with God, The vital issue is not whether we meet man's standard of requirement. We should be concerned about how we measure up to God's standard, the person and stature of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us return now, in our thinking to Revelation eleven where John is seen holding the "reed like a rod" and the angel is commanding him to measure "the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worship therein."

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Revelation 11:2,3).

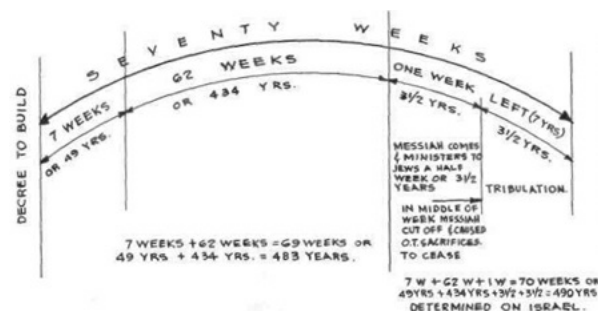
John is told not to measure the Court of the Gentiles, the outer Court. God is dealing exclusively with the Jews here. During the Church Age, God deals individually with Jews and Gentiles. They both have the same privilege to come to Jesus Christ and grow in spiritual stature.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man. so making peace; (Ephesians 2:13-15).

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

When the tribulation begins, the Church Age is closed, and God is giving special attention to His Covenant people.

The duration of the tribulation period is often a disputed point. Some contend that it lasts for seven years, while others teach that it is a period of three and one half years. Scriptural evidence proves that it is three and one half years in duration. Before considering the stature of evidence which confirms this truth, let us refresh our minds with the great prophetic revelation given unto Daniel.⁸



Jesus ministered for three and one half years, and when He died, the animal sacrifices ceased as far as God was concerned, for THE SUPREME sacrifice had been made.

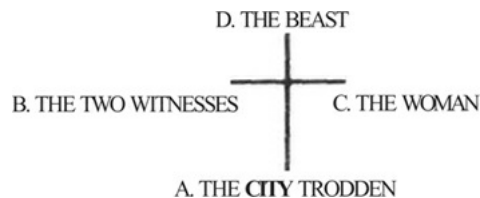
The three-and-one-half-year tribulation is clearly drawn out in the ninth chapter of Daniel. God gave Daniel the detailed revelation of the seventy prophetic weeks prophesied by Jeremiah. These seventy weeks concern prophecy which deals only with the Jewish nation, God's covenant people.

From the command of Cyrus, the Persian king, to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple, until the time of Jesus Christ, is a prophetic period of time called “seven weeks and threescore and two weeks.” When Jesus Christ, the Prince, was born, this closed the period of seven plus sixty-two, totaling sixty-nine weeks. Thus we are left with the 70th prophetic week, and in the middle of this last week, Messiah was cut off.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (Daniel 9:27).

During His ministry of three and one half years, Jesus made a covenant with a remnant of Israel. This leaves the last half of the 70th week of Daniel, or three and one half years, in which God will deal particularly with the nation of Israel, as the time of the great tribulation. In between these two three-and-one-half-year periods of the last week, or the 70th week, comes the Church Age, the Dispensation of Grace in which God deals particularly with the Gentiles. Remember, the 70 weeks of Daniel’s prophecy relate to God’s special dealings with His chosen people, the Jews.

The following four portions of Scripture in the Book of Revelation also bear witness to the length of time designated as the Great Tribulation.



A. THE CITY TRODDEN

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months (Revelation 11:2).

The first proof of the length of time of the tribulation period is found in Revelation 11:2. The Gentiles will tread underfoot the Holy City, Old Jerusalem, for a period of 42 months, which is three and one half years.

B. THE TWO WITNESSES

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Revelation 11:3).

Verse three also substantiates the length of time as being three and one half years. We see that the two witnesses prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days which equal 1,260 days (three and one half years).

C. THE WOMAN

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days (Revelation 12:6).

Again, we have the same designation of time: a thousand and two hundred and threescore days which is equivalent to 1,260 days, or three and one half years.

D. THE BEAST

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue *forty* and *two* months (Revelation 13:5).

Forty and two months is another way of saying three and one half years. The Beast, or the Antichrist, is said to

continue forty-two months or three and one half years from the time he comes up out of the sea.

Without any doubt, then, the fourfold witness of God's Word establishes a tribulation period of three and one half years. In Revelation 13:1, we see that the Beast (the Antichrist) rises up from the Sea (another name for the Bottomless Pit), and he has power given unto him for three and one half years. After this time he and the False Prophet will be "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20).

We have seen that John was presented with "a reed like unto a rod," so that he might measure the Temple of God, the Altar, and the worshippers therein, excluding the court of the Gentiles. We have also seen the significance of the "forty and two months" (three and one half years, or 1,260 days) referring to the Great Tribulation. During this time two very extraordinary persons, designated as "the Two Witnesses," prophesy, minister, and preach. Their instruction follows the commissioning of John to take the reed and measure.

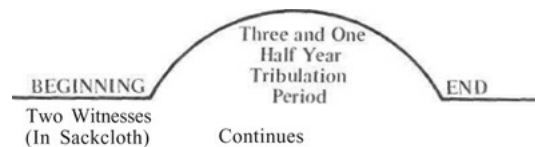
8B. R. Hicks, *Mysteries of Daniel Revealed*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1971).

CHAPTER TEN
THE TWO WITNESSES
(Revelation 11:3-14)

By way of quick review, let us rehearse God's prophetic calendar, beginning with the Cross of Jesus Christ. The Church Age, or the Dispensation of Grace, in which we are presently living, follows His death and resurrection. The grace period closes with the "catching away," or the Rapture of all the overcomers, those who constitute the Wedding Party at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This is the next great event on God's time clock.

At the Rapture, Jesus Christ resurrects the saints who died as overcomers; then the overcomers who are alive at His appearing will be caught up, together with the resurrected saints, to meet the Lord in the air. The Rapture is not to be confused with the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Rapture takes place, Jesus appears in the air, but He does not come to the earth at this time. The Rapture signals the beginning of the Great Tribulation period, which lasts for three and one half years.

The Antichrist who is none other than Judas Iscariot resurrected from the dead, appears almost simultaneously with the Rapture of the overcomers. Although the Rapture deals a tremendous wound to the Antichrist's Head of Deceit, his deadly wound is healed. He will establish himself as ruler and will reign from Jerusalem, for the Jews will accept him as their long-expected Messiah. They are deceived by the Antichrist's Head of Deceit and Head of Enchantment, into thinking him to be the true Christ. In spite of evil influence at work in the world, God is not left without a witness even at this time. God sends two very special witnesses to counteract the full stature of power manifested in and through the Antichrist.



Some believers who miss the Rapture will believe the testimony of the Two Witnesses and will manage to survive through the tribulation. The ministry of the Two Witnesses will be so powerful, along with the witness of other Christians who will have missed the Rapture, that the Beast (Antichrist) shall stagger temporarily, because his Head of Deceit is wounded by the impact of their testimonies. "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast" (Revelation 13:3).

We must first establish the identity of these Two Witnesses. They are *persons* sent from Heaven to perform an extraordinary task. We are not left to speculate as to the identity of one of the witnesses, for the Prophet Malachi names him.

Behold, I will send you *Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*
And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, test I come and smite the earth with a curse (Malachi 4:5,6).

This prophecy definitely pertains to the second coming of Christ. His first coming was in His incarnation in the body of Jesus, who went to the Cross, was buried, rose again, and ascended unto His Father in Heaven. The Rapture of the Wedding Party is not His second coming, for He does not come to the earth but appears in the air to catch away the overcoming saints. At the end of the tribulation period, Jesus will return to the earth again and stand on the Mount of Olives. This is His triumphant return with His Bride in full revelation of His magnificent glory, splendor and power. Malachi's prophecy states that Elijah the prophet will be sent "before the coming of the great and

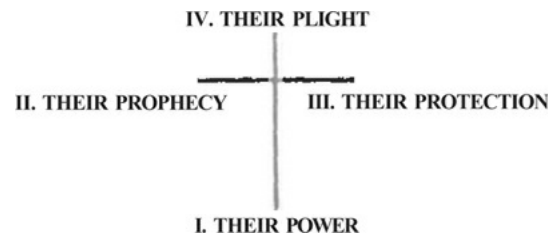
dreadful day of the LORD,” or the second coming. Elijah, then, is one of the two witnesses that shall precede the second coming of Christ.

The second witness is not specifically named; however, we can identify him by the process of elimination. We know that God’s Word says, “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Elijah and Enoch are the only two who escaped physical death and were carried away into Heaven in their mortal bodies. They will come back to earth to serve as God’s witnesses during the tribulation period. Elijah and Enoch will be martyred for their testimonies, and their dead bodies will lie exposed in the streets of Jerusalem.

There is only one exception to the law that says “It is appointed unto men once to die.” This exception is made for the “saints that are alive when the Lord appears in the air.” Their mortal bodies will be changed into immortal bodies in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

God’s preeminent witnesses, Elijah and Enoch, were each noted prophets during the first phase of their ministry. The second phase of their ministry will be more notable. Their final exodus from this earth will be spectacular, for their enemies will see them resurrected from the dead and lifted up into Heaven.

God does not send spiritual babes. He sends two witnesses of great maturity, both in stature and power, because they must withstand the full stature of wickedness in the person of the Antichrist. The description concerning them follows:



I. THEIR POWER

And **I** will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Revelation 11:3).

The Two Witnesses did not presume, in the flesh, to accomplish the spiritual job that lay before them. God anointed these two men with power to fulfill the calling that He placed on their lives.

A. SOURCE OF POWER

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth (Revelation 11:4).

God shows us the exact source of the power that belonged to the Two Witnesses, for they are described as possessing the stature of two olive trees and two candlesticks.

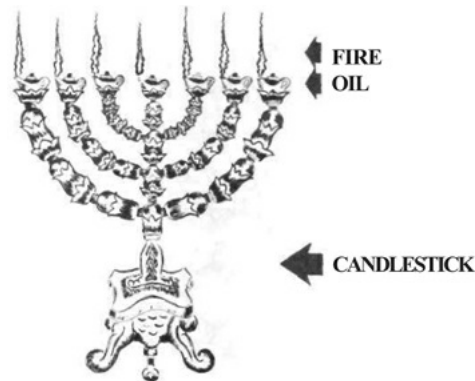
1. Candlestick

The description of the Two Witnesses begins with the source of their power. They were two olive trees and two candlesticks. Let us consider first the fact that they are called “two candlesticks.” **The** Mosaic Tabernacle gives the most detailed picture of Jesus Christ, after whom these two witnessing candlesticks are patterned. The two candlesticks have gained the mature stature of the Golden Candlestick, Jesus Christ.

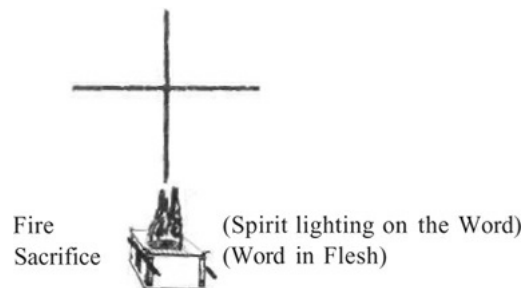
The Candlestick in the Mosaic Tabernacle was made of pure gold and portrayed the divine side, the Christ side, of Jesus Christ. There was no wood of humanity included in its construction. It was one candlestick designed with sixty-six bowls, knops and flowers. The Golden Candlestick represented the full light of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge of Christ, the Word, as revealed in the sixty-six books of the Bible. Each book ties together beautifully with one of the three aspects of the Candlestick; its bowls, its knops, or its flowers. The Candlestick had a central shaft out of which proceeded six branches. At the top of the central shaft and at each of the branches was a socket that held one of the seven lamps of fire used to lighten the Holy Place. Since seven is the number of completion,

then we understand that the Candlestick with its seven lamps pictures the complete Spirit of light and truth seen before the Throne of God (Revelation 4:5) and also possessed by Jesus Christ. Isaiah spoke prophetically concerning Jesus Christ and His possession of the complete Spirit of God: "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD," (Isaiah 11:2).

The Golden Candlestick represents the Word of God as found in Christ Jesus. Into the seven lamps on top of the Candlestick was placed pure olive oil beaten: "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always" (Exodus 27:20). First we see the Candlestick of the Word; then the oil and fire of the Spirit rests upon the Candlestick of the Word. The union of the Spirit and the Word produced the glorious light that filled the Holy Place.

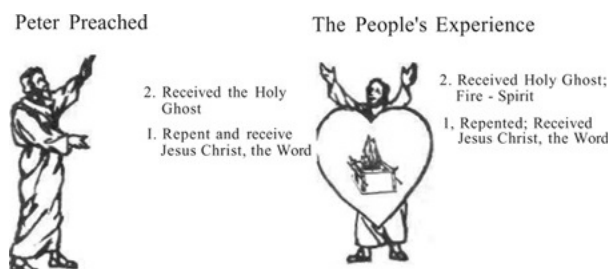


Let us consider the origin of the fire that was joined with the oil to form the light. In the beginning Aaron spread the sacrificial offering before the Lord as Moses instructed him to do, and then supernatural fire from God descended upon the sacrifice and consumed it. This experience was found in the Courtyard of the Tabernacle at the great Brazen Altar. The sacrifice was a picture of Jesus Christ, the Word in flesh. The fire was a picture of the Holy Ghost which lights upon the Word. Thus, from the beginning the principle of the Spirit lighting upon the Word is established.



This principle was fulfilled spiritually on the day of Pentecost. Peter told them that if they would repent and receive Jesus Christ, the Sacrifice, the Word in flesh, then the Holy Ghost fire would fall upon them.

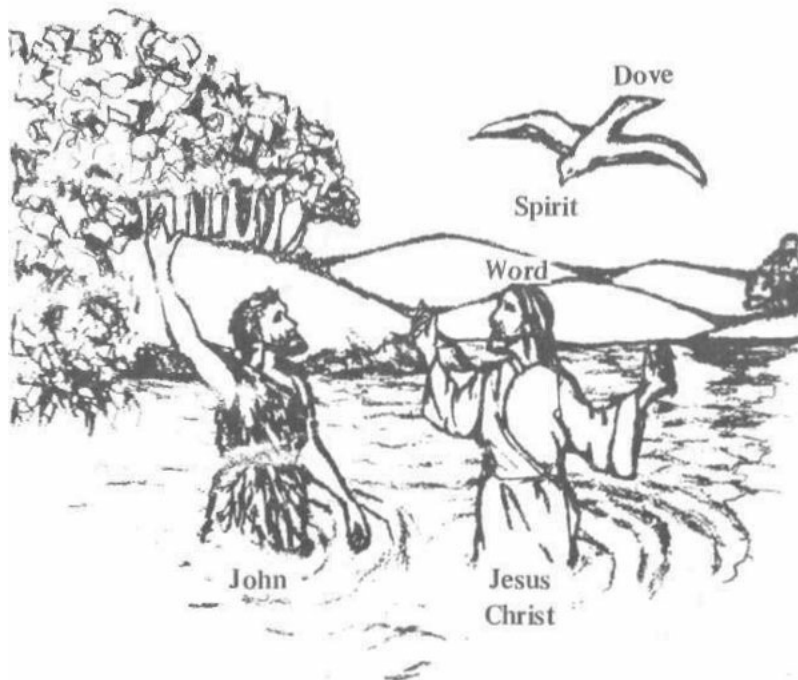
DAY OF PENTECOST



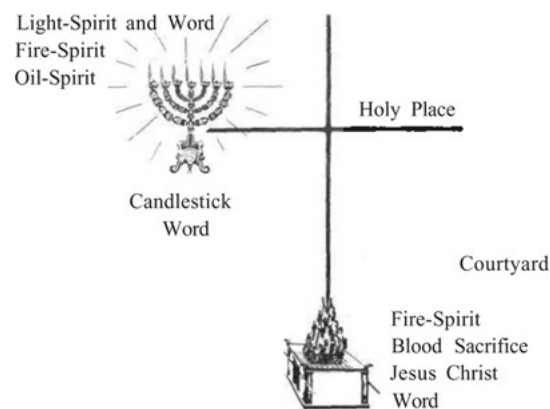
Peter's message on the day of Pentecost was: first, repent and receive Jesus Christ; secondly receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire. The people experienced exactly what Peter preached: first, they repented and received Jesus Christ; secondly they received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire.

Jesus Christ experienced this order personally when He was baptized in water. When Jesus Christ, the Word in flesh, came up out of the water, the Holy Ghost came down out of Heaven and rested upon Him. Here was the Word, with the Spirit resting upon Him.

JESUS' EXPERIENCE IN JORDAN



Notice that there is no *oil* of the Spirit in the Courtyard experience, only the *fire* of the Spirit. The *union* of the Word with the oil, and the fire of the Spirit is found in the Holy Place at the Golden Candlestick. This demonstrates a very important spiritual principle: that the Spirit (the oil and the fire) always rests upon the Word (the Candlestick). Thus, the union of the Word and the Spirit in the Holy Place pictures greater spiritual experience and growth.



Just as the stature of a tree grows taller when its foundational root system increases, likewise is our spiritual

pattern of growth. The more we grow in the Word and Spirit in our Courtyard experience, the more we grow in the Word and Spirit in the Holy Place. When we grow to the Holy Place of spiritual stature, we experience a new aspect of the Spirit of God. This is where God adds the oil to our spiritual stature and increases the fire from our Courtyard experience.

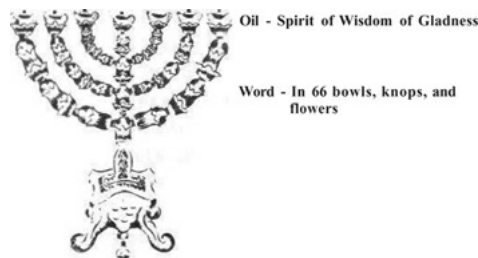
Although fresh oil rests upon the Candlestick of the Word, there is no light until some fire from the Brazen Altar is brought in and joined to the oil. Then there is light, a glorious new union of the Spirit and the Word, The Holy Place represents a new realm and degree of spiritual growth. The union of the Word and the Fire of the Spirit begins in the Courtyard, but when we press on in spiritual growth, we come into a new union of oil of the Spirit that is joined to the Word and the Fire of the Spirit.

In our study of the Old Testament Tabernacle we have learned that the oil at the Candlestick has to do with the wisdom of humility.⁹ The fire found there pertains to understanding. And the light produced by the union of the oil and fire represents the knowledge found at the Candlestick. This light is found in Jesus Christ, the Golden Candlestick, who declared "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Let us examine the oil of wisdom, the fire of understanding, and the light of knowledge that is found at the Candlestick, so that we can ascertain what degree of spiritual stature belongs to God's two special witnesses during the tribulation period.

a. Oil

The oil is a type of the gladness of the Spirit of God, the gladness of His humility wisdom, that anoints the Word of God.



Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Psalm 45:7).

The oil of gladness anointed Jesus Christ to do the will of the Father.

There are three primary definitions of the word *gladness*, which give us a rich understanding of the power of satisfaction that the oil of gladness brings.

1) *Gladness* means joy, and joy means to be filled with pleasure and delight. The oil of wisdom, the oil of humility, the oil of gladness of the Spirit fills the soul with agreeable feelings of satisfaction. The oil of gladness fills the soul with joyous pleasure, a quiet sense of gratification to take the low place and to be completely changed into a new form so that new light of the Spirit and Word might come forth. The oil of gladness, the oil of humility, the oil of wisdom, gladly give itself to be completely changed, completely consumed, in order that new light might shine day and night in the Tabernacle, What gladness of humility. The oil of gladness means joy, which in turn means delight, a high degree of pleasure and satisfaction. Thus, the oil of gladness, the oil of wisdom fills us with pleasurable satisfaction in the place of humility and fills us with delightful satisfaction in the high place. It was the nature of the oil to be glad when it abode in the low, obscure, hidden place of the lamp on the Candlestick. It was the nature of the oil to be glad when it was released from the lamp and was transformed into light and set at liberty to dart, dance, skip in shimmering rays of light throughout the Holy Place. What exaltation. What delightful satisfaction. How thrilling to possess the oil of gladness and find satisfaction in the low place or high place, according to the will of the precious Heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

2) *Gladness* means mirth. The word *mirth* means gaiety, to be boisterous, and noisily merry. It was the nature of the oil of gladness to be gay and merry in the low place of humility in the lamp. It was bright and brilliant, clear and pure, lively and merry. It was full of festive, hilarious laughter over being joined with the Word, the Candlestick, even in the low place. The oil of gladness was certainly boisterously demonstrative when it was transformed into light, and darted into all the corners of the Holy Place to clothe it with a resplendent robe. Without the vesting beauty ministered through the changed oil, all of the Holy Place would have been left in obscurity and gloom. When the oil of gladness was transformed by its union with the fire to become light, it was joined, not only to the Candlestick, but to all the other pieces of furniture in the Holy Place. This principle also applies spiritually. If we are boisterously merry and gay over the union with the Word in the low place, we will be exalted and given a greater union with the Word. How consistent are the divine principles of God!

3) *Gladness* means to rejoice. *Rejoice* means to relive the experience, to take joy again. It was the nature of the oil to be happy in the low place of humility or in the high place of exaltation. Therefore, when the oil of gladness found itself in the low place in the lamp, it rejoiced, it relived its joy for the low place.

God's principle of humility before exaltation rules out the wise and prudent from growing in the stature of Jesus Christ. There is no rejoicing in the pleasures of the world. On the other hand, spiritual blessings are a continual source of joy. Although we have drunk of the spiritual pleasures found in the Spirit and in the Word, they have never become tiring or boring. It is possible to rejoice over and over again, and each time, we find the Spirit and the Word sweet and pleasurable as at the first. This same oil of gladness has come to rest upon the humility Word and exalted Word.

If we will stay in the sixty-six books of the Bible, eventually God will put some of the Holy Ghost oil of gladness upon them. We will not receive all seven lamps at one time, but as we continue to live in the Books of God's Word, the oil of gladness will come in an ever increasing measure. The religious world is dying today because of a lack of the Word and the oil of gladness which accompanies it. When a child of God is studying and meditating upon the Word of God, he feels the leaping up of inward joy, an explosive quickening of the Word, that fills the heart with pleasurable, delightful satisfaction. This is the oil of gladness coming to rest upon the Word of GOD. The reality of such a continual experience cannot be argued away. When the Holy Ghost fell upon Jesus Christ (the Word), He was anointed with the oil of gladness. No wonder He could say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God..." (Psalm 40:8). "...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34).

Oh, that God's people would devour the Word of God, so that God could anoint them with the oil of gladness. There is no oil of gladness to be found in union with the pleasures of this world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15,16). God is no respecter of persons. We all can know the "oil of gladness" that rests upon the revealed Word of God. It is for us all.

The second door, the one leading into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, was narrow and very high; whereas the first door, the entrance into the Courtyard, was much lower and wider. The wide door makes it easy for "whosoever will" to enter into God's provided gifts: salvation through the Blood, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire, and water baptism in the Name of Jesus Christ. Those who would enter into the Holy Place and minister as priests, find the door narrow and tall. To enter here one must narrow his worldly vision, and as a result, his vision of Jesus Christ will be all the higher. When the conditions are met, we have the privilege of entering into the Holy Place, the place of prayer at the Golden Altar of Incense. There we also have access to the light of God with its oil of gladness at the Golden Candlestick, and access to the governmental bread found at the Table of Shewbread.

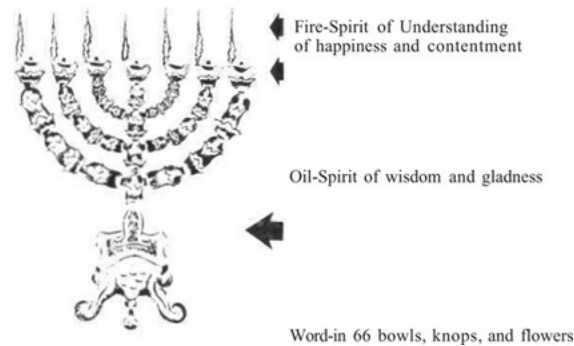
There is a real growing up into spiritual maturity in God, and with it comes strength and power to stand in the hour of temptation and testing. It was this power that clothed the Two Witnesses, for they are presented as "the two candlesticks." There is no oil, fire, nor light upon the words of men, nor upon the beggarly elements of this world. The infinitely satisfying and exciting aspects of the oil are found only on the living Word of God.

The nobility of the Two Witnesses, sent by God during the tribulation period, is partially due to the fact that they are "two candlesticks." They come to withstand the Antichrist because they possess full stature of the Word and the Spirit. Herein lies their power. They have learned the source of true joy, mirth and rejoicing. This is the oil of wisdom, the oil of gladness. The Two Witnesses have already gained the knowledge that there is no true gladness outside of the Word and will of God. They cannot be tempted to deflect nor to retreat from their ministry of

witnessing, for they know the source of their gladness. Elijah and Enoch have grown spiritual statures in the Word of God and are anointed with the Spirit of the oil of gladness. This power makes them strong enough to withstand the enchanting powers of the Antichrist.

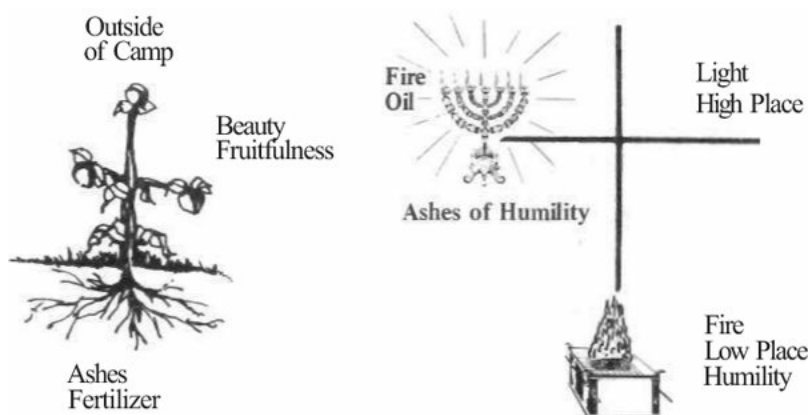
b. Fire

The fire on the Candlestick was a type of the converting power of the understanding of the Spirit of God.



The nature of natural fire is to convert everything that it touches into its own image, and together they climb into new planes of exaltation and light. After burning with brilliance and light, they are prepared for new realms of humility in the low place. In the form of dust and ashes, they go forth together into the place of humility, as it were, where they are in a proper form to serve as fertilizer and make a garden more fruitful. Thus we see that fire brings forth light in the high place of exaltation, and life in the low place of humility. The light of exaltation prepares the way for greater life of humility

Likewise, in the Tabernacle, the fire of understanding, as it were, was brought from the low place in the Courtyard and joined with the low place of the oil of gladness in the lamp. Through this oneness of relationship, light was born because the oil and the fire were willing to be changed into a new form called light. After the fire and the oil burned and after light was shed forth, they were changed again into the new humility form of ashes, which were carried to a new place of humility outside the camp, to be fertilizer in God's garden of earth. After accepting the new humiliation form and the new humiliation position, the oil and the fire come forth in new exaltation of beauty and fruitfulness. Thus we see that the great wheel of God's principle of humility and exaltation is ever turning! My Father, how marvelous and great is thy wise design!



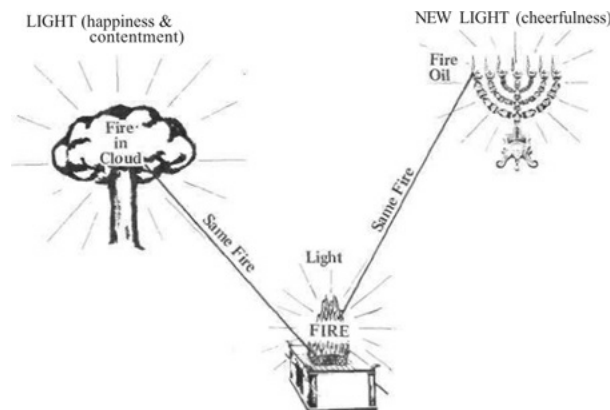
Likewise, the fire of understanding in our personal temples will prepare us to minister in the low place or in the high place. The fire is happy in the *low* place, or in the *high* place, or in the *out* place. Understanding equips us to be contented and happy in any place in the will of God.

Let us further examine the origin of fire in the Tabernacle. As God led the children of Israel out of Egypt, “the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:” (Exodus 13:21). God led Israel by night by a pillar of fire. This is the same fire that came out from before the Lord and fell upon the sacrifice on the Brazen Altar. With the fire in the Courtyard came a portion of light. The Hebrew word *light* from the cloud of fire means lightning, illumination, and happiness. *Happiness* means contentment. When the cloud and fire appeared, its presence and light gave a sense of happiness and contentment to the children of Israel, for through it, their understanding was enlightened to know that God was with them. Likewise, the light of the fire in the Courtyard ministered happiness and contentment to the children of Israel. It confirmed that God was receiving their sacrifices at the Brazen Altar.

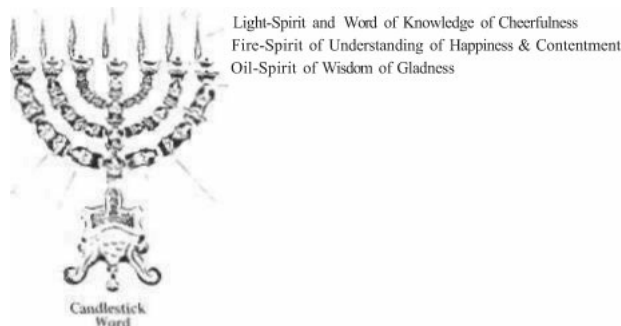
Enoch and Elijah had the full stature of the Word and the full stature of the Spirit, which was manifest in the full oil of gladness and the fire of understanding with its happiness and contentment. They were fully satisfied in their union with their heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. They could not be tempted with any other loyalty or union.

We experience the same degree of strength when we know the oil of the Spirit of gladness and the Fire of the Spirit of happiness and contentment upon the Word of God. Nothing or no one can tempt us to forsake our precious heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

c. Light



The union of oil and fire in the Holy Place resulted in the birth of a new light. This is a different light from the light of the fire that fell on the sacrifice at the Brazen Altar. The fire that was carried from the Altar to be joined with the oil of the Candlestick produced a different degree of light because of the union of the fire with the oil. In other words, the fire of contentment placed on the Word (the Candlestick) produced the light of cheerfulness.



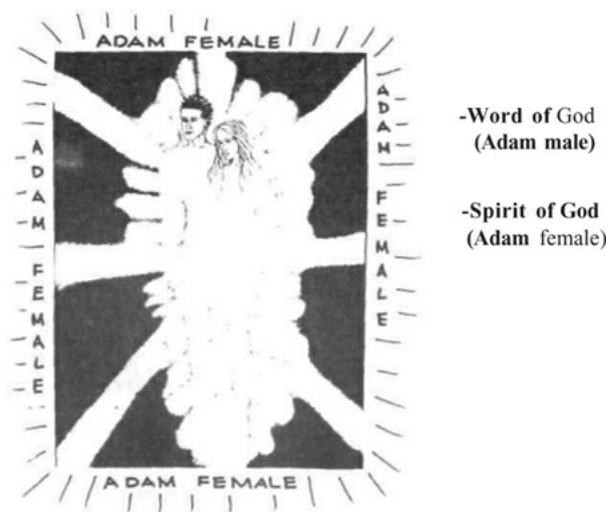
Light is the marriage union between the full stature of the Spirit (oil and fire) and the full stature of the Word represented by the Candlestick. The seven bowls full of oil, and fire resting on the Candlestick is a beautiful picture of the union of the Word and Spirit. This Hebrew word *light* means cheerfulness and has to do with “a steady display of bright spirits.” When the light of knowledge from the Word and the Holy Ghost illuminates our countenances, we radiate cheerfulness. This light of knowledge, awareness, and familiarity fills the soul with cheerfulness, encouragement, comfort, excitement, and makes our hearts willing for the will of God in any place.

Light pours forth freely, impartially, over the mountains and the valleys. Light spreads itself like a cloth of gold over the barren, the desolate, the ugly. Light darts into the smallest crevice to illuminate and to cheer. Light wings its way to the highest place and streams in overflowing rays to the lowest place. Natural light is the cheerful smile of Heaven upon the earth. Much more in the spiritual, the light of knowledge and cheerfulness transforms us into a bright, shining chandelier in our Father’s house.

The Hebrew word *light* used in connection with the Candlestick, is in the feminine gender. This light bathed the entire Candlestick. In other words, the Word stood clothed and protected by the female light. This same principle is seen in the Garden of Eden. Perhaps you have wondered why the serpent tempted Adam female first? Keep in mind that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His principles never vary, whether one looks in the Old Testament, the New Testament, or in eternity. There is a unity and similarity of principle, regardless of the time of God’s working. Just as the protective female light clothed and guarded the Candlestick (the stature of the Word in the Tabernacle), so also did Adam female (type of the Spirit) serve as guardian and protector over Adam male (type of the Word) in the Garden.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an *help meet* for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him (Genesis 2:18-20).

In the beginning God called their name Adam. “...In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created” (Genesis 5:1,2). Originally man was distinguished as Adam male and Adam female. Not until after the fall did Adam name his wife *Eve*. God created Adam female to be the helpmeet for Adam male. The Hebrew word *help* means to surround. A physical surrounding would have been impossible. But since Adam female was clothed with light and glory, she could surround him with her light and glory, Adam female represents the Spirit of God, and Adam male represents the Word of God.



The word *help* also means to protect, to guard. It is interesting to note that the word *meet* means exactly the same thing. She was to be a double wall of protection to guard her husband. She stood personally by his side and her

light and glory encircled him. The serpent was wise. He knew that he could not tempt Adam male (type of the Word) without first penetrating through Adam female (type of the Spirit).

This same principle works with us likewise. If the Serpent can attack us in the Spirit realm first, then there is possibility of attacking our understanding of the Word next. If we fail to worship God in the Spirit and permit the enemy to deaden our praise, stifle our worship, and smother our love for Jesus, then how can we expect the Word of God to be quickened and to be made alive? No wonder churches today are dead and dry, with so little of the quickened Word of God in their midst. The Word has become a dead letter to them, because the Spirit of God has been desecrated, as it were. People in such churches find it difficult to shout and get blessed and excited over the dead letter of the Word of God.

Adam female was a helpmeet, which pictures her ministry as being that of a wall. She was a double wall to surround, to protect, and to guard Adam male, who represented the Word of God. In their state of innocence, before they were tempted or tested, Adam male and female were faced with making a choice between the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. They could have obeyed the will of God and eaten of the Tree of Life, thereby gaining immortality which would have kept them forever in their beautiful, sinless state.

If they had chosen God's will for their lives, they would have brought forth immortal children. But Adam male and female chose to receive the words of the Serpent. Their wrong choice included receiving the Serpent's will and eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Instead of bringing the blessing, promised by the Serpent, the forbidden tree became a tree of death, and Adam male and female became mortal beings. Death entered, and man became mortal creatures, destined to die. Spiritual death was instantaneous; they lost their light and their glory. They stood stripped and naked in their sinful condition. The physical death process began immediately and worked on their mortal bodies until it ultimately brought about their decease, so death passed upon all men.

Let us learn another lesson here. Perhaps we wonder why Adam female could be deceived as she was. She was not deceived until she accepted and partook of the words of the Serpent. His words had no oil of gladness, nor any fire of contentment, nor any light of cheerfulness. Yet she received the Serpent's unanointed, dead, dark, sad words and gave them a place in her mind and heart. As soon as the Serpent's words entered, they began to infuse their deceitful poison. Soon Adam female was so deceived that she looked upon the forbidden tree as being good, pleasant, and desirable. God had warned her that if she ate of the forbidden fruit, that it would become a tree of death to her, but she saw it as the opposite from what God had said.

It is the same today. If we hold conversation with the Devil, we actually receive his poisonous words, which will fill us with deceit. He is the father of lies, the father of all deceit. Receiving his words will result in death.

He is also the accuser of the brethren. Constantly, he whispers discouragement and defeat to God's people. If we give him our ear, we take his words of deceit into ourselves, and we suffer spiritual death accordingly. How we need to fill our hearts and minds with God's truth, for in truth there is life. If we hide His precious Word in our hearts, He will place the oil of gladness upon it, the fire of happiness and contentment, and the light of cheerfulness with its wall of protection.

Beloved, it is possible to grow to the place in God where we *know* the real gladness and contentment that is found in the Word of God and the will of God. When this truth comes, it is a wall of protection against the world, the flesh, and the Devil. This proves again why God has chosen Enoch and Elijah as His two witnesses against the Antichrist. They have full stature of the Word and the Spirit and will be clothed with this protective light of cheerfulness. We see another example of this principle in Leviticus.

And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died; and the LORD said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not; for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat (Leviticus 16:1,2).

The cloud spoken of, here, was the glory cloud, filled with the light of the Shekinah glory of God. Inside the Ark of the Covenant was the Word inscribed on the tables of stone. What protected the Word in the Ark? The light protected it by overshadowing it.



In I Samuel we have an illustration of what happened when unprepared people looked into the Ark.

And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter (I Samuel 6:19).

Seeking to get to the Word within the Ark, the men of Bethshemesh broke through the light. But the light that protected the Ark and its contents slew many of them. The Spirit of God is the illuminator and the revelator of the Word. Without the Spirit, the Word is a dead letter. Also the Spirit stands as a protector of the Word, a helpmeet indeed. We must go through the Spirit to get to the Word. Therefore, it behooves us to yield to the gracious drawings and wooings of the Holy Ghost, so that the Word may be revealed to our hearts.

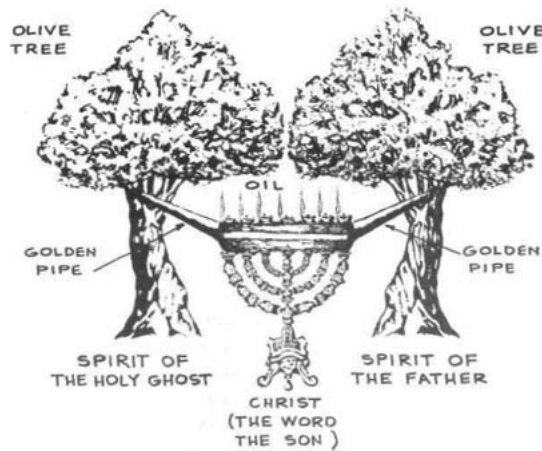
God's Two Witnesses have been well established in this principle; therefore, the Antichrist has no power over them. They stand in the earth as two candlesticks. Their stature of the Word is well protected by the **oil** of gladness, the fire of happiness and contentment, and the **light of** cheerfulness. This is one source of their power and strength.

2. Olive Trees

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth (Revelation 11:4),

The Two Witnesses possess a double portion of power. One source of their power is the Word which the Candlestick illustrates. The second source of their power is the Spirit which the two olive trees illustrate. To understand the shadow and type of the olive trees, we must turn back to the prophetic Book of Zechariah.

And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts...Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth (Zechariah 4:1-14).



First we see a Golden Candlestick. We already know that the Golden Candlestick in the Tabernacle represented the Word, the Christ, the divine side of Jesus Christ. On top of the Candlestick is a huge bowl with seven pipes coming out of the bowl, leading to the seven lamps thereon. The type and shadow of the complete sevenfold light of the Golden Candlestick is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, which is clearly noted in Revelation 5:6, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb [Jesus Christ] as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." The Candlestick in Zechariah's revelation can be none other than the Word, the Christ.

On either side of the Candlestick stood two olive trees equipped with golden pipes, which piped their golden oil into the bowl of the Candlestick. Here is a beautiful portrayal of the Triune God. Pouring into the Christ, the Word, is the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ possessed the Spirit of God without measure. "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34). Jesus had the tree of the Spirit of the Father and He had the tree of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost; He had the oil of joy of the Father, and He had the oil of joy of the Holy Ghost pouring into Him.

When Jesus suffered death on the Cross, being made sin for us, He suffered without human measure. No human being could possibly know His suffering and the depths to which He descended into Death, Hell and the Bottomless Pit for us. He could suffer without measure, because He had the supply of the golden oil of the Spirit without measure. He possessed the oil of gladness, the fire of happiness and contentment and the light of cheerfulness.

The work of God is accomplished "not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit." The two olive trees emptied their golden oil into the bowl, which amply supplied the Spirit for Jesus Christ that He might work the works of His Father. This portion of Scripture closes with a very pertinent thought concerning the "...two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth?" (Zechariah 4:14).

The name *Lord* refers to the Hebrew word *Adonai*, which means master, husband, Bridegroom. Thus we see the perfect marriage union that Jesus Christ had with the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Holy Ghost.

A different expression is used to describe the olive trees and the candlesticks belonging to the Two Witnesses: "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the *God* of the earth" (Revelation 11:4). The word *God* is used in relation to His creating power. We know, then, that the Two Witnesses stood before Him as ones created by Him. Although they had grown to full spiritual maturity in the Spirit and in the Word, they did not possess the personal Golden Candlestick that belonged to Jesus Christ, or the personal olive trees which belonged to the Father and to the Holy Ghost. Jesus had the Spirit and the Word without measure, and He stands ready to share abundantly with the Two Witnesses. Their source of strength is sufficient for then-need.

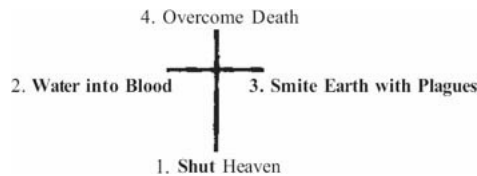
These Two Witnesses stand in the earth with a full stature of the Word, a Candlestick, and a full stature of the Spirit of God, an olive tree. This is the source of their strength with which they overcome the Antichrist. He cannot kill them until their ministry is completed.

B. EXERCISE OF POWER

We have seen the sources of the power of the Two Witnesses. Now let us consider the exercise of the power of the oil of gladness, the power of the fire of happiness, and the power of the light of cheerfulness.

These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will (Revelation 11:6).

We see in this chapter a fourfold description of the Two Witnesses as they exercise their authority and power during the short time of their ministry. Three manifestations of their power are seen in the above verses and the fourth use of their power is described in verse eleven,



1. Shut Heaven

And these have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy:...(Revelation 11:6).

The first exercise of the power committed unto the Two Witnesses is the shutting up of heaven. The Greek word *shut* means to block up and close up that which was previously opened, to bind something that was not satisfactorily completed, and to unite. By the power of the Word and the Spirit the Heaven will close up so that there **will** be no rainfall on the earth for the three and one half years of their ministry—"in the days of their prophecy." What a terrible time of drought this will be on the whole earth. We recall the opening of the Seals seen in Revelation six. The third seal (Revelation 6:5,6) confirms this fact of drought, for it shows the black horse and his rider and the terrible famine that they bring. The first trumpet judgment has already sounded, bringing destruction to a third part of the trees and to **all** the green grass on the earth. The second trumpet brings death to a third part of the creatures of the sea. All in all, it is a dreadful time of hunger, death, and destruction, part of which is due to the power of the Two Witnesses, as they bind up the rains of Heaven for the entire three and one half years that they prophesy to the Jewish remnant. It is a time of suffering for the whole world—wars, drought, famine, pestilence, death.

All this prophecy will be fulfilled literally, but the spiritual principles are useful to Christians today. "All scripture...is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness:" (II Timothy 3:16). Let us examine the thought of a shut heaven in order to see the practical application that it has to our personal lives. The natural heavens speak of the high and elevated place. Spiritually speaking, the heavens relate to our mind, which resides in the head, the highest and most elevated part of man's anatomy. The thoughts of our minds are comparable to clouds which carry rain, in that they shower our earth with information. If the showers of information come from the carnal mind, then our carnal, fleshly earth flourishes and brings forth words and workings, or deeds, of the flesh. Sometimes the information comes to us from another person's heaven (mind). They let one of their thought clouds, as it were, or their word clouds float over into our heaven and shower us with information. If their thoughts, or words, shower us with bitter, hateful information, for example, it will be just a short time until the seeds of bitterness and hate, that are in our carnal hearts, will take root downward and bear fruit upward. Sometimes it takes just one shower to bring a young tree of the flesh into being.

But there is power in the Word and in the Spirit of God to enable us to take command, and shut up the heavens. Through exercising the power of the Spirit and the Word of God, we can close our mind to the many and various kinds of clouds that try to capture our minds with their influence and control. God's Word can bind up, block up, close up that which was previously open. Some people are troubled with lustful thoughts, envious spirits, jealous torments; there is no end to the kinds of unclean thoughts that try to float about in the heavens of our minds. But, beloved, there is a sure cure. There is a way out.

Our answer is to have the oil of gladness on top of the Word of God, the Fire of the Holy Ghost with His happiness and contentment, and the light of cheerfulness to protect and encircle the Word of God in our minds. It is the Devil's purpose to pollute our mind with all manner of vile and dirty things, but when the Spirit of God (the oil, the fire, the light) settles down upon the Word of God in us, this will shut up our mind, our heavens.

Sometimes, however, we deliberately choose to keep our heavens open to other people's unclean thoughts. Let someone with a gossip spirit come around, and there will be some people who will open their minds to all the information being imparted. If we are not careful, we, too, will participate in a contaminating process by passing the

information along to the next fellow who has an open heaven.

Although we cannot be held accountable for the bits of information that are dropped into our minds, we do not have to invite them to stay. There is power enough in the Word and in the Spirit of God to cleanse us from these “showers of information” that descend upon our minds.

The Apostle John is projecting this very same thought when he stated, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John 1:7). It is impossible to have light to walk in without the oil and the fire of the Holy Ghost. When the Holy Ghost, with His oil, fire, and light, finds union with the Word of God in our temples, then there is cleansing in the Blood for *all* of our needs, because the word *cleanseth* implies a continuous process of cleansing.

Each of us has to make up his own mind. Do we really want to go on for God? If so, then surely we dare not join ourselves to the many unclean clouds that are floating over our heads. We must shut up our heavens, closing out the clouds and thereby cutting off their showers of instruction. Instead of showers of unclean information, there will be showers of the precious cleansing Blood of Jesus. Let us choose to walk with those who are busily experiencing the oil of gladness, the fire of contentment, and the light of cheerfulness. These things are going to work for Enoch and Elijah in the tribulation period, and certainly they will work for us now.

We have no excuse for not going on for God. Regardless of what our circumstances may be, God is able to close up the heavens of our mind against the satanic attacks of the enemy and to thwart his purpose, which is to work mental havoc and destruction in us. The word *shut* also means to unite. Once our mind is closed to the unclean clouds, it is then open for new union with the Lord Jesus Christ. As we open our Bible to study and meditate upon God’s Word, the Spirit of God will come and light upon its pages. It will cause the Word to come alive. It will ignite our heart and fill us with new happiness, new contentment, new cheerfulness, which forms an impenetrable protection.

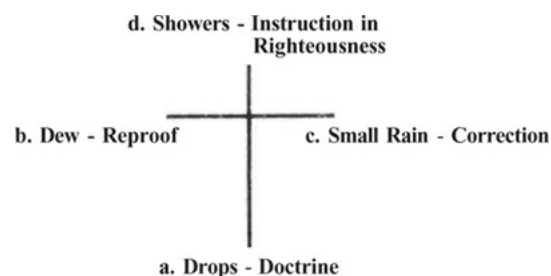
If it were not for this solution, a minister would be in a dreadful predicament, for in his work of counseling, his mind is often burdened with the unclean clouds that plague many a struggling soul. How wonderful it is to get alone with the Lord in the Word and prayer and lay hold of the power that we need in exercising authority to shut up the heavens. Then when the oil of gladness comes, the fire of contentment, and when the light of cheerfulness begins to sanctify and cleanse, the servant of the Lord is able to bear up under the load. By exercising this power, he is always moving upward into new experiences of having his *heavens* shut up from the unclean clouds.

2. Water into Blood

...and have power over waters to turn them lo blood...(Revelation 11:6).

What a fantastic miracle this is! The Two Witnesses will turn the waters into blood. They shut the heavens so that instead of water, they can cause blood to rain down upon the earth. The water referred to here is a particular class of rain. In order to determine exactly what kind of rain this is, we need to study a stature of truth on rain. The Word of God describes four kinds of rain in Deuteronomy, which fits with the stature of “all Scripture” found in II Timothy 3:16 and 17.

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: (Deuteronomy 32:1,2).



The Greek word *wafēr* in Revelation 11:6 tells us that this is showers. There will be literal blood raining like

showers from Heaven upon the earth in this dreadful time of judgment.

Blood speaks to us of either the blood of animals or of the blood of man. Such a profusion of blood, omnipresent in nature, could not possibly be the blood of animals nor that of any ordinary human being. There is only One who possesses omnipresent blood, **and** that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is no new sign, for it was one of the supernatural signs given unto Moses. God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush and commanded him to go back to Egypt and present himself as God's appointed leader to deliver Israel from her bondage. Moses protested, saying, "...But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, the LORD hath not appeared unto thee" (Exodus 4:1). The LORD then gives three supernatural signs to Moses, which are proofs of His calling.

1) He casts his rod to the ground, and it becomes a serpent. He picks it up again, and it turns back into a rod in his hand,

2) He puts his hand into his bosom, and draws it out to show it has become as white as snow with leprosy. He returns his hand within his bosom, and brings it out to reveal that his hand is fully restored to healthy flesh.

3) He turns the water into blood.

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land (Exodus 4:9).

Principle wise, we have these same three signs with us today. The rod represents the power of Jesus Christ to change, which works so effectually in the lives of repentant sinners. The healing of the leprous hand types the healing power of Jesus Christ, which works so mightily in answer to prayer through the gifts of healings that have been bestowed upon the present-day church. Turning the water into blood depicts the creating power of Jesus Christ which is operative even today, God always works by a threefold witness.

So here again, we see His threefold witness given to Moses to persuade the Israelites of His God-given leadership. It was exodus time for God's chosen people. He was about to lead them into Canaan's land. If Israel had believed the signs that God had put before them, they would all have entered Canaan's land, their promised destination. Unbelief in God's changing power, God's healing power, and God's creating power, which operated through His servant Moses, kept the majority of the first generation of Israelites from entering into Canaan's land. Other miraculous signs were given to Moses which confirmed his words before the Egyptians, but the first three signs were given especially for the sake of the Israelites.

Prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ when He will return to the earth to bring deliverance once again to Israel, it is fitting that a blood sign will be placed in the earth once more. As Pharaoh was challenged and contested by God's two witnesses, Moses and Aaron, even so the Antichrist (Pharaoh's anti-type) is challenged and contested by God's two witnesses, Enoch and Elijah. The Pharaoh's magicians were able to duplicate several of the miracle signs wrought by the hand of Moses. In like manner, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will do many signs and wonders in their time.

This same sign of blood is seen as the first trumpet judgment is turned loose on the earth, "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood (Revelation 8:7). When the second angel sounded, "the third part of the sea became blood" (Revelation 8:8). This is the omnipresent Blood of Jesus Christ, the blessing side and the judgment side. On the blessing side, Blood brings us salvation and also insures us of resurrection to glory and reward. On the judgment side, the Blood guarantees the resurrection of all the dead; these will be brought up before the Great White Throne "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). Sinners, in their resurrected immortal bodies, will be cast into the Lake of Fire to be tormented. This does not excuse them from giving praise and honor to their Creator. In the Lake of Fire they will have to bow to the Name of Jesus and acknowledge Him as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Sooner or later, every living creature is going to bow to the mighty Name of Jesus. It is just a matter of when and where.

When we connect the study of the rain, which we have determined in this case to be showers, to the stature on "all scripture," we see that showers speak of instruction in righteousness. After our heavens have been shut, there is

a whole fresh new shower of cleansing by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to purify us that we might receive new instruction in righteousness.

The showers of the Blood of our precious Lord Jesus will be the encouragement and strengthening that some of the Christians will need during the tribulation period. Though they have missed the Rapture because of their lethargic and carnal ways, they will recognize the mighty miracle sign of the Blood of Jesus Christ. It will strengthen them to walk up boldly to the Antichrist and declare that he is a deceiver—he is not the Messiah, the Christ! Many will be martyred at this time, but some will manage to flee into hiding and will be preserved through the tribulation period.

3. Smite Earth with Plagues

...and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will (Revelation 11:6).

With the power that they possess from their full stature of the Word (the two candlesticks) and of the Spirit (the two olive trees), the Two Witnesses will also “smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will,” The word *earth* means the land and its occupants. To *smite* is to slap down in one stroke, and to flatten down.

Sometimes we are tempted to think that we cannot go on for God. We say, “So and so is standing in our way; this or that is hindering.” But if we keep a right spirit, we can flatten or slap down, as it were, anyone or anything that stands as a hindrance in our way. This smiting is not done with a malicious, hateful spirit of the flesh. It is done with the right spirit which comes from the oil of gladness upon the Word of God, the fire of happiness and contentment, and the light of cheerfulness. It is impossible to sway or sidetrack those who are filled with happiness and contentment in Jesus Christ. The creation and creature can offer nothing that compares to the Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ. Contented, happy, cheerful people cannot be shaken, hindered, nor led astray by the enemy. With the Spirit of God and the Word of God functioning within, there is nothing that can detour us from our intended destination-Canaan’s land.

4. Overcome Death

And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet;...(Revelation 11:11).

The power of Enoch and Elijah is sufficient to protect them until they finish witnessing to the Jews. Only after their ministry is finished, is the Antichrist (the Beast) able to war against them and overcome them. In verse seven it says, “And when they shall have finished their testimony...the beast...shall overcome them and kill them.” When their work is done, they are killed, and their dead bodies are cast into the street in the city of Jerusalem.

Although the Antichrist is able to overcome their physical bodies after they have finished the work God sent them to do, he has no power to impart his spiritual death to Enoch and Elijah’s spirit and soul. The Antichrist rules the thinking of the already rebellious people. For three and one half years the Two Witnesses walk through death, but it is powerless against the mature Candlestick of the Word and the mature olive tree of the Spirit that these two men possess. As the Word and the Spirit come together in their hearts, they experience spiritual resurrection life every day.

In the spiritual realm, we Christians already experience the Head of Death from Lucifer coming against us with dreadful power. Once that spirit of death is spewed out against us, as it will be against some of the Christians during the tribulation period, it leaves us feeling dead and utterly helpless. We lose consciousness of even a flicker of spiritual life. Then the Devil comes along with his lying Head of Deceit to convince us that we are hopeless and to make us feel that a strange thing has happened to us. However, it is not strange at all. God permits these death experiences to touch us, for they teach us that the Word and the Spirit can overcome death.

The Word (the Christ) walked through death with the man Jesus. Together they experienced the agony in the Garden, the beating, the ridicule, the rejection, the Cross, the tomb, and finally they went together into Death, Hell and the Bottomless Pit. Beloved, Jesus Christ knows all about suffering and death. He has been there. Thank God, that is not the end of the matter. After Jesus spent three days and three nights in the place of death, resurrection life came. He laid aside His grave clothes and took His place among the living. Hallelujah! Jesus Christ lives again.

And so it is with those of us who are His disciples. He also permits us to walk into death, spiritual death that brings with it all the crucifixion, mortification, and even burial, so to speak. How else can we possibly know His

resurrection life?

For the Two Witnesses, physical death lasted only three and one half days. Beloved, each of the Two Witnesses possessed a mature candlestick of the Word of God and each of them possessed a mature olive tree of the Spirit of God. After three and one half days, the full stature of the Word and the full stature of the Spirit stood up in the vertical position and took authority over the death that held the physical bodies of Enoch and Elijah. Resurrection life lifted the Two Witnesses out of death and stood them upon their feet. Not only did they come to life again, but “they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them” (Revelation 11:12). Their corrupting bodies, lying in open disgrace and ridicule on the street, were a great humiliation indeed, but that was minor in comparison to the exaltation that followed. All their enemies stood in fearful awe and wonder, as they beheld the two prophets stand up in resurrection life and ascend into Heaven upon God’s command.

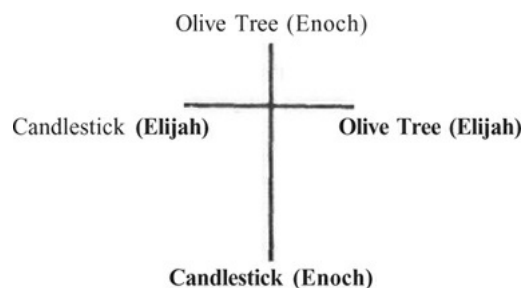
All these things are going to happen literally during the tribulation period. The literal heavens will be shut up so that no rain falls upon the earth for three and one half years. The showers will literally be turned into visible blood, the omnipresent Blood of Jesus Christ. The earth will be smitten and terrible plagues, as often as the Two Witnesses choose to use their power. And resurrection power will be manifest openly for all the world to see, when Enoch and Elijah are raised from the dead. Great fear will fill the hearts of all men as they watch them ascend into Heaven.

As far as we are concerned now, we, too, enter into the same source of power. We can lay hold of the Candlestick of the Word and the anointing of the full stature of the Spirit of God that pours the oil of gladness, the fire of contentment, and the light of cheerfulness and protection into our souls and spirits. We, too, can exercise the power to shut up the heavens of our mind to the unclean clouds and their filthy instructions. We can use the Blood of Jesus for cleansing our minds and for smiting the enemies in our personal earth. In our seasons of spiritual death, we can wait patiently until the Lord releases His resurrection life within us. Whatever happens literally during the tribulation period can be Experienced in the invisible realm now. We can apply these same spiritual principles to the relevant circumstances of life as we go on for God.

II. THEIR PROPHECY

To *prophecy* means to speak under the anointing, under inspiration. God equipped His Two Witnesses with supernatural power to perform and to confirm their ministry and to war against the Antichrist while they prophesied on the earth. These two are God’s witnesses, or martyrs, for the word *witness* is also defined as the word martyr. Just before His departure from this world, Jesus said, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be *witnesses* unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). It is the power of the Holy Ghost that enables us to be witnesses, even to the point of martyrdom. A true witness of Jesus Christ is one who is completely sold out to the truth, so that not even the threat of death will silence them.

Why did God send two witnesses? In the first place, this is God’s mode of operation. When it pertains personally to God and His works, He always works with a threefold witness. In the affairs of men, however, God permits men to work by either two *or* three: “...that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (Matthew 18:16). In the second place, the Two Witnesses form a full stature of ministry to those who are alive during the tribulation.



God’s witnesses minister in the power of the Spirit of God, for it is His anointing that is upon their inspired prophecy. What a privilege it is to be in the presence of an inspired and anointed speaker. This is always how it ought to be in the house of God. Saints often come into the worship service weighted down with physical weariness,

their minds still under the influence of spirits of the world and the Devil, Some come dragging in more dead than alive because Lucifer's Head of Death has been warring against them. The only answer to such needs is anointed and inspired ministry in the pulpit. This anointed speaking can come from the congregation as well, for those who have been faithful in the prayer closet come into God's house with both the Word and the Spirit vibrant and alive within their hearts. These saints are able to worship and praise the Lord with anointed speaking, which, in turn, repels the negative forces that are at work in the service. We are all members of the body of Christ, and as such, we minister to and affect one another. It takes the anointing of the Spirit on the prophecy that comes across the pulpit to quicken and reveal the Word, to drive back the forces of darkness, the spirits of deadness and bondage, and even physical weariness. There is life-giving power in the anointed preaching of the Word,

A. THREE AND ONE HALF YEARS

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, [3 1/2 years] clothed in sackcloth (Revelation 11:3).

Enoch and Elijah are not going to be silent for the duration of the three and one half years of judgment and distress. They will not take a rest, as it were, from declaring the truth which God has commissioned them to give. We need to take heart, those of us who feel the weariness of prophesying for the Lord, for if the Two Witnesses have enough power to minister as faithfully as they do, surely there is enough power to enable us to do the same.

B. SACKCLOTH

...and they shall prophesy...clothed in sackcloth (Revelation 11:3).

Although they are heaven-sent ambassadors, bearing a direct message from God, Enoch and Elijah do not come dressed in purple, scarlet, silk or satin, the garments of royalty, but in sackcloth.

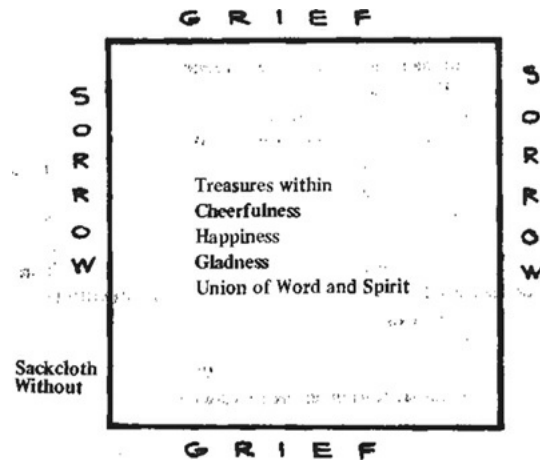
It was the custom of the Old Testament prophets to clothe themselves with sackcloth. The sackcloth was a visible witness of their ministry and call from God. However, sackcloth also presents another valuable spiritual principle. Sackcloth is a rough, coarse fabric that is very uncomfortable to wear. Sackcloth is a demonstration of mourning, grief and sorrow. This is a strange combination indeed. Keep in mind that these Two Witnesses are represented as two candlesticks (the mature stature of the Word) and two olive trees (the mature stature of the Spirit of God). From the union of the Word (candlesticks) and the Spirit (olive trees), the Witnesses are anointed with the oil of gladness, the fire of happiness and contentment, and the light of cheerfulness. This glory and light comes from their personal union with God; therefore, these men are completely satisfied and exalted in their relationship to the will of God. Impressive and beautiful as this is, yet they stand clothed in sackcloth of humility, in garments of mourning, sorrow, and suffering. The world looks upon their sackcloth; yet it knows nothing about the glorious treasures hidden within them.

We see this same principle in the Mosaic Tabernacle. Within the enclosure of the white linen curtains, which served as a wall around the outer Court of the Tabernacle, stood a separate building, the Tabernacle proper. Little did people realize what immense wealth was hidden within the sanctuary. There were four layers of covering over the Tabernacle. The exterior covering was made of badger skin, which was unattractive, dark, and humble in appearance. But hidden within the Tabernacle lay fabulous treasures, seen only by the priesthood. Hovering over the Mercy Seat, in the most Holy Place, was the Shekinah Glory, the presence of God Himself. What unspeakable treasures! We see this same principle in the clothing of Enoch and Elijah. Marvelous treasures were hidden within them, but the world saw only this humble badger skin.

This principle also illustrates how we, as under shepherds, are to minister to others. Although we possess the oil of gladness within (which is the minister's strength), we must be willing to weep and to suffer discomfort and humiliation in order to minister to our people. However, if we allow inner feelings of sorrow and grief to push out gladness, happiness and cheerfulness, then it is easy to accuse God and complain against Him. When sadness anoints our lamp of carnal reasoning, then we moan and groan against the people, against our circumstances; we bear the yoke of ministry with a begrudging spirit of resentment. We feel tempted to do as Hezekiah, who took pleasure in displaying the secret treasures of his dominion: "Then said he, [the Prophet Isaiah] What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my

treasures that I have not shewed them” (Isaiah 39:4). This verse tells us that Hezekiah withheld *nothing* in his whole dominion, even the secret treasures of the Lord’s house were included. He showed all the treasures and all the secrets and he called them *my treasures*. No glory and honor went to God, to whom the treasures belonged. In like manner we, too, are tempted to display our inner treasures for personal exaltation.

God’s order is reversed. He clothes His Witnesses outwardly with the sackcloth of humility. The world sees only the grief, the sorrow, the suffering of their ministry, but hidden within their hearts are the secret treasures of their joyful, happy, contented, and cheerful union with the Lord.



The Two Witnesses are diligent to work day and night to prophesy for three and one half years. Perhaps this is another reason for their being two of them; then they could alternate in their ministries. Another reason for their sackcloth of sorrow or grief was that it protected them from abusing their power to afflict. Humility will always cause us to minister judgment with a merciful attitude. Enoch and Elijah took no personal delight in ministering judgment. When we are clothed with sackcloth that brings suffering to our own flesh, neither will we take delight in ministering judgment to others. Remember that the Two Witnesses had power to afflict as often as they chose to do: “...and to smite the earth with all plagues, AS OFTEN AS THEY WILL” (Revelation 11:6).

In the ninth chapter of Luke Jesus’ disciples present an example to us of why we need to be clothed with sackcloth. Because they were not wearing an outer garment of humility, the disciples showed no concern for the spiritual needs of the Samaritans. In fact, when they sensed the Samaritans rejection of Jesus, James and John said, “Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of (Luke 9:54,55). They had not yet found the gladness, happiness and contentment of the Word and the Spirit of God, for if they had been contented, they would not have desired to see judgment visited upon the Samaritans. If an inner union had been made with the Word and Spirit, they would have been willing to wait for God to redeem.

Enoch and Elijah had this inner union, so they were able to minister in humility. They were wrapped up in intercession and travail for the people to whom they were ministering. As Christians, we can fail to put on the garment of humility of intercession and travail, choosing instead to wrap up our inner treasures with fleshly pride and exaltation; then we will have no protection against the fiery darts of the enemy, nor against the antichrist spirits that are in the world. It is absolutely necessary that we wrap our treasures in sackcloth.

III. THEIR PROTECTION

While the sackcloth of humility, sorrow, and mourning protects inward treasures of gladness, happiness and contentment from being defiled by the things without, the two prophets had a twofold outward protection.

A. FIRE OUT OF MOUTH

And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed (Revelation 11:5).

Their added protection against the Antichrist and his followers is the fire that comes flashing forth out of their mouths. Just what is this fire? The answer is found in the Book of Jeremiah.

Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them (Jeremiah 5:14).

This is the fire of the Word of God. Whenever anyone seeks to kilt the Two Witnesses, they are met with the Fire of the Word, and even as wood is quickly devoured by fire, their enemies will be consumed. Unless there is some fire of happiness and contentment on the Word of God that is within, there can be no devouring fire proceeding from the mouth. Its outward working is contingent upon the inward possession of the Fire of the Word. Whatever fills the heart is what the mouth speaks.

Since the burning fire of the Word of God is a great protection for the Two Witnesses, it is equally so for us today. The third chapter of I Corinthians describes the works of the flesh as wood, hay, and stubble, things which will not stand the test of God's judgment fire. The enemies of the Two Witnesses are likened unto wood. Wood cannot consume fire, but fire can consume wood. The wood of the flesh is no threat to the Fire of God. The people who attack the Word of God, the Spirit of God, or the witnesses of God are to be pitied, for in due season they shall be consumed, even as the natural fire consumes natural wood.

Our flesh has a wooden cudgel, or **club**, that it uses defensively to protect itself against the attacks of others. It uses this cudgel in an aggressive manner to beat others into subjection to its will.'

We find this *wood* aspect of the flesh more clearly defined in the fifth chapter of Galatians, which describes the works of the flesh. The wooden cudgel of the flesh is hatred, wrath, strife," envy, and murder. All too frequently we resort to using our fleshly cudgel. Although we may never literally kill a man's body; every man's wooden cudgel has the power to destroy the reputation, the influence, and the determination of others. In this respect wood can kill. It is particularly noticeable when a minister uses the Word of God as a wooden club to beat down his enemies. But if the Fire of the Word of God is turned loose behind the pulpit, it will consume the minister's wooden cudgel. Furthermore, it will consume the fleshly attitudes, dispositions, and works of the hearers. This Fire kills and makes alive. Remember that the operation of the Fire of the Word of God is based upon a person's inward possession of the happiness and contentment that is born out of the union of the Spirit of God with the Word of God.

B. ASCENSION

And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them (Revelation 11:11,12).

Their ascension is their second and final protection. To keep the experiences of the Two Witnesses in proper order, we will consider this point after we have studied their warfare and death. We cannot grasp the triumph of their ascension until we have first considered their dreadful plight.

IV. THEIR PLIGHT

A. WARFARE

God has never promised His disciples and servants a bed of ease. To the contrary, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). The more of the Word of God that is entrusted to us, the more intense becomes the persecution and warfare. Consider John the Beloved, who suffered banishment to the Isle of Patmos, because of the word of his testimony. Even in the midst of his persecution, John stayed "in the Spirit"; therefore he was entrusted with an even greater revelation of the Word, the Christ (Revelation 1:9-18).

In spite of the warfare and fighting (the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force), we must keep in mind that our lives are immortal as long as we are walking in the will of God. Nothing can bring us to a premature grave until God is through with us. The enemies of Jesus tried many times to take His life, but He walked right through the midst of them into safety. He was there, right before them, but then He was gone. They

could in no way touch Him, for His hour had not yet come. His earthly ministry was not yet finished, so there was no way that they could bring Him to an untimely death. And so it is with the Two Witnesses. Not until they have completed their ministry of prophesying can anyone lay a hand upon them. Only then could they kill them.

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast [Antichrist] that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them (Revelation 11:7).

Enoch and Elijah were in dire circumstances. The warfare was waged by the Antichrist. We know from this that they suffered a personal attack from the full stature of wickedness that indwelt the Antichrist. The warfare reaches such intense proportions that the Two Witnesses are overcome and killed by the Beast.

How fearful we all are of finding ourselves in dire circumstances, where we can see no way out. If doing the will of God puts us in the squeeze of a serious dilemma, we can take heart, and be confident that He will get us out. We cannot redeem ourselves, but must wait patiently until the Lord Himself comes to redeem us.

B. DEATH

The plight of the Two Witnesses included warfare and death. When God was ready, He allowed them to succumb to the attack of the Antichrist, and they are killed. Here are some interesting details concerning their death:

1. Unburied Bodies

And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (Revelation 11:8).

The two dead witnesses lie as unburied corpses in the street of the great city Jerusalem. What an utter disgrace is heaped upon them. The people of the world have such disrespect for the Two Witnesses, that they refuse to even extend them the honor of a decent burial. This shows the world's rejection and complete disdain of the two servants of God. According to eastern customs, the matter of burial was of great importance; and in Israel, because they did not embalm the corpse, it was expedient that they bury their dead the very same day. We see this fact proven in Acts 5:6 and 10, when Ananias and Sapphira were buried immediately upon their death. What a gross transgression this was against Jewish tradition, against society, and against the Word of God. There they lay, two bodies quickly decomposing in the temperate climate of Jerusalem.

2. Spectacle

And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves (Revelation 11:9).

What a horrible spectacle they will be. Without a doubt this event will have thorough news coverage, and by the means of television the whole world shall look upon these decaying spectacles as they lie there in the street.

3. Defense of Dead Bodies

...and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves (Revelation 11:9).

Burial will not be permitted. This is a deliberate and premeditated act, not one of negligence. No doubt these bodies are defended lest any person come along and bury them. How great was their humiliation!

God's law that "it is appointed unto man once to die" has now been fulfilled in Enoch and Elijah, for both of these had previously been translated bodily into heaven, bypassing death. There is only one exception to God's law, and that is at the Rapture of the living overcoming saints. Their bodies will be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality (I Corinthians 15:51-53).

Let me explain this further, Man is created as a threefold being: spirit, soul and body. When a New Testament believer dies, his spirit and soul return to God, and his body goes to the grave. Because we are on this side of the

Cross, after Jesus Christ has shed His own Blood to cleanse us from sin, our spirit and soul ascend immediately into the presence of God. This was not true in the case of the Old Testament believer, who had only the covering of animal blood for his sin. In his case, the spirit and soul went to Paradise, also called Death, and Abraham's bosom, and his body went to the grave. The experience of a sinner at death in the Old Testament and the New Testament is the same: the spirit returns to God, the soul goes to Hell, and the body goes to the grave. This same pattern was fulfilled in the death of Jesus when He took the sinners' place. His spirit went to the hands of the Father, His soul went to Hell, and His body went to the grave. On resurrection morning, His spirit came down from the Father, His soul came up out of Hell, and together they were joined with His resurrected, glorified body.

With this as background, let us consider the experiences of Enoch and Elijah. These were men who walked with God, and one day God simply took them from this earth, transporting them to Heaven, body, soul and spirit. Neither of them yet possessed their immortal bodies; therefore, they were improperly dressed for Heaven. So in the meantime, God clothed them with their house of glory as a temporary measure so that they might abide in His presence. This was temporary because the eternal order is for mortality to be swallowed up by immortality, but Enoch and Elijah had not died and been resurrected yet.

When the time comes for their appearance on earth again, during the Great Tribulation, God will set aside their garments of glory and reclothe them with their mortal bodies for their ministry on earth as His Two Witnesses. At the close of the tribulation, the Two Witnesses are killed. Now their mortal bodies have experienced the death that is appointed unto all men. After three and one half days, Heaven commands their resurrection. Their immortal garments, houses of glory, are dispatched from Heaven, and their mortality will be clothed with immortality and they will be caught away into Heaven. This time they are properly dressed; they are prepared, now, to be in the Lord's presence for eternity.

A somewhat similar situation is seen in the sixth chapter of Revelation. The souls of martyred Christians (martyred early in the tribulation period for their testimony's sake) are seen under the Great Altar in Heaven. These are their spirits and souls only, for their bodies are still lying in the graves on earth. They have not yet been resurrected; therefore, they are not seen wearing their immortal garments of glory.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled (Revelation 6:9-11).

These souls under the Altar cry out for vengeance; their dead bodies are still buried in the earth. For their comfort and encouragement, they receive their house of glory, their white robes, their garments of immortality. At this time they merely possess them, but they have not been joined to them because their bodies are **still** in the grave. They cannot wear their white robes, the glory body, because it is tailored to fit over a resurrected body. Their experience is somewhat like that of Enoch and Elijah, except that Enoch and Elijah's physical bodies were not in the grave. They were set aside in Heaven to await further use during the tribulation.

4. Rejoicing over Death

And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth (Revelation 11:10).

All the earth begins to rejoice and celebrate at the death of the Two Witnesses. In fact, it becomes like a commercial Christmas, as people exchange gifts and make merry.

These two faithful witnesses of God ministered His prophecy in humility and exaltation, but they found only rejection and hatred as their reward from the earth. Their witnessing generated terrible animosity in the hearts of wicked men against the Word of God. These Two Witnesses were resisted, rejected, despised, and finally killed in a most ignominious way. Having ministered for **three** and one half years, their end was unburied bodies, which were defended against burial, and their death brought much rejoicing among the peoples of the earth.

But this was not their end. Let us return to the third point under "Their Protection." The first protection was the Fire of the Word that proceeded out of their mouths. Their second protection was their ascension into Heaven.

And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them (Revelation 11:12).

The greater the humiliation, the greater the exaltation. The humiliation of the Two Witnesses had been great on the earth. Now they are lifted from their present humiliation and exalted to Heaven. First they are recognized by a great voice from Heaven. How wonderful it is to be faithful and patient through humiliation while waiting for God's recognition and advancement. Secondly, they received a personal invitation from the glorious Throne of God to "come up" higher and to be advanced above all their enemies. Thirdly, they ascend in a cloud, in a chariot of glory, before the faces of their enemies.

God is faithful to exalt His servants at the appointed time. His exaltation brings joy to His people and shame to His enemies. All this exaltation was for their added protection. When they ascended, mounted up into Heaven far above all their enemies, they were protected from further humiliation at the hands of the Antichrist and his followers. Their ascension protected their resurrected garments of glory that they might not be defiled by the presence of their enemies.

Likewise, with us, the Lord gives us a word of truth; then we go through Gethsemane to the Cross for crucifixion, death, burial, and then comes resurrection. He says, "Come higher..." We can come higher only after we have descended into a new experience of death. Resurrection follows death. Ascending into heavenly places in Christ Jesus is one way of winning the victory.

And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven (Revelation 11:13).

God continues to exalt and honor His Two Witnesses by sending a mighty earthquake, which witnesses to the earth that the people have sinned greatly and offended God by rejecting His Two Witnesses. The effect of their ascension has tremendous power upon the earth and its inhabitants. Many perish, and great fear overwhelms those who survive. In their fear they begin to acknowledge the God of Heaven.

As we ascend into heavenly places in Christ Jesus, our ascending will cause many a spiritual earthquake. Each time we mount a little higher in God, we disturb and shake people's earth around us. Resurrection power will do much to destroy the City of Pride that is erected in our own personal earth. Even as the tenth part of Old Jerusalem fell, so will a portion of our spiritual City of Pride fall as it feels the impact of our ascendings upward in God. And in these ascensions, many of the enemies that dwell in our own flesh will be destroyed.

The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly (Revelation 11:14).

In the study of the Two Witnesses, the source of their power was revealed in the fact that they were described as being two candlesticks and two olive trees. Thus, we understand that each of them possessed the mature stature of the Candlestick of the Word of God and the mature stature of the olive tree of the Spirit of God. The Two Witnesses exercised their power by shutting Heaven, by turning water into blood, by smiting the earth with plagues, and by overcoming death with the spiritual resurrection life that was working in them daily. Their prophecy lasted for three and one half years. All during this time, Enoch and Elijah wore sackcloth as a demonstration of the personal grief and sorrow that they felt in having to prophesy a message of judgment.

They were protected during their ministry by the Fire of the Word of God that came out of their mouths. The second phase of their protection came after they had experienced the warfare of the Antichrist and the death that he inflicted upon their bodies. For three and one half days their dead bodies lay in the streets of Jerusalem. They were a spectacle for all the world to see. Guards stood to protect their bodies from being buried, while all the people rejoiced over the death of God's Two Witnesses. When resurrection life took authority over the physical death that held their bodies, it became the last protection for them against further humiliation at the hands of the Antichrist and his followers. Resurrection life allowed them to ascend above all the suffering and death of this old world.

»R. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

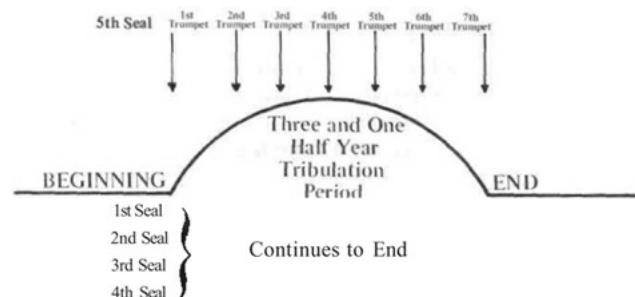
CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE THREE WOES AND THE SEVENTH TRUMPET CONTINUED

The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:14-19).

John's prophetic revelation is not given in chronological order. First, the seven seals are revealed to give a vivid picture of what will transpire on the *earth* in the beginning, during, and after the tribulation period.

The seven trumpets reveal God's judgments which are released from Heaven during the tribulation, and which work simultaneously with the five seals which are loosened at the beginning and during the tribulation period.



The sixth and seventh seals are loosened after the tribulation (Revelation 6:12-17; Matthew 24:29).

The seventh trumpet sounds at the end of the tribulation period, and God's final judgment begins to be poured out on the earth, as recorded in chapter eleven. God's final judgments continue through the reaping and judgment of the Wild Vine of the earth, the pouring out of the seven vials on the earth, and are consummated at the battle of Armageddon, which is fought after the tribulation. All these judgments are recorded from chapters fourteen through chapter nineteen.

The battle of Armageddon marks the end of God's final judgments, which were introduced when the seventh trumpet sounded. God's final judgment will be accomplished on the earth when Jesus Christ and His Bride return to the earth and war at Armageddon with the Antichrist and his armies, and overcome them.



Before studying the beginning of God's final judgment, released by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, let us examine the three woes which will be felt in the earth with the sounding of the fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpets, as prophesied.

THE THREE WOES

After the fourth trumpet has blown, as seen in Revelation 8:12, the three woes are pronounced upon the inhabitants of the earth. The word *woe* means grief and pain.

And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! (Revelation 8:13).

These woes pertain to the inhabitants of the earth. Four seals and four trumpets of judgment have already been released upon the earth, but in view of the three trumpets that are yet to come, the angel in Heaven pronounces these three woes:

1. Woe, grief and pain at the fifth trumpet:

One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter (Revelation 9:12).

2. Woe, grief and pain at the sixth trumpet:

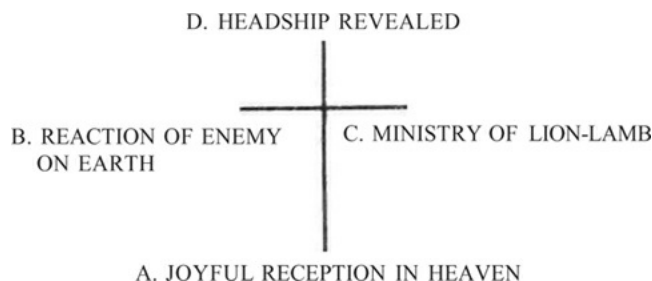
The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly (Revelation 11:14).

3. Woe, grief and pain at the seventh trumpet:

The fifth trumpet judgment opens the Bottomless Pit to release strange perverted creatures called locusts, which are equipped with torment as of a scorpion. When the sixth trumpet sounds, four angels and more strange creatures, the horsemen and their army, are loosed at the River Euphrates to go through the earth and torment the inhabitants of the world with more pain and suffering. When the seventh trumpet sounds, many things take place with great rapidity. The wrath of the Lamb begins to be manifested in greater power; the vials are poured out, which brings the wrath of the Lamb to a final end at the battle of Armageddon.

VII. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

We are now ready to begin our study of the seventh trumpet, which covers the closing part of the tribulation, and the vials, and the battle of Armageddon. Let us consider the following stature of truth in connection with the introduction of the seventh trumpet:



And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

The sounding of the seventh and last trumpet sends out a warning that demands men's attention. The second woe is past, and the blast of the trumpet introduces the third woe. Let us note the consequences that this trumpet brings, both in Heaven and in the earth.

When the trumpet sounds, loud and joyful acclamations of the Bride are heard in Heaven. We are particularly interested in identity of the "great voices in heaven" that triumphantly declared "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." The clue to their identity is found in chapter one: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Revelation 1:10).

There is no confusion as to the identity of the One who is speaking with this *great voice*. It is the trumpet voice of the Word, Himself, the Christ. This same great voice speaks out of the temple in Heaven, "And I heard a *great voice* out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth" (Revelation 16:1). Again in the seventeenth verse we read: "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a *great voice* out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." This is the Son of God talking. Nobody else has this kind of power. He utters His great voice out from the temple, from the Throne of God, the place of power and authority. Did not Jesus declare "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18)? In chapter twenty-one this great voice is again heard out of Heaven.

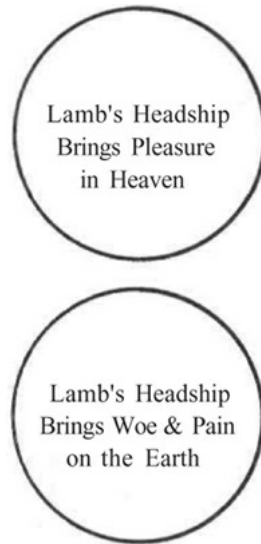
And I heard a *great voice* out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God (Revelation 21:3),

Now let us return to chapter eleven. The Two Witnesses have faithfully prophesied for three and one half years during the tribulation period. Their ministry ends in violent death, and their bodies lie exposed in the street for three and one half days. At the end of the three and one half days, the Spirit of life from God enters into their dead bodies. They are resurrected and commanded to return to Heaven, In full view of all their enemies, the Two Witnesses ascend into Heaven.

And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them (Revelation 11:12).

Here again is the same great voice speaking with commanding power. Then when we come to verse fifteen, we see that there are great voices (plural) that speak forth, "...and there were great voices in heaven saying..." Who can these voices be? They are the voices of the Bride of Jesus Christ. The Bridegroom speaks with a great voice, and the Bride speaks with the same kind of voice as her Husband.

When the seventh trumpet sounds, introducing the Headship of the Lamb, the Bride receives the Headship of her Husband, her Bridegroom, with great joy and rejoicing in Heaven. However, the same trumpet that brings pleasure in Heaven brings woe, pain, and grief on earth.



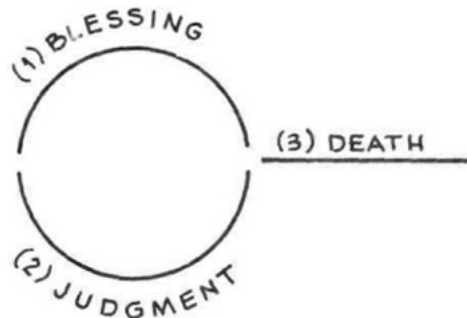
First let us look at the joyful reception in Heaven of the Headship of the Lamb.

A. JOYFUL RECEPTION IN HEAVEN

Only one event is in question here; yet how varied are the reactions. The introduction of the seventh trumpet judgment brings great joyfulness and pleasure in Heaven, but to the earth it brings only woe and pain. The pouring out of the vials of wrath and the battle of Armageddon are just around the corner, after the seventh trumpet sounds. Though pain and woe are coming to the people on earth who have continued in their rebellion and rejection of God, the Bride shows joyful anticipation that the Headship of her Bridegroom will be manifested, even if it is in wrath.

As Christians we have an important vantage point. Since we are aware of our heavenly citizenship, we can think with Heaven in view. Those who ascend by the Spirit of God and the Word of Christ, and sit together with Him in Heavenly places, can react with pleasure to His Headship in all circumstances. They can rejoice over the Lamb's Headship on the blessing side and also on the judgment side. God's perfect will is to use His Headship to bless man into repentance. If this fails, then God in His faithfulness will use His Headship to minister His permissive will of judgment to bring man to repentance. If man refuses to repent on the blessing side and also refuses to repent on the judgment side, then God is left with no choice but to bring man to death. Thus God gives man three choices: blessing, judgment, or death.

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering: not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; (Romans 2:4,5).



The earth rejects blessing and goodness of God, and it will reject also the judgment of God that is poured upon it through the woes. Tremendous suffering is about to be turned loose on earth, and Heaven rejoices over the justice that is to be meted out. The Bride realizes that the end of the struggle is in sight. The Heavenly Bridegroom is about to assume His rightful place of exaltation and glory.

This is a beautiful lesson. To those of us who have become one with Jesus Christ, His Headship brings joyful reception, whether it is on the pleasure of the blessing side or on the pain of the judgment side. But to those who are living worldly lives, resisting and rejecting the blessing side of His Headship, then the judgment side of His Headship brings only misery, woe, grief and pain.

1. Great Voices of the Bride

The word *great* means a strong, mighty, powerful, loud, and fearful sound. Her voice is akin to that of her Bridegroom.

a. Took Possessions

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

Notice what the Bride says. She is happy because her Bridegroom has taken His possessions, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord (our Adonai, our master-husband, our Bridegroom)...” How patiently He waits for His possessions.

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him (Hebrews 2:8).

The Lord’s ownership has already been established invisibly. However, until this time there has been no visible manifestation of His possession. The time has arrived, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, that the kingdoms of this world should visibly become the kingdoms of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bride rejoices that the kingdoms of this world will no longer be held in control by fallen Lucifer and his Antichrist.

Fallen Lucifer tries to usurp our spiritual possessions, too, and we need this great voice of authority and power to confess the truth, that “the kingdom belongs to the Lord.” If we will confess the true King as possessor of our kingdom, then the King will fight to protect His kingdom, His possessions.

When we grow into spiritual maturity, oneness of relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we can speak with the authority of the Bride of Christ and declare our independence from Lucifer.

b. Eternal

...and he shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

The great voices of the Bride have clearly stated that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and *He shall reign for ever and ever*. His rule is eternal. His kingdom shall never end. The announcement of the Bride, declares that He has begun His visible reign, which will extend through the millennial reign and on into the New City in the ceaseless ages of eternity. He shall reign until all enemies are put under His feet. None shall ever wrest the sceptre of power and authority out of His hand.

2, Four and Twenty Elders

And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God (Revelation 11:16).

The four and twenty elders join the Bride in joyful acclamation of the Lamb’s Headship, His rulership over the nations. We see the elders and the beasts seated on thrones, clothed in white raiment, and wearing crowns of gold upon their heads (Revelation 4:4). Let us consider their reaction to the Lamb’s Headship.

a. Humility

The four and twenty elders arise from their seats (thrones) and fall in humility and reverence before the Headship of the Lamb. The idea of falling means to come down by the force of gravity, to come down because of being detached, pushed, or dropped. When the four and twenty elders feel the power of the Headship of the Lamb, it is like the force of gravity that pulls and pushes them to the place of humility at the feet of the Lamb.

We, too, can have this same experience in this present life as we grow in spiritual stature and come under His Headship. It is indeed a living thrill, a spiritual romance, to feel the force of the gravity of His Headship in all things, that draws us to His feet in humility, surrender and obedience. What peace and joy it is to know that He is the Head over *all* things in our lives. How much better it is, beloved, to fall at His feet in worship and adoration and be filled with joy and delight, than to remain in a carnal, stubborn, complaining, erect position, and be filled with misery and sadness.

The four and twenty elders arise from their thrones of exaltation and fall upon their faces and worship God. These are redeemed people who have grown to the shoulder realm of spiritual maturity. They know enough of the Headship of the Lord to bow in humility to it.

b. Worshipped

In their humility they prostrated themselves before the Lord to render worship unto Him, who alone is worthy. They poured out their extreme devotion and intense love at the feet of God and the Lamb.

c. Gave Thanks

In their position of worship, they give thanks.

Saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned (Revelation 11:17).

They also give thanks for His Headship, even as the Bride gives thanks. Their adoration evolves from their thankful recognition of the right of God and the Lamb to rule and reign over all the world. They express their gratitude over His possession of the kingdoms of the world. When they say, "We give thee thanks...which art, and wast, and art to come," they are acknowledging: You are ruling and reigning right now. Thank you for your Headship that has ruled us in the past, and thank you that you are going to reign and rule in eternity."

d. Powerful Reign

...because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned (Revelation 11:17).

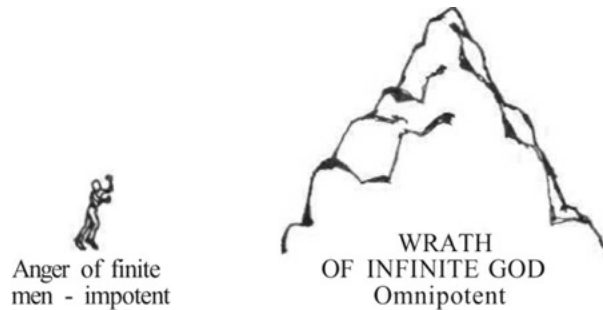
The kingdoms of this world have always been the Lord's: first, by creation; secondly, by purchase at Calvary's Cross; and now, thirdly, by His powerful reign. He has asserted His rights, exerted His power, and turned His title into possession by casting out the usurper of His possession. Therefore, great is the rejoicing and pleasure seen in Heaven when the seventh trumpet sounds. It is the beginning of the end. It is time for exaltation. It is time for the unveiling of the resurrected and glorified, ruling and reigning Christ.

B. REACTION OF ENEMY ON EARTH

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth (Revelation 11:18).

The inhabitants on earth evidence no pleasure at the manifestation of the Lamb's Headship. They feel only pain and anger. Look at the contrast: pleasure in Heaven over His Headship, His reigning power, but pain on earth because of His Headship and reigning power. The world is angry, enraged, and resentful of the righteous acts of God. Not only have they been angry, but they are still angry. Their hearts rise up in angry defiance against God and

against the wrath of His Headship. They meet His infinite wrath with their finite anger. Consider the audacity of man in putting up his impotent anger against the omnipotent wrath of God.



This is the time when God is taking just revenge upon the enemies of His people by recompensing tribulation to those who have troubled and persecuted them. Man meets the wrath of God with his fretful anger, but by so doing, he increases his guilt and hastens his own destruction.

Man's anger cannot avail in the face of the wrath of the Living God. How petty, how insignificant is man's impotent anger when it stands alongside of God's omnipotent wrath.

The seventh trumpet makes way for the wrath of God and the Lamb to be poured out in the last seven vials, which will be completed at the battle of Armageddon. This will be the last great battle between the forces of evil and the forces of good before Jesus Christ takes over the kingdoms of this world. After Jesus Christ, accompanied by His Bride, defeats the Antichrist and his armies, He sets up His millennial reign of peace.

C. MINISTRY OF LION-LAMB

Chapter five begins with John's great anxiety and distress over the fact that there are none counted worthy to open the seals that bind the book written within and without. John weeps much, until one of the elders speaks up saying:

...Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof (Revelation 5:5).

No doubt John turned around, expecting to see a roaring lion. Instead, he saw a Lamb as it had been slain. The Lamb stands revealed, still bearing the testimonial wounds of His vicarious death. We see His nature of humility, obedience, and surrender as the Lamb, that paid the price for sin. We see His ferocious nature as the Lion, that hates sin; and we also see His powerful strength to devour sin. He is the Lion-Lamb.

The Blood of the Lamb goes in both directions—the horizontal position of humility, obedience, and surrender, and the vertical position of authority and commanding power. When the Lion-Lamb nature is formed within us, we have Lamb's Blood that will give us power to stand in either position: as a roaring lion, well able to devour sin or a lamb with a will surrendered to obey. There are only two ways that God requires us to go. If we have the Blood of the Lion-Lamb on our will, then we can readily take either position. In some circumstances of life, we overcome the world, the self life, and the Devil, by assuming the humility position of surrender. In other situations we overcome these enemies only as we take the vertical position of immovable strength and authority.

In itself, the human will is completely contrary to the will of God. If God wants us to take a stand, we want to appear meek and humble. On the other hand, there are times when God asks us to humble ourselves, and not fight, but take the lowly position of surrender. Then our perverse human will stands erect and tries in every way to assert its authority and rights. But we have a Lion-Lamb who is well able, with His prevailing power, to bend our will or stand it up according to the will of God. His will becomes our will through the process of personal crucifixion.

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her

husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Romans 7:1-3),

When we take our stubborn will out to the Cross for crucifixion, and permit a death experience to take place there, the human will is liberated from its first husband (the perverted will of fallen Lucifer). Then it is in a position to be married to another man, Jesus Christ. This principle is taught in the Book of Romans.

1. Wrath

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come...(Revelation 11:18).

The word *wrath* means a desire (as a reaching forth of the mind), violent passion, justifiable abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath. Beloved, part of the Lion-Lamb's ministry is to manifest God's justifiable abhorrence of sin. He desires, with a violent holy passion, to take vengeance on those who have transgressed God's laws and rebelled against His Word. These stubborn rebellious ones will suffer the punishment of the Lamb's righteous indignation. Things are moving fast, now, for the finishing up of the judgments of God so that the millennial reign of Christ and His Bride might be established.

2. Dead Avenged

...and the time of the dead, that they should be judged...(Revelation 11:18).

Another part of the Lamb's ministry is manifested as He avenges the death of God's servants. God will punish their enemies, those that had persecuted and killed them.

3. Give Rewards

...and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great...(Revelation 11:18).

All, whether small or great, will receive then rewards for their faithfulness and for their good works.

4. Destruction

...and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth (Revelation 11:18).

When the seventh trumpet blows, it is the solemn announcement that the consummation of the destruction of God's enemies is at hand.

The Wild Vine, Apostate Israel, will be reaped, and the fruit of her works, which are filled with the blood of God's people, will be trodden in God's great winepress in Heaven and will be mixed with His wrath. The mixture of blood and wrath will be poured into the seven vials, which in turn, will be poured out quickly upon the earth. After these vials of God's wrath are poured out, the sixth seal is loosened. The Book of Matthew shows clearly that the sixth seal is opened immediately *after* the tribulation period.

Immediately *after the tribulation* of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken (Matthew 24:29).

This prophecy in Matthew will be fulfilled when the sixth seal is opened (Revelation 6:12-14). Then comes the silence at the seventh seal. The word *silence* means a hush, so a hush goes all over Heaven. The reason for the hush is that they are waiting for the command to charge. The Bridegroom and His Bride will come charging out of Heaven on the white horses of faith. Then Jesus Christ will stand on the Mount of Olives, and the mountain will split to form a valley of protection for those people who will flee out of Jerusalem just before her final destruction.

After these events have transpired, comes the battle of Armageddon, This is the destruction that follows the seventh trumpet. This will be the destruction of those who have destroyed the earth.

D. HEADSHIP REVEALED

In the Old Testament Tabernacle, the Lord's Headship was pictured by the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat. As long as Israel walked according to the leading and direction of the Headship, they were blessed and they were victorious against all of their enemies. Since God manifested His Headship on earth, then it is no surprise that His Headship is also manifested in Heaven.

1. Ark Seen

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:19).

We notice two things about what happened when the Temple was opened in Heaven. First of all, the Ark (representing the Headship of Jesus Christ) was SEEN. This word *seen* means to gaze with wide open eyes. No veil of separation hindered their vision, but rather, the Headship of the Ark was clearly revealed and seen. In the Old Testament Dispensation, the Ark of the Covenant was seen only at special times.

Too often we merely *think* we see things. However, when we actually see, perceive, and understand, then we can walk in the light of that perception. How often we profess to be walking in the will of God (under His divine Headship) when it is only an empty profession. If we evidence all kinds of rebellion, resentment, and accusations against God, His will, and His Headship when situations fail to please us, then we are not truly walking under His Headship. After we really see His JUSTICE, the omniscience, and the omnipotence of His Headship, then we can walk in the light of His Headship without a murmur or a complaint. No longer is the thought of His Headship a religious theory; it becomes a living reality in our inner heart. It gives us perfect rest and surrender to the will of God.

2. Witnesses

...and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:19).

Some terrible sufferings come as a witness that God's Headship has been seen. Lightning splits the heavens. Voices are heard. Thunderings rumble across the skies. The earth shakes, and great hail falls down upon the earth. These are witnesses that the Ark has been seen.

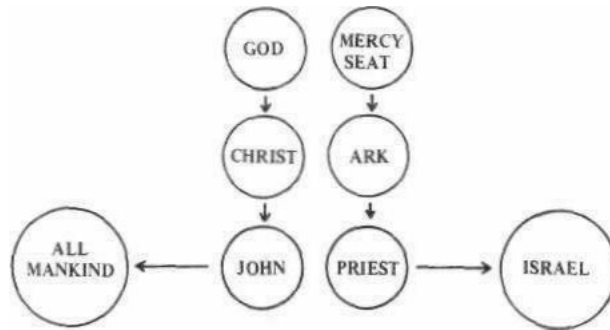
The Son suffered for the revelation of His Father's Headship, and those who see it now will witness similar experiences. Suffering and pain is not a sign of whether or not a person is in the will of God. We all suffer one way or another. It is especially blessed to suffer in the will of God, for each suffering becomes another step on the stairway to a closer and more intimate relationship with the Lord. In I Peter there is a Scripture which proves that there is a suffering in the will of God and a suffering out of the will of God:

For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing (I Peter 3:17).

How much better it is to suffer while doing the will of God as we walk under the Ark of His Headship, than to suffer while walking under the headship of our own carnal reasoning.

For better understanding of the order in which the revelation of the Headship of God and the Lamb was given to the Apostle John, it is necessary to look at the Apostle Paul's revelation and also the type and shadow found in the Mosaic Tabernacle.

ORDER OF HEADSHIP



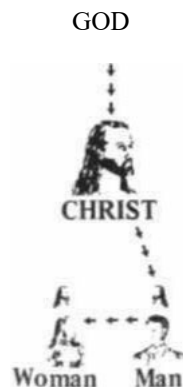
Jesus, in His mediatorial character and glorified humility, is at the head of mankind. He is not only the first of His kind, but He has been made both Lord and Christ. He has a Name above every name, and a name at which every knee of mankind must bow. Although Jesus has been deified and has a high office and superior authority, He has a Head, God His Father. Jesus Christ is the Head of all creation, but God is Jesus Christ's Head. All revelation of the Headship originates in God, who, in turn, reveals it to Christ. The Apostle John received his revelation from Christ, and then he passed it to all mankind.

We see the same order in the Mosaic Tabernacle, The Ark represented the head realm, or the Headship of Jesus Christ. The Mercy Seat became the Throne from which God ruled and reigned. In other words, the Ark became the head of the Tabernacle, but the Mercy Seat became the head of the Ark.

This is the same principle in regard to the order of headship in the Christian home. The Head of Christ is God, Christ is the Head of the man, and the man passes (not his carnal headship) the Headship of Christ to the woman.

ORDER OF HEADSHIP IN CHRISTIAN HOME

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God (I Corinthians 11:3).



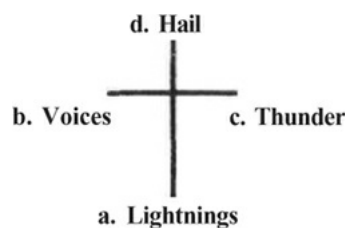
In this way there is one head of the house, and that Head is Christ who is under the Headship of God. It is this order of headship that John the apostle refers to in John 15:7: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." In other words, if as believers we abide under the Headship of Christ, even as He abode under His Father's Headship, then we have power and authority in our praying and "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." This kind of relationship insures the right kind of praying, for prayer out of carnal and selfish motives will go unanswered (James 4:3).

A sure guarantee for our prayers to be answered is to stay under the Ark, under His Headship. Then when He speaks a word of command, or a word of promise, we can move out under His authority, knowing without a shadow of a doubt that it shall be fulfilled. This kind of assurance comes from walking under the Lord's divine Headship. In this way there are no failures. Sometimes people wonder how to gain power with God in prayer. The answer is simple—walk under the Headship of the Lord abiding under the Ark. We need to learn to work where God is working, and our work shall never know failure or defeat.

Remember, there is more to this than just talking about it. This oneness of relationship will be tested often. The Lord is faithful to try us, for only in this way can we possibly know whether or not we are actually committed to walk under the Ark. As already mentioned, prosperity or success is no indication whatsoever of whether or not one is in the will of God.

When walking under the Ark, we will know many seasons of humility which will bring suffering, rejection, and criticism to us. These experiences expose the reality of our commitment to the will of God. Hard trials will not sway nor influence the soul who has *seen* the Ark of His Headship, for that soul will continue to press onward without a murmur or complaint. On the other hand, the soul who professes, but who does not actually possess this relationship, will question God and murmur and rebel over unfair circumstances when he is afflicted and tried. Walking under God's Headship does not mean that life will be all suffering, for there will also be seasons of exaltation, which will bring many experiences of blessings, prosperity, acceptance, and honor.

We always have a spiritual witness that confirms our relationship with the Ark of the Headship of the Lord. Likewise, there is a visible witness to John, when the Ark, the Headship of the Lord, is seen in Heaven. The following stature is a study on the fourfold witness which was given to John when he saw the Headship of the Ark in Heaven.



a. Lightnings

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:19).

The natural types the spiritual; the invisible is clearly understood by the visible creation (Romans 1:20). In the natural, lightning separates the rain clouds: therefore lightning symbolizes separation in the spiritual realm also.

In the testing and trials of his life, Job spoke “unadvisedly” with his lips because he had not seen the Headship of the Lord in his miserable and painful circumstances. God appoints many difficulties in life in order to work the separations that are essential to make us grow in God. When we are hard pressed, and the way is dark and obscure, then it is time to stand still and trust in the Lord. Circumstances will reveal whether or not we really believe that “all things work together for our good,” or whether we just have a religious philosophy.

Oh, how many fleshly attitudes and dispositions we must be separated from before we are spiritually mature enough to be in the Bride of Christ.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy (I Peter 4:12,13).

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, *if need be*, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (1 Peter 1:6,7).

b. Voices

What are these voices? We have learned from other portions of our study in the Book of Revelation, that this is the Bride's voice coming out of the Throne. This same interesting combination of lightnings and thunderings and

voices are seen in chapter four, verse five.

These voices (plural), are coming from the Throne. In chapter eight, when the angel fills his censer with fire from off the Altar and casts it down into the earth, the voices, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake are mentioned again. In chapter nineteen, verse five, the Bride's voice, from the Throne, extends an invitation to others to praise her God. The Bride is the one who has grown up to the head realm. She occupies the Throne with God and the Lamb.

Now as the seventh trumpet sounds, we see again, the light-rungs, the voices, the thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail. When the seventh vial of wrath is poured upon the earth in chapter sixteen (verses 17 and 18), again there are voices, and thunderings and lightnings, and a great earthquake; hail is mentioned in verse twenty-one.

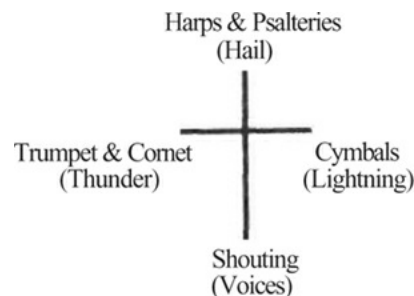
The Bride's voices speak out of her union with the Bridegroom. They are a witness of the Bride's union with the Ark and the Headship of the Lord. No effort is made in the revelation to explain what these voices say. Nevertheless, we can find clues elsewhere in the Scriptures that will give us an idea of what the voices are saying.

We know that God works by established, unchanging principles. The things which He did in eternity (yesterday, as it were) are the things which He does today. The things which He does tomorrow will always be consistent with what He has already done. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, the immutable One in whom there is not a shadow of turning.

A similar witness to the Headship is seen in the Old Testament in connection with the Ark of the Covenant. King David was bringing the Ark back to Jerusalem. The Ark was going to be *clearly seen* once again in its rightful place in the City of Jerusalem.

So David, and the eiders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of Obed-edom with joy. And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: David also had upon him an ephod of linen. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps (1 Chronicles 15:25-28),

The same basic principles of witnessing His Headship are seen here in I Chronicles. Although different words are used to identify the various witnesses, and though the order in which they witness changes, the basic principle is unchanged. There are always witnesses of lightning, voices, thunder, and hail when God's Headship is seen.



As David brought back the Ark, the people shouted over the Headship. Their voices were raised in praise and thanksgiving to God for the Ark. Inside the Ark, rested the Word of God written on the tables of stone. The shouting voices established new gratitude and appreciation for the Word. Then came the sounding of the trumpets and cornets and cymbals. The trumpets and cornets represent the thunder of union as God's Headship came to rest once more in Jerusalem. The cymbals represented the lightning, because the Hebrew word for *cymbals* means the ear getting red, lightning, fire, and light. With the return of God's Headship came the cymbals of lightning, which separated Israel from her own carnal headship. And finally there was the music of the harps and psalteries, which are a picture of humility, even as the hail represents the cold breath, the humility breath of God. When we know the symbolic meanings of these things in Scripture, things become very meaningful to us personally.

From the clue given in I Chronicles 15, we can safely assume that the voices that are heard in Revelation are

giving vent to their praise, gratitude, and adoration. The gratitude of the Bride for the Headship of God and the Lamb is so powerful and so precious that nobody but the Bridegroom seems to understand. The word *thanks* means to give assent, to give consent. Whenever we say, "Thank you, Jesus" in a situation, we are actually consenting to what He is doing.

This, then, is God's order of operation. First comes the lightning of separation, and if we are walking under His divine Headship, the separation is followed by the voice of praise and thanksgiving (giving our consent to the separation). We can experience separations, and yet we may not necessarily be giving our consent for them to happen. Forced separations, those which we refuse to accept in our heart, gain no spiritual ground for us. Sometimes separations only make us angry and resentful. If this is the case, we are not walking under the Headship of the Ark; for if we were, God would be hearing the witness of our voice of consent, our voice of praise, our voice of gratitude for the privilege of having this relationship with Him.

Beloved, when painful things come to us, we are prone to blame others and to react with a spirit of anger toward them. This proves that we are not living under the Ark. The person who is abiding under the Headship of the Lord takes ALL THINGS as they come from God. How else can ALL THINGS be profitable and work together for our GOOD and His GLORY? How else can we obey Ephesians 5:20: "Giving thanks always for ALL THINGS unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"? God's perfect will is to bless us into going on for Him. But, if we do not heed, then it is necessary for Him to send us trials, testings, and troubles in His permissive will. In each painful experience we have a new opportunity to accept the lightning separation from things in our carnal wills. Then we can give our praise, our consent, for His Headship in our life. This brings us to new union with God's will and a new humility. Whereas we are too often concerned with the *now*, the Lord is concerned with the end result.

c. Thunder

First comes the lightning of separation; then come the voices of praise and thanksgiving, the giving of consent to His Headship in ALL THINGS; following all this comes the thunder of union. When there is a new spiritual union of the soul with the will of God, there will be the witness of the thunder also. The Lord is faithful to plan circumstances for each individual in order to give him an opportunity for a lightning experience. If man accepts the lightning (separation) and follows it with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, then God is faithful to send the thunder that bears witness of a new degree of union with the Word, the Christ.

d. Had

In Revelation 11:19, the hail is the fourth witness that comes out of Heaven. We have already learned about the hot and cold breath of God. His hot breath speaks of exaltation and His cold breath of humility. We have much to learn before we can know true union with His humility. Although humility is a foreign attribute to the carnal man, Jesus beautifully reigned and ruled over the world, the flesh, and the Devil through His humility as He walked in this earth as the Son of Man. This same humility, the humility of the Lamb, is available to us. To produce His humility in our lives, the Lord appoints circumstances that bring the lightning of separation, which gives us opportunities to lift our voices of praise and consent for His Headship, thunder of new union with Him, and for the production of the hail of humility in our lives. Before exaltation must come humility. Before the Crown must come the Cross.

We see this same identical pattern when the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the newly built Temple in the time of Solomon. What a great time they had that day!

Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Juduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and *psalteries and harps*, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) It came even to pass, as the trumpeter:, and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their *voice* with the *trumpets* and *cymbals* and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good...(I Chronicles 5:12,13).

Once more we see the voices lifted up in praise, the thundering of the trumpets, the lightning of the cymbals, and the humility hail represented by the harps of humility and the psalteries. When God establishes principles of operation, we see them over and over in His Word. That is why lightning, praise, thunder and hail are witnesses to the Headship of the Ark when it is *seen*. It is because this is God's order.

If we permit these things to be formed in our lives, we shall experience the glory of the Lord filling our personal temples, just as Israel did when the Headship was established in Solomon's Temple.

...for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD: So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God (II Chronicles 5:13,14).

There will be a witness when the Headship of the Lord is seen in our life. It is easy to tell when people are going on for God. Their lives carry these same witnesses of their relationship to the Lord. On the other hand, there are some Christians who drag along, constantly murmuring and complaining over their lot in life. Obviously the Ark has not yet been *seen* by them. In fact, when the will of God is presented to them, there is only resistance and a general state of misery. One can easily see why all Christians are not going to be in the Bride of Christ. They would be utterly miserable in that union.

e. Earthquake

There is a fifth witness, distinguished from the other four, in that this witness is seen on earth, not in Heaven. This, too, is a witness of His Headship. The earth began to shake and quake, for with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, it is now time for the Lion-Lamb to take over the Headship of the world. His Headship shall be visibly manifested in the millennial reign of Christ.

We see the witness of the earthquake working in our personal walk with the Lord; this is demonstrated when we pray the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth (my personal earth), as it is in heaven.' Before the Headship of Jesus Christ is fully established in our lives, there will be many earth-shaking experiences. These earthquakes will prepare the way for God's kingdom to be established in us.

The physical demonstration of trembling, shaking, quaking in our natural body is a common manifestation of the power of the Spirit of God and His workings. Shaking is just the outward evidence of the inward workings of God. Beloved, the Word from God's Headship causes earthquakes in our fleshly nature. The writer of the Book of Hebrews refers to the shaking power of God's Word.

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: (Hebrews 12:25-28).

In our flesh we have many hard, immovable attitudes and opinions. There are times when other people cannot persuade us to change our proud, rebellious and unmerciful stance. But our immovableness will be moved when God, in His mercy, sends a situation or a circumstance which will cause our obstinate opinions to crumble and fall. There is nothing in our will that God cannot shake. Only Jesus Christ, the Rock of truth is unshakable. As we allow God's Headship to shake us loose from our proud and shakable human will, He sets our feet firmly upon the Rock that cannot be shaken. Hallelujah!

The witness of lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquakes and great hail accompany the revealing of the Ark of His testament in the Temple in Heaven. When His Headship is seen in its authoritative position, these witnesses can be silent no longer. They burst forth into a demonstration of the anticipated victory that the Ark (the Headship) will bring when Jesus Christ and His Bride go out to battle the Antichrist and his allies. When the Ark is in its proper position it brings decisive victory to its followers. The battle of Jericho vividly demonstrates this.

There was only one time when Israel conquered her enemies by carrying the Ark of the Covenant into battle at the command of God. This was at the battle of Jericho. This was a beautiful shadow and type of the victory which will be won through the Headship of Jesus Christ at the battle of Armageddon.

At Jericho we see the same witnesses accompanying the Ark. They had the lightning, the thunder, the voices, and the hail. Israel had to demonstrate these witnesses before God put the power of the Ark into operation, which achieved the victory for them.

The story is told in Joshua 6:1-16. Jericho was a well fortified city. Even though the Lord had said to Joshua "I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour," the city appeared impenetrable. Nevertheless, because Israel was obedient, the mighty wall of Jericho fell, and the city was taken. Israel implicitly followed God's directions in every detail.

The Lord told Israel to walk about the whole city once each day for six days, and then on the seventh day to encompass the city seven times. What strange battle tactics! The number of times that Israel marched about the city depicts the union between the number six (the number of man) and seven (the complete one, Jesus Christ). In this union we come up with the number thirteen, which is the number of the Bride and Bridegroom relationship.

The world calls thirteen an unlucky number, but on the contrary, it is the most blessed number of all. No doubt the superstition connected with number thirteen has been fostered by God's arch enemy, fallen Lucifer.

So then, when Israel demonstrated her marriage union with God, He promised to give the victory over Jericho. In like manner the battle of Armageddon will not be fought until after the marriage union has taken place in Heaven, when the number six (man's number) has joined number seven (Jesus Christ's number) in marriage union, when man and Jesus Christ have been made one in will, spirit, mind, heart, and purpose.

Specific instructions were followed in Israel's march around the city of Jericho. First came the warriors. They made a way for the Headship, as the procession began its march around the mighty wall. Following the warriors came seven priests carrying seven rams horns. Then came the Ark of the Covenant, followed by the people.

The witnesses that are seen when God's Headship comes into view are seen on this occasion also. The lightning of separation was in the presence of the Ark, for on it abode the Shekinah Glory of God; the thunder of union was in the trumpet sound of the ram's horn. For six days the people walked in silence, enduring the humiliating heckling (the hailstones of the icy breath of God's humility) that the citizens of Jericho heaped upon them.

What an utterly foolish spectacle they presented. The citizens of Jericho saw a strange lot of nomads shuffling along in silence behind their warriors, while a strange looking, mysterious box was being carried on the shoulders of four oddly dressed men. Day after day their pattern of behavior was the same. On the seventh day the same parade took place, only this time they walked seven times in succession, making a total of thirteen times that the city was circled. Thirteen times Jericho had been encompassed by the lightning of separation from the Ark. Thirteen times Jericho had heard the witness of union as the priests blew their trumpet horns of consecration. Thirteen times Israel had endured the humiliation from the heckling crowd (the hailstones). Finally the trumpet sounded LONG, and as with one voice (the voice of unity between the Bride and Bridegroom), the Ark of the Lord went into action.

Hebrew tradition tells us that an earthquake took place at Jericho which opened up the ground. We know for certain all of the city's wall was swallowed up in the earth. There was one exception, the part of the wall where the house of Rahab stood. Her house was spared because she had protected the spies of Israel.

This battle was won by the Ark (the Headship of Jesus Christ). Preceding the victory at Jericho was the witness of God's Headship. This principle was demonstrated here by the children of Israel, and it will be fulfilled, literally, by the Bridegroom and the Bride at the battle of Armageddon. Before the victory at Armageddon, we see the same witnesses: the lightning of separation from the Shekinah Glory of the Ark, the thunder of the trumpet horns by the priest which declare their union with the Ark, the voice of unity of the Bride shouting forth the praises of God, the hailstones of humility, and the earthquake, which is the witness in the earth. Principle wise, the witnesses are the same.

The Headship of the Ark is effective only when it is preceded by the witnesses of lightning, thunder, voices, and hail. Saul's experience with the Ark illustrates this fact. Saul never walked by the Headship of the Lord. He never bothered to go before the high priest with the Urim and Thummim to enquire about the will of God. Neither was he much interested in the lightning of separation from his carnal will and mind, nor did he evidence much interest in the thunder of union by the trumpet. Neither was he much concerned about confessing the Lord's Headship by the voice of praise and thanksgiving, thereby giving his consent to the will of God in his life.

Yet when he faced the Philistines in battle, King Saul decided to call for the Ark. The Ark came, but there was

no lightning, no thunder, no voices, no hail, no earthquake. Instead of victory, the Philistines defeated them horribly and stole the Ark.

There is only one way to approach the Ark. We cannot simply step in with our fleshly arrogance and command the Ark to work for us. We must come God's way, which is through the lightning of separation, into the thunder of a new union with Him, and lay hold of some humility hailstones on the way. Only then will we have the voice of praise and thanksgiving that consents, saying, "Thank you, Jesus, for every step. Thank you for every suffering, for every hardship. Thank you for all the heckling and ridicule."

This is why the Headship of the Lord works for some, but does not work for others. Without the proper preparation and the correct accompaniment to the Headship of the Lord, there is no power in, nor performance of the Ark. But when the lightning, thunder, voices, hail, and the earthquake are present to bear witness of union with the Ark, then the Ark moves in power and authority.

The children of Israel did not arrange this battle strategy at Jericho. God used this battle to make a demonstration of what will happen at the battle of Armageddon. Even as it was in Jericho, the army of the Lord will not have to lift up a sword. The sharp sword of the Word will come out of the mouth of the Bridegroom, smiting the nations. Zechariah gives us an insight as to the effect of the sword from the Bridegroom's mouth.

And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth (Zechariah 14:12).

The remainder of their flesh will be eaten by the fowls of the earth at the great supper of God. All this is described in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation.

In conclusion, let us remember that the Headship of Jesus Christ is not going to come to us at our fleshly command. Were the Ark to come to us under these conditions, it would mean only judgment and a curse, just as it did to King Saul when he sent for the Ark without having the necessary witnesses.

The Son of God had to suffer for the Headship of the Father in His life. However, the way of humility led to exaltation. To be in the Bride of Christ we, too, must be willing to suffer in walking under God's Headship.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE WOMAN SEEN IN HEAVEN (Revelation 12:1-6)

AND there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered (Revelation 12:1,2).

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven...” The word *wonder* means a miracle, a sign, a token, to signify and to indicate. The identity of the woman mentioned in these verses has given rise to much erroneous speculation.

Some teach that this woman is the Virgin Mary, when she was pregnant with the Christ Child. This theory is impossible in the light of the key of knowledge found in Revelation 1:1: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass*.” The same key is mentioned again in Revelation 4:1; “...I will shew thee *things which must be hereafter*.”

Many years before John had received the vision of the Woman in question, the Virgin Mary had given birth to the Christ Child, Jesus had grown to maturity and had died on the Cross, been buried and resurrected. Moreover, a group of an hundred and twenty beheld Jesus when a cloud received Him into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father. This was all past history before John was exiled to Patmos,

Since the Book of Revelation is concerned with *future* events, then we know that the Woman is not the Virgin Mary.

Another key which helps to interpret the symbology of the Book of Revelation is the knowledge that some of the scenes take place on the earth, while others take place in Heaven. In the case of this Woman, the Word clearly states that she is in Heaven; therefore, this cannot be an earthly, physical experience. Once more this rules out the Virgin Mary, for she travailed and gave birth to a physical, human child on earth. The Woman in Revelation twelve is a spiritual personage, and the child that she travails to birth is a spiritual child. The Woman is strangely clothed with the sun, moon, and stars, which further indicates that this is a spiritual scene. No literal woman could be clothed with the natural sun, moon, and stars.

Others hold to the philosophy that the Woman is the nation of Israel. However, the nation of Israel is on the earth, and hence could not be clothed with the literal sun, moon, and stars. Neither can this refer to the spiritual experience of the nation of Israel, for she rejected her Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Rejection of the true Messiah will eventually result in the nation of Israel's acceptance of the Antichrist. Therefore, Israel cannot be living in the heavenlies in the beautiful spiritual experience described here.

Neither is the Woman a picture of the Church as a whole. How blessed it would be if the whole Church of Jesus Christ were living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Unfortunately, many believers in the Church are living in carnality and the things of the world. Although the Lord Jesus Christ has provided a heavenly position for *all* of His people, all do not experientially avail themselves of this opportunity. “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). In all honesty, we must acknowledge that the entire Church is not living in this place. Many Christians fail to take time to sit at the precious feet of Jesus and to ascend into the heavenlies, through the Word and prayer every day. Not all of the Church, nor all Christians, are going to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ.

Truth never leaves people neutral, and certainly the truth that the Bride is a select group out of the Church of Jesus Christ creates one of the greatest upheavals in Christendom today. Some Christians react with anger and unbelief, bitterly rejecting all scriptural evidence of the truth. They prefer to continue in their traditional,

anesthetized state of lukewarmness. Other Christians react in the opposite way to this same truth. Their hearts are stirred to study, pray, and fast. With a new vision they begin to seek added growth in God. The same truth that some Christians despise will cause others to run earnestly for the Prize, the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At natural weddings, other people are present besides the Bride. The same will be true at the wedding of the Lamb and His Bride. Besides the Bride and Bridegroom there will be queens, concubines, virgins, relatives, and friends, for example (Song of Solomon 6:8,9).

The virgins are the bridesmaids at the wedding. The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew records the experience of the virgins on earth. The entire group of bridesmaids sleep, but of the virgins, five are wise and carry an extra supply of Holy Ghost oil in their vessels along with their lamps. When the cry rings out "The Bridegroom cometh!" the five wise virgins light their lamps and go to the wedding. But the remaining five, who are foolish, hear the cry and go to buy oil because their lamps had gone out. They return with the oil, but find that the marriage door has been shut. While the virgins, the Bridesmaids, sleep, others are awake. Someone utters the midnight cry. Beloved, it is the Bride. She has not been sleeping, but has been busily preparing herself for the coming of her Bridegroom.

The Woman who is seen in Heaven is the portion of the Church which chooses to live in the heavenlies with Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom. She is the part of the Church that presses into the marriage relationship, into oneness of spiritual relationship With Him. This is not the whole Church, for part of the Church remains on earth and goes into the tribulation period. The portion of the Church remaining in the tribulation period are Christians who fail to be overcomers in their Christian walk and conduct. They choose rather to live a selfish, carnal and self-willed Christian life. Neither do they see any necessity for spiritual growth, nor do they register any interest in degrees of reward which can be theirs in eternity. Since the Rapture is limited to overcomers, the fleshly, carnally minded Christians are left to enter into the tribulation.

For better understanding of the Woman in chapter twelve, let us consider the dealings of God with the nation of Israel. When Israel was in Egypt, she was called a Son (Exodus 4:22). When she was in the wilderness, she was called a Church (Acts 7:38). When she was in Canaan's land, she was called a Wife (Ezekiel 16:32). Thus we see three phases of spiritual experience in Israel's relationship to God: as a Son, as a Church, and as a Wife.

Natural Israel was not called the *Wife* of God until she entered Canaan's land. Thus her experiences from Egypt to Canaan's land are a picture for believers who desire to grow spiritually that they might be in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Israel knew God as a son knows his father. She knew how to live in subjection and surrender to the Headship of God as her father. Israel also knew God as a Church, which God blesses with gifts, His Headship, and the necessary instruction to lead her out of the wilderness. Finally, Israel knew God as a wife knows her Husband in being blessed in the fruitfulness of a oneness relationship after she reached Canaan's land.

Just as God governed and directed Israel from Egypt to Canaan's land, so will He do for us today, if we follow on to know Him.

God's principles of operation never change. It is stated of Him "...with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). Because of this fact, we can study God's ways of dealing with men under the Old Testament Dispensation, knowing that His dealing in the New Testament Dispensation and in the future eternal Perfect Age will be consistent with what He has done in the past.

The Apostle Paul further explains our need for the Old Testament Scriptures. They are pictures, shadows, types for our instruction and for our examples.

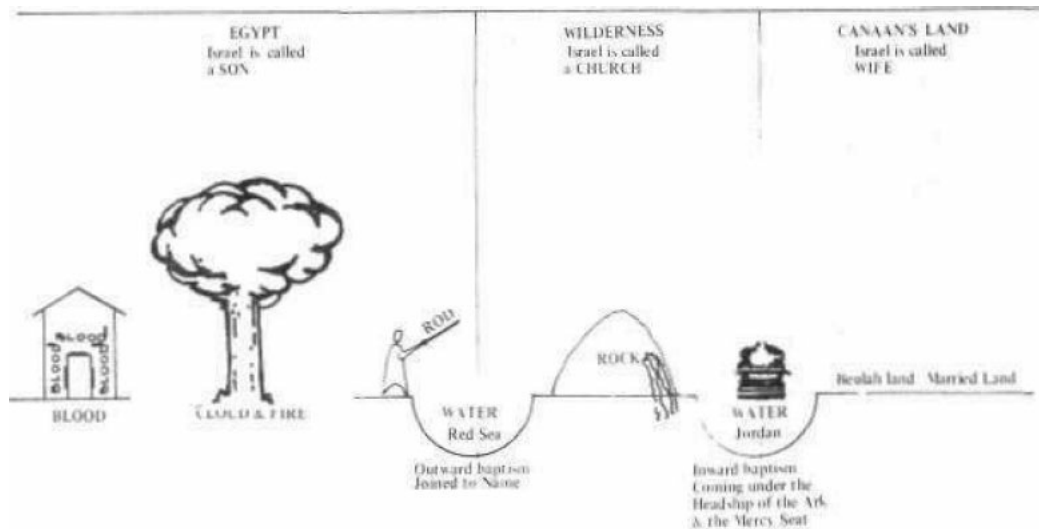
Now these things were our examples [our figures] to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted...Neither be ye idolators, as were some of them;...Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed...Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted,...Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured,...Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (resemblance, type, a model for imitation, or instance for warning, fashion, figure, form, pattern, print): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come (I Corinthians 10:6-11).

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope (Romans 15:4).

Timothy also stressed the same point by stating "ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be

perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16,17).

With this in mind, let us examine in detail God's leading of Israel from Egypt to the promised land. We shall see that her journey falls into three phases. In each phase she increases in her spiritual relationship with God. However, we shall note that not all of Israel reached the last phase of the journey or entered into Canaan's land.



We shall study Israel's experiences because her relationship to God is a beautiful picture and pattern of the spiritual journey which we take as New Testament believers. As our pattern, Israel enlightens our understanding about the wonder seen in Heaven, the Woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars.

Jacob played a vital part in the story of Israel's nationhood. Out of the loins of Jacob came the twelve sons who built the twelve tribes of Israel. When God began dealing with the twelve tribes as a nation, we find Israel in bondage in the land of Egypt (a type of the world). While in Egypt, Israel was given the spiritual experiences which brought her out of the land of bondage and which formed the foundation upon which all of her other spiritual experiences rested. This foundation consisted of blood, fire, and water.

Israel's first step of obedience was when she killed a lamb and applied its blood upon the two doorposts and the lintel of the door of the house. This blood covering protected every believing Israelite from the plague of death that fell upon all the firstborn of man and beast throughout the land of Egypt. With the blood covering on the door, their feet shod and their staves in hand, the Israelites consumed the whole roasted lamb, for it was time for her exodus under the divinely anointed leadership of Moses. The Pascal Lamb was a type of the vicarious death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Israel's next spiritual experience as she journeyed out of Egypt was with the cloud and fire. Hovering overhead was the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. In type and shadow Israel experienced the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is provided for all New Testament believers. The nation of Israel was "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Corinthians 10:2). The Shekinah Glory of God indwelt that cloud. The same cloud that brought light and warmth to Israel, brought darkness and confusion to the Egyptians.

The Holy Ghost still has the same twofold aspect. People who have received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost testify to the blessings and glory that it brings to their lives. At the same time, Christians who reject the necessity or the reality of such an experience continue to walk in the darkness and confusion that covers people who resist the leadings of God's Word and God's Spirit.

The second phase of Israel's journey brought her to the edge of the Red Sea, into a place of no escape. Mountains surrounded her on either side, the pursuing Egyptians closed all hope of retreat to the rear, and an uncrossable Red Sea spread before them. The situation was acute from all natural appearances. But God was leading His people to Canaan's land, and with God nothing is impossible.

In obedience to God's command, Moses stretched forth the rod in his hand and divided the Red Sea. This rod bore the name of Aaron the high priest. However, the name was still in the invisible at this time. Later, this very rod with the visible name of Aaron written upon it was laid before the LORD, along with the rods bearing the names of the princes of the other eleven tribes. Out of the twelve rods, Aaron's was the only one that supernaturally budded,

blossomed, and bore fruit in one night. This was done to show the life, beauty, fragrance, and power of the Name of our spiritual High Priest, Jesus Christ.

The Red Sea began to move by the power and authority of the name that was on the rod. God congealed the waters into a heap on either side by freezing them with the cold breath out of His mouth. Then the hot breath of God passed through the center and made a dry path for the multitude (numbering about 3 million, plus herds and flocks) to cross the Red Sea dry shod.

The significance of the rod is in the name it bore, for Aaron's name represented the Name of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ. In like manner, the Name of JESUS opens the pool of His death for us (baptism in water which is burial with Christ). Just as Israel came under the authority of that priestly rod to complete her exodus out of Egypt, we also come to our own personal Red Sea experience. We are stalled in our journey toward spiritual maturity until we take on the Name of Jesus in water baptism, which in turn opens His death and life to us. The life, beauty, fragrance, and power of the Name of Jesus prepares us to take on His death daily and to enter into new resurrection life and union with Him.

It took blood, fire, and water to liberate the nation of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. These were God's good gifts to Israel; and in this relationship with God, Israel is called a SON.

And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my SON, even my firstborn. And I say unto thee, Let my SON go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn (Exodus 4:22,23).

God uses our own sins to punish us. This accounts for the mandatory terms given to Pharaoh, God demanded of Pharaoh that he let His Son, Israel, go; and if he did not, God would smite Pharaoh's son. Pharaoh had laid his oppressing hand upon God's son (Israel); therefore, God was justified in putting his hand of judgment upon Pharaoh's son.

After Israel came through these three experiences: Blood (passover), Fire (the cloud of the Spirit of God), and Water (the Red Sea baptism), she found herself in a new relationship with God. She was, then, in the wilderness, the second phase of her journey. Here Israel was called a CHURCH for the first time. While in her wilderness journey, Israel received the revelation of the full stature of Jesus Christ as set forth by the Tabernacle. In the wilderness Israel drank from the spiritual Rock, the Christ, the Word, the God of Truth.

Moreover, brethren, ! would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ (I Corinthians 10:1-4).

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he (Deuteronomy 32:4).

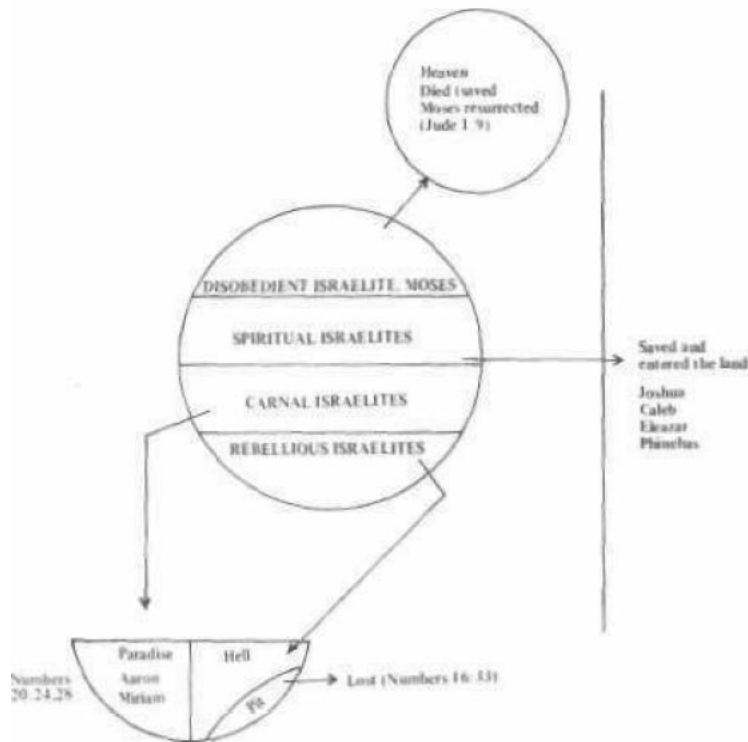
Israel was now called a Church. We are particularly interested in the Church phase of Israel's experience, for it confirms our interpretation of the identity of the Woman in the twelfth chapter of Revelation.

This is he, that was in the CHURCH in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the Lively oracles to give unto us (Acts 7:38).

God's perfect will was for each person to let the spiritual water out of the Rock work its nature of truth in his heart. If each one had done this, all of the members of this Church would have loved, accepted, and spoken the truth concerning God's headship over them. It is regrettable that just a small minority had this spiritual experience with God. We know this is true because God denied entrance into Canaan's land to the majority of the first generation of the Israelites who came out of Egypt. The individual members of the Church in the wilderness evidence various degrees of spiritual maturity, which show a distinct separation within Israel as a church.

WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE - CHURCH

CANAAN'S LAND



The Church in the wilderness did not automatically possess Canaan's land simply because she had possessed the relationship with God as Son when she left Egypt, or because she had become a church in the wilderness. A portion of the Church backslid on God. Their murmurings and complainings progressed to open rebellion. The final destination for this group was the pit. They lost out with God altogether, for they completely rejected God's Headship over His Church.

Others, because of their carnality, wandered in the wilderness for forty years until they died and were buried there. Their spirits and souls went to Paradise. Although they were saved, their unbelief in God's Headship at Kadesh-barnea kept them from entering the promised land (Numbers 14:22,23). Even Moses, the great servant and prophet of God, because of disobedience failed to reach the promised land. He, too, died in the wilderness, but God bestowed honor upon him by sending Michael, the Archangel, to raise him from the dead. Hence, he was seen by Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus.

Keep in mind that all of Israel had the blood; they all had experienced the cloud and fire, and had come through the water. Yet not all of them possessed Canaan's land. In fact, only four of the original adult group entered the promised land, plus the new generation who were born during the forty years of wilderness wanderings.

Thus, out of the Church in the wilderness came four classes of people: first, the backsliders who lost out entirely and went to Hell and to the Pit; secondly, those who died as believers and went to Paradise; thirdly, Moses, who was resurrected and went to Heaven; and fourthly, those who went on to possess the prize, which was Canaan's land. Only these were called the Wife of God.

When Israel crossed Jordan, she entered into the third phase of her spiritual experience and relationship with God. The name *Jordan* means to descend, to go downward, to fall, to bring down, to sink, subdue. In order to enter Canaan's land, the Israelites had to descend into the depths of the Jordan River. As the priests, holding the Ark, stood in the middle of the river, the Israelites passed under the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat.

The Ark was a picture of the Headship of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Mercy Seat represented the Headship of God. Israel demonstrated her espousal to the Lord's Headship as she passed through single file beneath the uplifted Ark. God called the promised land *Beulah land*, which was married land. Israel was now called *wife*, and God dealt with her accordingly. In this new relationship, He no longer dealt with her as a Son, nor as a Church, but as a WIFE, as His Bride.

The sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel gives many beautiful pictures that show how the Lord, as a spiritual Husband,

provided Israel with the comeliness of His own character and nature. But Israel began to trust in her own beauty and played the part of the harlot by committing whoredoms against her spiritual Husband. So the Lord spoke to Israel saying:

And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy. And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places: they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare (Ezekiel 16:38,39).

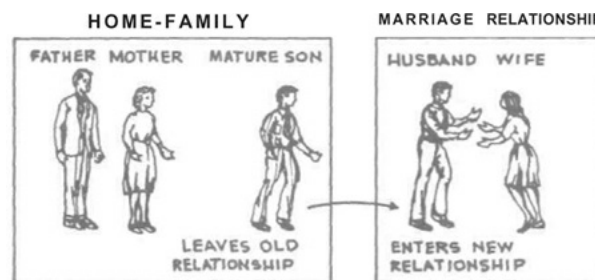
Israel was guilty of whoredom, naturally, as well as spiritually. She took the oil and the incense and the things that God had given her with which to worship Him, her spiritual Husband. Instead she poured them out unto idols upon every high hill and under every tree. Thus she played the part of a spiritual harlot. She was guilty of idolatry, or spiritual adultery. She had broken her marriage vow to God, her spiritual husband. This is why God is going to burn Jerusalem with fire when she compounds her spiritual adultery by accepting the Antichrist, the strange husband.

We have seen the different degrees of relationship which Israel experienced in her spiritual and natural journey with God. Although she was called CHURCH in the wilderness phase, the individual people fell into different spiritual categories. Therefore their eternal destinations varied. Some died a premature death because of disobedience and never made it to Canaan's land. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam are examples. They died as believers; however, they missed the prize. Others, for example, who participated in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, died under God's sudden judgment and went down to the pit. But there were those who made it to the prize and possessed Canaan's land. This same situation exists in the Church of Jesus Christ today. We see various spiritual distinctions among the believers. In the New Testament, the Church is also called the BODY of Christ. We find no scriptural basis, whatsoever, for the assumption that all of the Church, or the Body of Christ, is going to be the Bride.

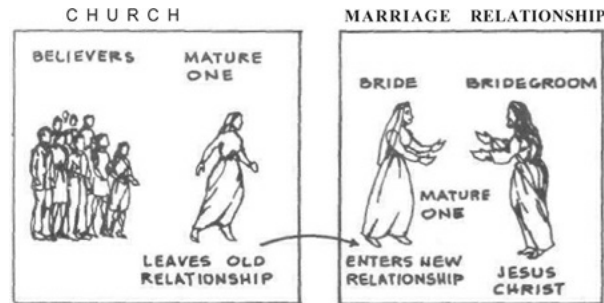
Let us examine the one Scripture that the religious world uses to try to prove that the Church is the Bride.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:31,32).

In this text, the Apostle Paul shows that when a man grows to physical maturity and is ready for marriage, he must leave his parents' home and establish a new relationship of oneness with his wife.



Paul says that this is a picture of Christ and the Church; yet the mystery is in the fact that some, Paul says, are mature enough to leave their child relationship, their parental relationship (the Church) and enter into a new relationship as wife. The ones in the Church who grow into spiritual maturity will be counted worthy to leave the relationship that they knew with the Church, and enter into marriage relationship with the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.



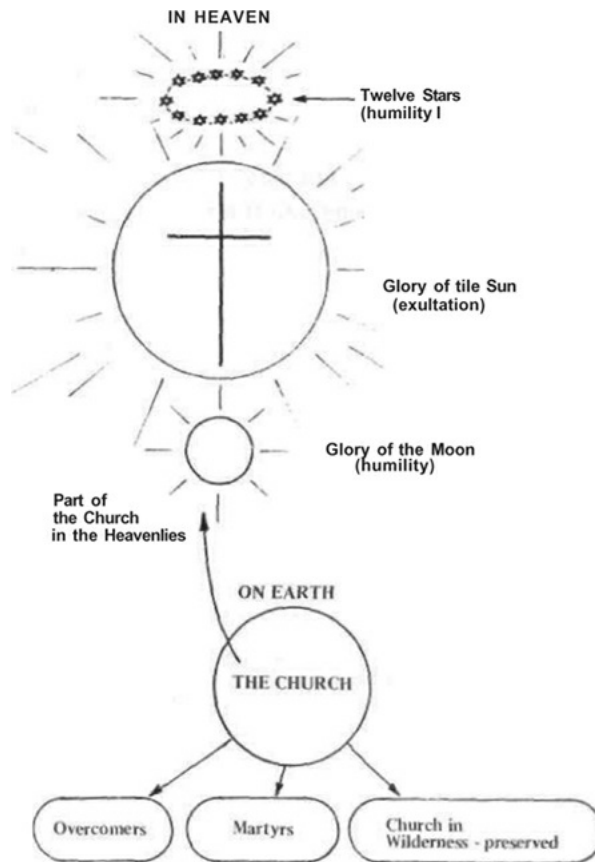
It is indeed a mystery how *all* Israel had the experience of blood, fire and water in Egypt; all had the leadership of the cloud and fire, the Manna, the water from the Rock, the glory of God, the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and yet some rebelled to the point of backsliding and went to the Pit. Because others doubted God's Word and His nature, they disobeyed His commandments, which sent them to premature graves. However, there were a few who grew into spiritual maturity and possessed Canaan's land, married land.

The different reactions of God's people to the same diet, the same power, the same leadership is indeed a mystery. Likewise in the Church today, Jesus Christ has given the same Blood, the same Holy Ghost, the same Name (Jesus), the same sixty-six books of the Bible to His Church; and yet we see the same mysterious reactions among His people. Some Christians try to rationalize away the responsibility of personally laying hold of these spiritual experiences by saying they were only for the early Church. Others fear being ostracized by their churches if they accept any doctrine that is contrary to their traditional teachings. Still others love their own will and their own ways so much that they never cease longing for the things that they have left in the world. But there is *one* in the Church who thirsts and hungers for all that the Lord has. She longs to be under His Headship. She longs to please Him and be one with Him in spiritual marriage union. This is the Bride.

The Church is said to be the body of the Lord. When God prepared a Bride for the first Adam, He took only a small portion of Adam's body (church) and mysteriously worked until that portion stood up in full maturity in the image and likeness of Adam, as it were. The first Adam is a picture of the second Adam, Jesus Christ. Since God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we know that this principle applies spiritually to the Bride of Jesus Christ. She will be a small portion of His Body (the Church), but she will feed on His Word and bring her will under subjection to His Headship until she stands up in the full mature stature of Jesus Christ. God's principles of operation, the shadows, types He has drawn out for us, and the direct references of His Word, all prove that the Church as a whole is NOT the Bride of Christ.

Some of the Church will backslide even though they have partaken of the Blood, Fire, and Water. Some Christians will die as believers and go to Heaven because they have their foundation, Jesus Christ, but their fleshly works are consumed when tried by the fire (I Corinthians 3:10-17). Nevertheless, the Church has some overcomers who grow to maturity in God. These mature ones are willing to descend into the depths of humility and come under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who enter into the spiritual promised land and become one with Him both in heart and will in this life are privileged to know the Bride and Bridegroom relationship now and in eternity.

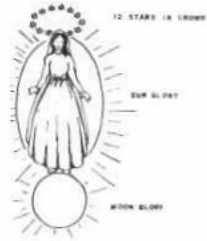
From day to day the Bride of Christ is preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb, when her Bridegroom will publicly acknowledge her relationship with Him. She will be one with Him in eternity.



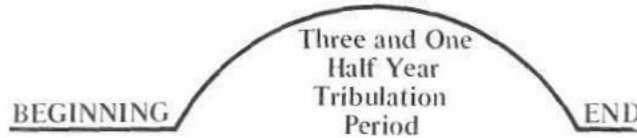
The Woman described in the first two verses of Revelation twelve represents the part of the Church that is the Bride. She is seated in the heavenlies with Christ, travailing in birth; therefore, we know that she is giving birth to spiritual children in Zion. In verse six we also see the Woman fleeing into the wilderness. The Woman who flees is still the Church, but she is the portion of the Church who missed the Rapture, and who will be miraculously preserved during the reign of the Antichrist.

Even as Israel, the Church, was divided in the wilderness, likewise, the Woman, the Church of Jesus Christ, is going to be divided into different groups. Right before the tribulation, part of the Church (out of which comes the Bride, the man child, and the rest of the wedding party) is caught away. She is spared the agonies and sufferings of the Great Tribulation. But part of the Church (the woman who is seen fleeing into the wilderness) is still on earth during the tribulation.

The Antichrist will prevail over some of the saints both spiritually and physically, for some will deny Jesus and accept the Beast. These saints will go to the Lake of Fire with the Antichrist. Then there is a group of saints over whom the Beast will prevail physically. These saints will stand true to Jesus and die a martyr's death. But there are some who will be supernaturally preserved throughout this dreadful time of God's judgment on earth.



The Woman seen in Heaven is the Bride part of the church of Jesus Christ, The man child that she travailed to birth speaks of the saints who grew to the shoulder realm of spiritual stature.



The Woman seen fleeing into the wilderness is the part of the church that misses the Rapture and is miraculously preserved through the tribulation.

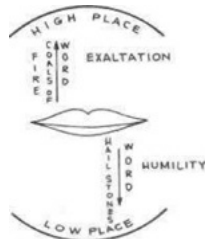
The Woman seen as *a great wonder in Heaven* is a very special woman. Her description clearly sets her apart as the Bride of Christ. She is clothed with the brilliant sun glory; the moon glory is under her feet, and she wears a crown of twelve stars of humility glory upon her head.

How did the Bride obtain her clothing? How was it formed? What did the Bride have to do in order to shine like the sun, stand on the light of the moon, and wear twelve stars upon her head? Her description has to do with God's great principle of humility and exaltation. Every aspect of God's nature can be classified in one or the other of these two ways: either as humility or as exaltation. The purpose of our Christian walk is to have God's nature formed within us. Therefore, we must walk in His way of humility, which will fit us to be clothed with the glory of His exaltation. The Bride walked this way; that is why we see her clothed as the sun.

In order to understand these two sides of God more clearly, let us examine some natural examples of this principle which God uses in His Word. First of all let us state that humility belongs to the great depths of God's nature, and exaltation belongs to the tremendous heights of His nature.

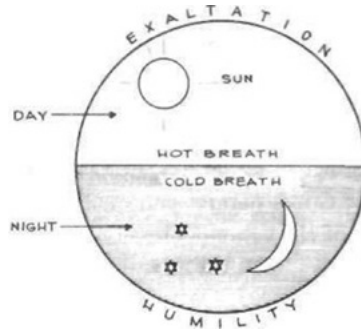
Romans 1:20 says that the invisible is understood by the natural, or visible. For our first natural example of the two sides of God's nature, let us study the Psalmist's description of what comes out of God's mouth.

The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire (Psalm 18:13).



Cold always seeks the low place in the natural. Therefore, the cold symbolized by the hailstones denotes the humility side of God's Word. Heat from coals of fire always rises and seeks the high place in the natural. Thus, heat, symbolized by the coals of fire denotes the exaltation side of God's Word.

Another natural example of this same divine principle is God's portrayal of night and day as humility and exaltation. Since the moon and the stars rule in the night season, in the cold season as it were, they represent the humility side of God's Word also. The sun typifies the exaltation side because it rules in the day, or the hot season.



Thus, we see that God's humility side is depicted by these things in the natural: hailstones, cold, night, moon, and stars. His exaltation side is pictured by coals of fire, hot, day, and the brilliant sun. It was as the Bride became acquainted with the humility light and the exaltation glory of God that she was clothed as we see her revealed to John, with the moon under her feet, her clothing as the sun, and her crown of twelve stars upon her head.

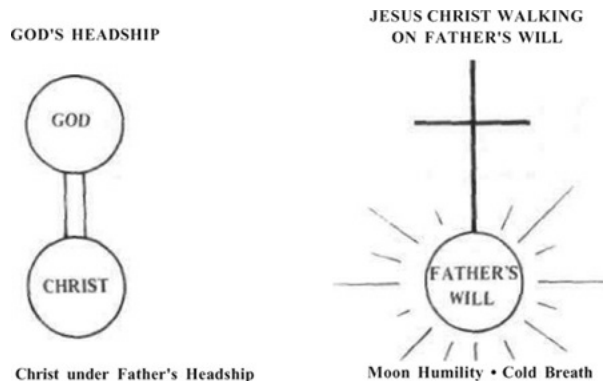
Jesus' experiences in His earthly walk exemplify the Bride's walk, and show us how she obtained her clothing. The Bride was conformed into the image of her husband. So Jesus, too, was clothed in the same fashion. He had the moon light of His Father's humility under His feet; the sun glory of His Father's Headship clothed Him, and upon His Head He wore a crown of twelve stars, a crown of humility ruling power.

First of all, we see that Jesus walked in the will of His Father and did the works of His Father. Though Jesus had His own human will, He willingly walked in the light of His Father's will, which was a way of humility, a way of crucifixion. Jesus said of Himself:

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own WILL, but the **WILL** of the Father which hath sent me (John 5:30).

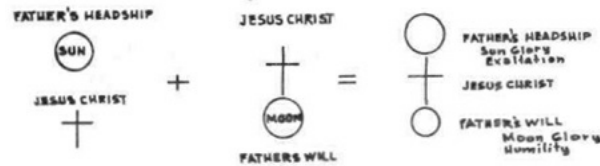
All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I **WILL** in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own **WILL**, but the **WILL** of him that sent me, And this is the Father's WILL which sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the **WILL** of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him may have everlasting life: and I **WILL** raise him up at the last day (John 6:37-40).

God is *the Head* of Jesus Christ, but He was willing to become a way for Jesus to walk on. He was willing to furnish His will, the light of His humility way as a foundation for the Son's works.

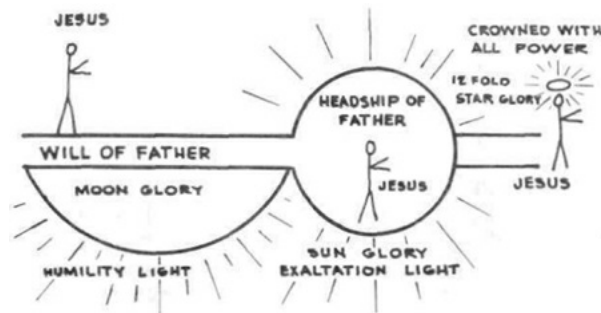


That was why Jesus could say, "...my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34).

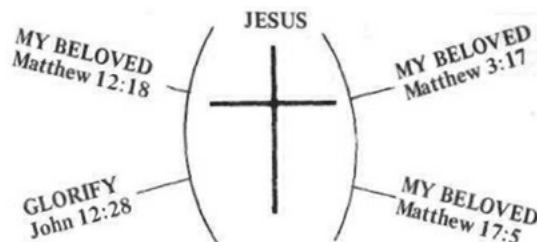
As Jesus walked in the Father's will, setting His own will aside, He was crowned with the Father's Headship.



Jesus walked His earthly journey in order to become a Way for us, just as His Father's will was a Way for Him. When Jesus became a Way, by keeping His will joined to the Father's will, then the Father could walk on Jesus and work through Him. That is why it can be said that the Head of Jesus (typed by the Ark of the Covenant) is the Father's footstool (I Chronicles 28:2). Walking in the Father's will crowned Jesus with the sun glory of the Father's Headship. This prepared Jesus to be crowned with the twelvefold star glory of governmental power, or all power.

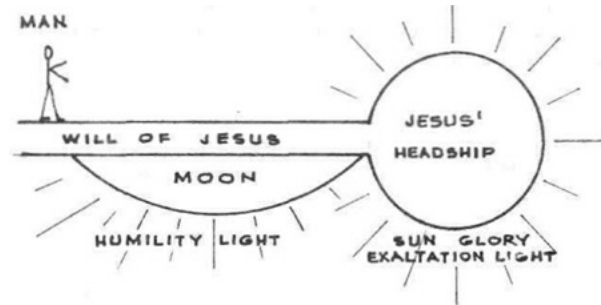


Jesus Christ experienced being clothed with the sun glory of exaltation in His earthly life when He was honored by the audible recognition of His Heavenly Father.



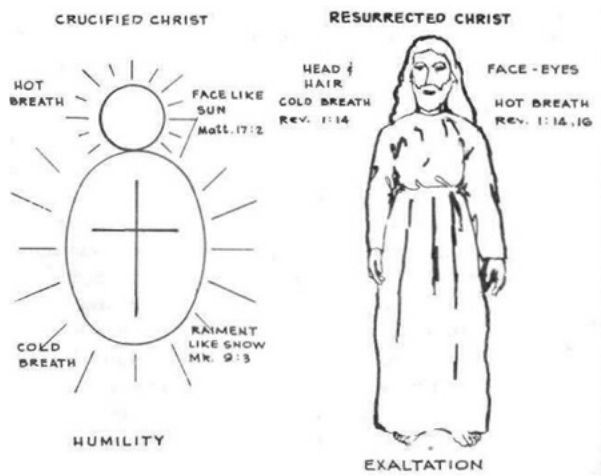
God the Father breathed upon His Son with the hot breath of exaltation when He spoke out of Heaven acknowledging Jesus as His Son. Jesus' life visibly displayed the two sides of God's nature. He walked and worked in the cold humility light of His Father's will, and He received the hot breath of exaltation from His Father when God acknowledged His Sonship from Heaven. God did not command Jesus to come under the sun glory of His Headship until He had first stretched out His will for the Son to walk and work in. In other words, the moon glory, the humility will of the Father, was the foundation of all of Christ's works.

It was because Jesus walked in the *Way* (the way of humility), that He was made *the Way* for us. As Jesus walked and worked in His Father's will, He was preparing Himself to become the Way in which we can walk until we finally become clothed with the glory of His Headship. This truth was revealed when Jesus said, "I am the Way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). The word *way* means a road trodden, Jesus left His will, His way of humility, for us to walk in. In other words, Jesus surrendered to be a road that we might walk upon Him. Walking in the Way will lead us to the glory of His Headship.

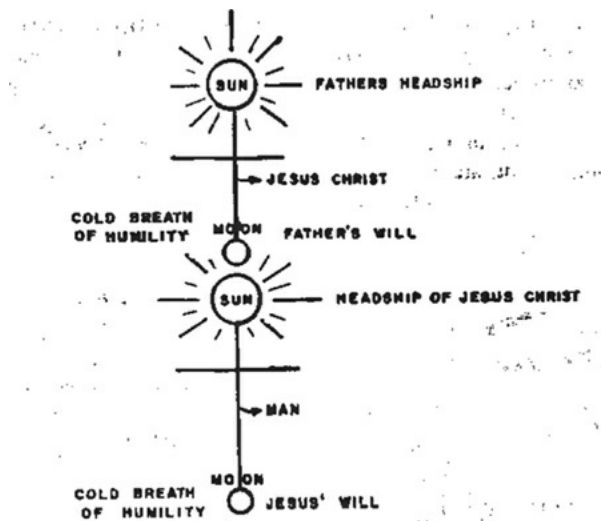


Then we, in turn, as Jesus, can become a way for Jesus to walk on and to work through.

When we view the Crucified Christ and the Resurrected Christ, we see how the principle of humility and exaltation formed Jesus' life into a visible display of the two natures of God.



If we desire to have God's nature formed within us, then we need to know Jesus as the Way. As we allow His will to be formed in our lives, we find a moon, a beautiful humility light for our foundation and our support, that will lead us to full stature in Him. When our spiritual stature has grown from His feet to His head, then we will be crowned with the exalted sun glory of His Headship. We will have Him as our Head. We will be under His guidance and will be made one with Him in will and desire, just as Jesus Christ was made one with His Father.



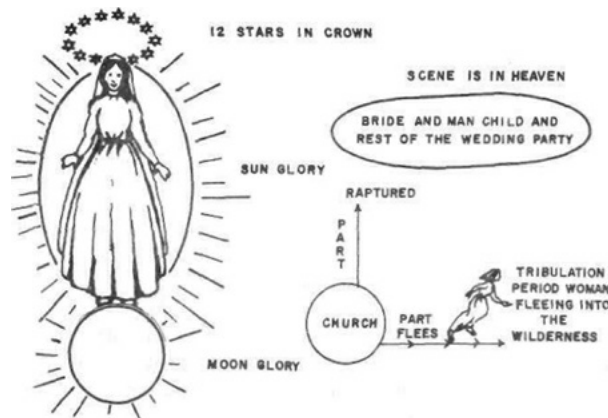
Walking in the moon glory of the humility will of Jesus Christ will lead us to accomplish all of the works that He has ordained from eternity for us to do.

This is the experience of the Woman (the Church) who lived in the heavenlies. She has the moon light, the humility will of Jesus Christ for her foundation. The moon foundation prepared her for the sun glory which clothes her. The crown of twelve stars which is on her head denotes the ruling power of humility.

Since the stars belong to the night season, they are associated with the cold breath of humility. And since twelve is the number of perfect government, we see that her head, her mind, was under subjection to the perfect government of the humility of Jesus Christ.

The ruling power of this crown of humility was demonstrated in Jesus' life through His many works. He had become a way, and as a way of humility, he ruled through the power that His Father placed upon Him. Everything that Jesus did, what He spoke, His works, were under the Headship of the Father. Jesus' crown of stars was a twelvefold governmental crown, and His ministry continually manifested His governmental authority, yet His Headship was controlled by the Headship of the Father. Jesus' authority ruled over sickness, nature, demons, death and sin.

The sun, moon, and stars, used to describe the Bride, are not the literal sun, moon, and stars which God created to shine out of the firmament to lighten the earth. They are, instead, the degrees of glory of humility and exaltation which the Woman, the Bride, has attained.



God created the natural sun to rule in the day, and the moon to rule by night. These same principles apply in the spiritual realm. The sun speaks of the Resurrected Christ in the fullness of His exaltation and glory. The moon and stars speak of the Crucified Christ and His fullness of humility and obedience. When Jesus left Heaven's glory and came down into this dark world of woe, He was like a moon and stars.

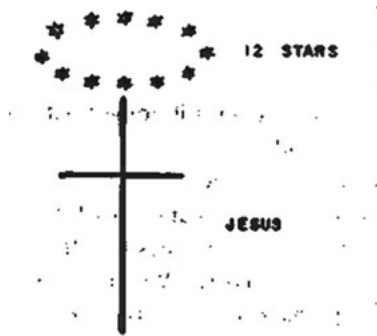
The surrender that Jesus made to walk in the way of humility, the way of crucifixion, formed our foundation on which our spiritual building is erected. In this sense, the moon, the humility light, speaks of the free gifts available to us through the Crucified Christ. In other words the moon under the Woman's feet is her foundation of blood, fire, and water, which she received as a gift. The sun glory and the ruling and reigning power of the stars represent the spiritual stature that she has built on her foundation through growth and crucifixion of the "Self life. Her foundation is free, but the stature on it is bought with surrender and obedience to the Word of God.

The Christian soldier mentioned in Ephesians 6:15 has his feet shod with "the preparation of the gospel of peace." The preaching of the gospel includes the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Fire of the Holy Ghost and the Waters of His Name, Death and Life. In other words, the soldier has the same moon foundation that the Woman has. He is presented as a soldier in full armor. This tells us that he is spiritually mature, for spiritual warfare is not for babes. Only people who grow into mature stature in God are spiritually equipped to engage in warfare against the full stature of fallen Lucifer.

The Apostle Peter preached this gospel of peace on the day of Pentecost. In Acts 2:38 Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," Our foundation is laid out in this Scripture: (1) Repent (Blood for salvation), (2) Water Baptism and (3) receive the Holy Ghost (Fire). This is the moon foundation, the humility light of Jesus Christ. This is the preparation of the gospel that will bring peace to the sinner's heart.

The spiritual principle seen in the crown of stars is one of ruling in the night season. The head of the Woman was adorned with twelve stars to show that she had taken on the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we have stated previously, twelve is the number of perfect government; the twelve stars, rulers of the night, represent the reigning power of humility. In other words, the Woman's head was crowned with the humble mind of Christ. Her mind was governed and ruled over by His **mind**.

Let us look at the twelve specific occasions during the life of Jesus Christ when He shone forth as brilliant stars in the night, displaying His ruling and reigning power of humility in the night season.



I. RULED OVER TROUBLED WATERS

And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus, But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God (Matthew 14:23-33).

While Jesus withdrew into the privacy of a mountain to pray, His disciples set sail across the Sea of Galilee in obedience to Jesus' command. Midway in the journey they were overtaken by violent winds and waves. Breaking through the darkness of a stormy night like a brilliant star, Jesus came walking on the turbulent water toward His disciples. In His reigning humility, Jesus controlled the power of nature to save those who were in danger and distress.

Jesus had commanded the disciples to go to sea. It is no new thing for Christ's disciples to meet with storms when they step out in obedience to His command. Even though Jesus foresees a storm, He sends His followers out into the midst of it. In His wisdom He designs dark situations that He might manifest Himself in His wonderful light of reigning humility.

His reigning humility humbled all things round about. The contrary winds were stilled. Jesus not only calmed the boisterous waves, but He also stilled the fear in the hearts of His disciples. The power of His humility filled them with new confidence and trust.

Through the stormy night, the light of the humility of Christ shone out, drawing Peter to Him. Jesus' reigning humility has power to draw us above this stormy world. Reigning humility enables us to walk upon the stormy waters of life, keeping us from sinking into them, or from being overwhelmed by them. A vision of the humility of Jesus will draw us with strong cords of love through the most adverse circumstances. Thus, Peter was drawn by the humility star glory of Christ in the night season.

Jesus, the Master of the storm, sustained Peter and permitted him to walk on the stormy waters as long as he kept his eyes fastened upon the One who ruled over the stormy water. Even so, we often find ourselves encompassed by troubled waters. Only as we keep rightly related to the Master of the storm can we possibly learn to rule and reign

over troubled circumstances. However, this ruling power does not belong to the flesh. We must humbly depend upon Jesus, for it is He, alone, who can reign over stormy waters and still the waves. Jesus is the star that rules in the night as a light of hope to us when we are tempest tossed.

We need to learn to be grateful for our personal stormy waters. How else can we get acquainted with the Crucified Christ and His ruling power? The Bride of Christ has this star in her crown which she has acquired because she learned to rule over the troubled waters in her life. It is part of her eternal adornment of glory.

II. RULED OVER STORMY WINDS

And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered (Mark 6:47-51).

The Gospel of Mark gives an account of the same storm recorded in the Book of Matthew. However, Mark's emphasis is more on the wind instead of the water. Each Gospel writer records varying details, which are not contradictory. They merely add more facts to the overall picture. In Mark's account, Jesus' command had sent His disciples into a situation where the winds were contrary. They had to toil all night in rowing because the force of the winds stopped their forward progress. This was a foretaste of the hardships that they were to expect later as they ministered for the Lord. The contrary situations that we come through victoriously will add to our spiritual stature. We must anticipate contrary elements. We must expect to toil in rowing. And as we overcome the opposition that would hinder our spiritual progress, we will continue to grow.

Wind speaks of breath; therefore, it suggests the thought of voices. Satan uses the voices of men to speak false doctrine, wrong opinions, false impressions, threatenings and fears, for example. All these serve as *contrary winds* which blow against our minds as we seek to walk on with God.

If we are not careful, we can lose sight of our course, our goal, and be delayed in our journeying. But if we are faithful in the night to toil and row against the winds of Satan, Jesus will be faithful to appear with the humility star light and calm the winds, leading us on in His will and way. As each stormy blast teaches us new lessons of faithfulness, we will learn more of His reigning humility. He is able to speak peace to our storms, for He shines as the bright and morning star of hope in our every circumstance.

Jesus ruled the winds that hindered the journey of the disciples. The same ruling experience can be ours, and it comes as we commit ourselves to Him and learn of His humility light. Those who take their eyes off the humility star soon find that the winds of turmoil and strife have blown them off course. These are the ones we see floundering in the waters of confusion. But if we fasten our vision on the humility light of Jesus Christ, He will bring peace in the midst of all stormy winds.

III. RULED OVER CHANGE

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt (Matthew 26:36-39).

It was significant that Jesus came to Gethsemane. Gethsemane means an olive press, an olive mill. This was a proper place for God to begin to bruise Jesus and to crush Him, so that fresh oil from His Spirit of surrender might flow out to all who follow Him to Gethsemane.

Jesus surrendered to die in the Garden. He surrendered for His Father to change His mind about the Cross, although the Cross had been the dream and goal of Jesus from eternity. It took the great power of reigning humility

for Jesus to rule over His will, and accept the Father's will even if it meant that He would fall short of the goal which He had come to earth to achieve. This was the supreme surrender of Jesus' life—for God's will to be changed about His death on the Cross. We all find it frustrating to adapt to sudden shifts in our plans. Change can cause our anger, our disappointment, our resentment to flare up, or we can reach out for the surrender that Jesus left for us and rule over our bad attitudes and dispositions through His humility reigning power.

The Bride of Jesus Christ will have the star of humility in her crown that rules over change even as Jesus Christ did. She will also have the fresh oil from His Spirit of surrender to share with those round about her.

God's plan of salvation, the giving of His only begotten Son on the Cross in substitutionary death for sinners, was purposed in the counsel of God back in eternity. God, who is One, is able to separate Himself into Father, Word, and Holy Ghost. The Son, Jesus, was begotten of God in spirit and soul form back in eternity before all creation.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist (Colossians 1:15-17).

The Christ was the eternal Word, and the Word was God. In eternity past, before man was created, God held a consultation with Himself and it was determined that the Word and the Son (Divinity and humanity) would come and take on flesh, take on a body, and be born of a woman. It was also purposed in eternity that Jesus Christ would go to Calvary's Cross as the Lamb of God, die, be buried, and be resurrected. This divine plan was devised before man was created; hence it was conceived before man ever sinned. God's foreknowledge showed Him the pathway of disobedience that man would choose. Yet God's love and mercy constrained Him to plan a way for man's salvation; God made a way for man to come back into union and fellowship with His Creator.

Realizing all this, we can better understand the tremendous import of the struggle of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He did not grapple with the fear of death, nor did He wrestle against unwillingness to go to the Cross. To the contrary, He had come all the way from eternity for this purpose. The struggle was over the cup of death that was presented to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. As one translation so beautifully puts it: "My soul is so dissolved in sorrow, my spirit is filled with such agony and anguish that if speedy succour is not given to my body, death must be the speedy consequence." It is evident, then, that Jesus was physically dying in the Garden.

How brightly the humility star of ruling over change is portrayed here. Jesus could very easily have lifted up one small finger of his indwelling deity and commanded sustenance to come into His disintegrating body, but we see only submissive surrender to the will of the Father, even if it meant His dying in the Garden and missing the cross. This was not according to God's plan. It was contrary to everything that had been foreordained before the foundation of the world! With His body literally disintegrating in death, Jesus Christ ruled over this unexpected change. Jesus was not frustrated, angry, accusing, nor regretful; all that poured from Him was a flow of the sweet fresh oil of surrender to the will of God. If the Father wanted to change His mind, completely revising the whole divine plan of salvation, He was willing. Jesus was surrendered for His Father to use someone else to accomplish what He, Himself, had been sent to do. Surely He demonstrated the power of the humility light to rule over change.

Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to give us the star of ruling humility in the night. When we get into a place of unexpected change, we need to remember that provision has already been made for us in Jesus Christ. We, too, may lay hold of that humility light which will enable us to rule over change,

IV. RULED OVER OFFENSE

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad (Matthew 26:31).

Jesus spoke these words in the beginning of His experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had just celebrated the passover and had instituted the communion supper, after which He and His disciples sang a hymn and then went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus knew that His hour of darkness was come; therefore, He warned His disciples of the darkness which soon would come to them. He admonished them also about their inability to rule over change.

We are so easily offended when change comes to our lives. When circumstances are pleasant and right according to our thinking, we feel quite assured that we are ready to suffer with Jesus. It is another thing, however, when darkness descends and the fire of persecution burns; we often become offended even as Peter and the disciples did. When our spiritual day changes into night, we beget hurt feelings and resentful angry feelings. We then begin to attack and assault the Headship of the Lord in our lives by questioning why He allowed our day to turn to night. We murmur and complain against His Headship because we fail to realize that He permits night to come in order to unveil Himself as the glorious star of humility that will help us rule and reign over the offense in the night season.

The humility light, the Christ, will reign over all resentment and displeasure that arises in our hearts as a result of change. The Lord Jesus, with His humility light, ruled over the offense that came when His disciples fled, and so can we.

God is faithful to present us many opportunities to have this humility star of ruling power formed within us. When this star of humility crowns our mind, it enables us to stand in the hour of offense, persecution, and suffering.

V. RULED OVER TORMENT

And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit (Mark 5:5-8).

Jesus shone as a bright humility star to take power over the spirit of torment that drove this poor man night and day. This demoniac creature dwelt alone in darkness among the tombs. He was in the desolate place of the dead, outside of the city. Since he was controlled by unclean spirits, he was very strong and ungovernable. He was a terror and torment to himself and to others round about him. But when Jesus appeared as a humility star in his dark night, the rays of humility light drew this ungovernable man to Jesus. The demons who bound him had to acknowledge that Jesus was the Son of God. Then Jesus, with His glorious light, ruled over the torment of the man by delivering him and commanding the demons to go into a nearby herd of swine. Their herders watched helplessly as the swine promptly ran down a steep place and into the sea where they were destroyed.

There was no rejoicing among the people because of the wonderful display of the delivering power of Jesus' reigning humility over the torment of this poor creature. Instead, they pleaded for Jesus to depart out of their country. The people chose the pride of their earthly possessions rather than the reigning humility power of God.

Likewise, as Christian believers, we suffer times of torment, for we live in a world of demon spirits.¹⁰ Although we are not possessed inwardly by demons as this man was, we are familiar with the influences of demon power around us. The demon world likes to harass and persecute God's people. They like to continually inflict suffering and annoyance, mentally or physically. One familiar avenue of approach is fear because fear carries tremendous torment.

Man is subject to seven basic fears,¹¹ namely: (1) the fear of poverty, (2) the fear of old age, (3) the fear of criticism, (4) the fear of loss of love, (5) the fear of suffering, (6) the fear of failure, and (7) the fear of death. These fears are common to all men, but with the reigning power of humility, we can rule over such torments, which Jesus demonstrated through the deliverance of the man of the Gadarenes. The humility light of Jesus will enlighten our dark night to see Him and enable us to experience His deliverance from all our tormenting fears.

VI. RULED OVER MONOTONY

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid...And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child (Luke 2:8-17).

The humility light of Jesus Christ came to the shepherds in the midst of their monotony. It changed their dull

lives and filled their hearts and their mouths with rejoicing. The shepherds were in their *same* country among their *same* flocks and their *same* companions. Their life was indeed monotonous. The word *monotony* means one tone, monotone, same tone, the same thing over and over again. The shepherds had been doing the same thing every night for many years. But, the night Jesus came, their monotony was turned into a thrilling and joyful experience.

Much of life is experienced on the level of monotony. If we fail to meet the glorious light of humility of Jesus Christ that transforms monotony into joy and rejoicing, we will soon despise the everyday things in our lives which are blessings in disguise. If we will be faithful in our everyday monotonous tasks of life, Jesus will appear with His humility star of the night. When we catch a new vision of Him, our night instantly turns into day.

No doubt the shepherds on the Judean hillside were aware of the monotony of their routine as night after night they tended the same sheep on the same hillside. But being faithful shepherds, they ruled over their particular monotony and continued year after year at their task. Suddenly one night the sky was filled with angelic messengers. Glory shone all around the shepherds as the angel of the Lord declared: "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the **Lord**. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-12). These faithful shepherds were the only ones; other than Mary and Joseph, who were permitted to look upon the humility of the Christ Child as He lay in the manger.

Christians are sometimes tempted to think that going to the house of God is a monotonous routine. A feeling of boredom can attach itself to our prayer time, or to our Bible study, or to our service for the Lord. As we press on faithfully year after year, we have occasions to rule over the sense of monotony that acts like a damper on our spirits.

As Jesus patiently trod the dusty paths of Judea and Galilee, He ruled by His reigning humility over the earthly monotony that accompanied His walk in life. Therefore, He is able to impart His ruling power to us. We must use it in this life if we hope to reign and rule with Him as His Bride throughout eternity.

VII. RULED OVER FRUITLESS LABOR

Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake (Luke 5:4-6).

Jesus used one of Simon's boats as a place from which to teach the people who had been pressing Him to hear the Word. After He finished teaching, Jesus noticed the frustration of Simon. Even though the fishermen had toiled all night long at their fishing, they had nothing to show for it.

Simon had loaned his boat to Jesus, and whatever we give to Him, He is faithful to repay it with interest. This was certainly true in Simon's case. At His command Simon launched out once more and cast in his net. This time it came up loaded with so many fish that the net broke.

Jesus ruled over their fruitless labor in the night season. He turned their unproductive labor of fruitlessness into fruitfulness. If Simon had refused to obey the word of Jesus, he would have missed this great experience.

Too many times we are prone to argue with the Lord. This causes us to miss out on some precious things that He has for us. Discouragement and defeat follow hard after a long period of fruitless labor. However, when this humility star is formed within us, it rules over our fruitless labor by guiding us to the path of fruitfulness. Only then can the blessings of the Lord enrich and bless us as He wills it.

VIII. RULED OVER SUFFERING

And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:37,38).

Anna the prophetess was an elderly widow who had given herself to fasting and prayer continually in the temple. She lived a mortified life, a life of self-denial, because she had learned how to rule over the sufferings of the "Self" life. Therefore, she continued to be faithful in her ministry.

In the midst of Anna's sacrifice, there appeared the humility light of the bright and morning Star, Jesus Himself. It was Anna's privilege to look upon her Saviour, her Redeemer, in the humble form of an infant, as He was being carried into the temple on the day of His circumcision.

Although this was not the first humiliation, or the first suffering, that Jesus experienced for us, it was the first blood that He shed for us. He was circumcised in order to fulfill the law for us, and Anna was privileged to gaze upon His humility light this day.

How tempted we are to draw back from the will of God when it entails suffering. But as we grow in spiritual stature, we will lay hold of the star light of His humility. Then we can truly see how Jesus accepted every suffering, every pain, that came to Him as He obeyed His Father's will. This light gives us power to rule over suffering in our personal spiritual walk with God. His ruling humility enables us to continue faithful in the will of God regardless of the suffering involved. Doubtless, Anna the prophetess could testify that her suffering was not worthy to be compared to the glorious light of humility that she beheld in the child Jesus that day.

If Jesus had not possessed this star of ruling power, He would never have made it to the Cross. Whenever we feel inclined to be disheartened, we must follow the exhortation of the writer of the Book of Hebrews:

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin (Hebrews 12:2-4).

If we remain faithful in our service for the Lord, even though it brings sacrifice and suffering, He will reward us with the glorious light of His humility to brighten the way, fill our hearts with joy and rejoicing, and lift us above our world of sadness and despair.

IX. RULED OVER EASE

And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God (Luke 6:12).

It was Jesus' custom to withdraw frequently from the multitudes in order to spend time in prayer and meditation. A man's relationship to God is primarily measured by what he does privately, not necessarily by what he does in his family's presence or in public.

In those days when Jesus' enemies were filled with madness against Him, He went to pray privately. He did not seek a nice comfortable chapel in which to pray. Instead, His reigning humility light ruled over ease. He sought the uncomfortable solitude of the mountains in which to pray. Being a man, Jesus was subject to like passions and temptations as we are, but He ruled over the love of ease which plagues all flesh.

Our flesh has a way of making insistent, loud demands. In spite of His great ministry and the pressing multitudes that thronged Him, Jesus ruled over this love of ease, slipping away to commune alone with His Father.

How prone we are to make excuses for ourselves. Too often we neglect the primary spiritual essentials by giving way to the demands of weary flesh. Just as Jesus ruled over ease, so, also, must we let the star of ruling over ease be added to the twelve stars of ruling power which must crown our head, our mind, if we are to be the Bride of Christ.

X. RULED OVER INJURY

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? (Luke 18:6,7).

This Scripture relates the story of the unjust judge. It takes the great ruling power of humility to wait patiently for the Lord to redeem the situation when our rights have been unjustly invaded. Too often we permit our unfair treatment to gnaw away inside of us until we are overcome with bitterness, hatred, and envy. Some people go to a premature grave because of this very thing. But if we cry day and night (because those who believe will have their prayers heard), if we wrestle with God (as Jacob who knew how to value the blessing), then the humility star will

appear and lead us to deliverance from the unjust oppression of our enemies.

This star of ruling power is just one small portion of the *one* great Morning Star who is none other than Jesus Christ. Each star presents a minute description of a portion of the ruling humility that is found in Him. As we progress in our spiritual journey, we must learn to rule over injury by reckoning on the faithfulness of the Lord to redeem us, rather than to seek our own means of redemption. How sorely we need to possess this portion of Jesus Christ, our precious Morning Star. The Woman, the Bride in the heavenlies, possessed this star.

XI. RULED OVER REJECTION

And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives (Luke 21:37).

Jesus knew what it was to be lonely. The Garden of Gethsemane, where He so often found retreat, was the very place where He suffered the rejection of His closest and dearest disciples. Yet there is no hint of bitterness or rancor in Him. Even when in the throes of His intense struggle on the night of His capture, His very own disciples could not watch with Him even one hour. In spite of His repeated entreaty, they continued to sleep on. We are permitted to suffer rejection too. Do we rule over it as Jesus did? Without true humility, we react with bitterness and resentment, but with humility we find ourselves more closely drawn unto Jesus. When that union is made, trying circumstances around us affect very little. With this star of humility to light our way, we can go through the deepest or loneliest of nights with victory.

XII. RULED OVER IGNORANCE

There was *a* man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him. Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him...Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?...Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (John 3:1-9).

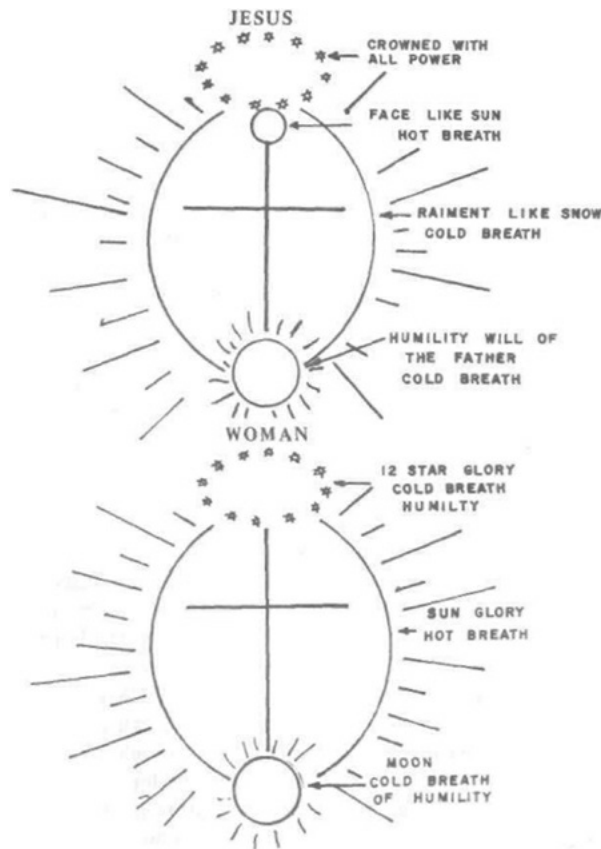
Although Nicodemus was a leader among the Jewish Pharisees, he displayed his ignorance of spiritual things when Jesus told him what to do to enter into the Kingdom of God. Jesus shone as a star in the night on this occasion by ruling over ignorance of this man who came seeking Him secretly in the night. Jesus could have reacted to the man's ignorance with irritation, but He displayed only patience as He explained what He meant so that Nicodemus could understand what He was saying.

As we teach others and bear witness to them of spiritual truths which we have experienced, we, too, are confronted with the ignorance of man. It is aggravating to the flesh when people seem totally unimpressed by the truth of Jesus. However, we know that it is because they lack understanding. Our first reaction may be to become frustrated because we feel that it reflects on our ability to teach. Then if we are not careful, we will react with irritation. Should this happen, we may very well lose our opportunity for influence. Hence, it is vitally important that we learn to rule over the ignorance of man.

A quick recall of our own ignorance when the truths of God were first presented to us should make us pause to consider the other person. As Jesus ruled over men's ignorance, so must we if we are to attain the prize of the Bride and Bridegroom relationship with our precious Saviour, Jesus Christ. Those who have their hearts and wills brought into complete union with His heart and will possess all twelve of the stars of ruling humility.

As we have said, the moon glory upon which the Woman stands in Revelation twelve is given to her by gift; whereas the sun glory and her crown of twelve stars are attained only by personal crucifixion and by taking on the resurrection glory and the humility of Jesus Christ and by growing into mature spiritual stature. Jesus demonstrated the full glory of the ruling power of the Morning Star in His earthly journey. We must seek to possess these same stars of ruling humility if we are to reign and rule with the power of humility in the night season.

Thus, we see the Woman in Heaven clothed with the same cold and hot breath with which Jesus Christ was clothed. In other words, she grew into His likeness and image.



Let us continue with our description of the Woman seen in Heaven who was so wondrously clothed in the light of the sun, the light of the moon, and crown of twelve stars. She represents that part of the Church that was prepared for the coming of the Bride* groom and who was caught away at the Rapture. This part of the Church is busy travailing and interceding that a spiritual child (or children) be born in the earth. This child-is designated “a man child” and is caught up into Heaven unto God at the Rapture.

And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered (Revelation 12:2).

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne (Revelation 12:5).

The scene takes place in Heaven; so we know that this is a spiritual woman travailing in spiritual birth to bring a spiritual man child to birth on earth. While seated with Christ in heavenly places, the Bride is busy in travail that a spiritual birth might take place in other human beings on earth. We shall see as we study further that this man child identifies the shoulder realm saints whose spiritual growth and maturity allows them to wear the white raiment degree in glory.

Further light on the Bride and her man child is given in Psalm 45:1-17. This is one of the thirteen Maschil Psalms of special teaching and instruction to the Bride. Again, we see the special significance of the number thirteen. The first eight verses present a description of the Bridegroom. Beginning with verse nine the account deals with the Bride pictured here as the Queen clothed in the gold of Ophir.

Kings’ daughters were among thy honorable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir (Psalm 45:9).

Because the Queen stands at the right hand of the King, we know that she is not the espoused (engaged) Bride,

for she stands in the position of authority and recognition at her Husband's right hand. During her espousal period she stands at the Bridegroom's left hand. The Bride's espousal has been spent in growing to a spiritual union with Him and in learning the many necessary lessons that prepare her for the exalted position as the Bride of Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Bridegroom. Psalm 45 describes the Bridegroom and the Bride as well as giving some interesting facts about the wedding and the conditions that she had to meet in order to become the Bride. The Kings' daughters are among the honorable women at the wedding; however, our attention is fixed upon the Queen in gold of Ophir.

Gold symbolizes deity. It speaks of the Resurrected Christ. Gold also speaks of the revelation of the Word of God. In the Song of Solomon, which reveals the preparation, growth, and marriage of the Bride of Christ, we glean more truth about the gold.

In chapter five, the daughters of Jerusalem, who are believers, yet strangers to the Bride and Bridegroom relationship, enquire of the Bride: "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?" (Song of Solomon 5:9). In response the Bride begins to describe her Beloved. We are particularly interested here in the description of gold in connection with the Bridegroom-Husband.

a) Gold Hands

His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl...(Song of Solomon 5:14).

The Hebrew word used here for gold and used again in Psalm 45, is *zahab*. which refers to the shining aspect of the gold. The hands of the Bridegroom are hands of gold, hands of divine revelation. The Queen in Psalm 45 is clothed with gold that she has laid hold of for herself, because she was well acquainted with the gold of the Bridegroom.

'The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold' (Psalm 45:13). The Bridegroom has hands of gold that will take the Word of God and bring with them the shining revelation which dresses up the inner man (heart, soul, spirit, will and mind) with the gold. Where does divine revelation come from? From without or within? This shining gold of revelation is dispensed only through the precious hands of gold of the Bridegroom. Before the outward evidence of the gold can be seen, the inward impartation of the gold must be accomplished.

Would that God's people would harness their hectic pace and provide time to spend in the prayer closet and in the study of the Word. Beloved, it takes time for the precious hands of gold to work the gold of His revelation and His divine nature within us. We must MAKE time for the hands of the Bridegroom to form our inner garments. Time spent alone with Him while His golden hands entwine the shining revelation of His Word around our heart, mind, and will, is time well spent. The Bride of Jesus Christ will set aside time to be alone with Him, for she is "all glorious within..."

b) Gold Head

His head is as the most fine gold...(Song of Solomon 5:11).

This describes the Bridegroom's divine mind. Another Hebrew word *paz* is translated as gold in this verse; it features the purity and clearness of gold. The mind of the Bridegroom is pure and clear. The higher we grow in spiritual stature in Jesus Christ, the clearer and purer our minds become because our minds are being fashioned like His head of gold, His mind of gold.

After the golden shining light of the workings of the divine hands of Christ have clothed us within through the revelation of the Word, then the head realm Word comes to dress up our outward man as well. His pure mind dresses the Bride in her outward apparel of gold. Psalm 45:9 uses the same word for gold: "...upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir." First we are clothed inwardly with gold, and then we gain our outward clothing.

We find this pattern established in the Old Testament Tabernacle. The foundation of the whole stature was the Courtyard with its basic and foundational experiences of blood, fire, and water. Simply put, the foundation is a portrayal of the Crucified Christ (His death and resurrection) and is a foundation of humility. Both pieces of furniture found in the Courtyard were made of brass, which speaks of the judgment of the Son of God. This pictured the humble side of Jesus Christ.

After our foundation of humility is laid, then, as priests of God, we can enter into the Holy Place where all of the furniture proper consisted either of pure gold, or wood overlaid with gold, The gold is a picture of the

Resurrected Christ in all His glory and exaltation. Both brass and gold represent Jesus Christ, His humility and His exaltation.

This same principle applies in Psalm 45. The inner clothing (hidden and unseen) must first be worked into the heart of the Bride. This is her foundational humility. All this is accomplished in secret while the Bride is hidden away in her prayer closet, alone with Him. Because the Bride has been faithful to lay her humility foundation, the Bridegroom exalts her by dressing up her mind with Word from His head of gold. She is honored when others see that her mind is clothed with the mind of Christ. The Bride stands at the right hand of her Husband clothed in pure and clear gold *of* His divine head.

When this head realm Word is evident in our lives, much honor and respect will come our way, for people must acknowledge the reality of what we possess, People cannot see our inner garment, the inner revelation of humility, but they can see the mind of Christ, our outward clothing, as it shines pure and clear as a light in the world (Philippians 2:14.15). The only way we are going to shine in this world is to let the divine hands of Christ dress up our soul with the living Christ, the living shining Light; and then let the pure, divine, clear head of Jesus Christ dress us up outwardly so that we stand pure and clear before people. Many Christians have failed to dress up their minds in the purity of Christ; therefore, others do not see that Jesus Christ is real in their lives.

c) Gold Legs

His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold... (Song of Solomon 5:15).

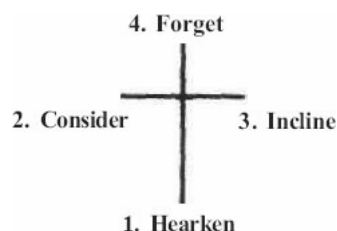
His legs are as pillars of marble, strong and stately, set upon sockets of fine gold. Since pillars stand upright, they refer *to* the authoritative will of God which is always pictured in the vertical position. Thus, his legs are pictures of walking in the upright will of God. The word *set* means to be founded and anchored. His legs are founded and anchored on the will of God and are immovable. They are ruled by the gold or divine sockets.

We need the formation of these same immovable legs of marble, plus the sockets of gold, to govern and direct the movement of our legs. In the natural, we cannot walk properly without bending our knees. This same principle applies in the spiritual realm. We need to bend our knees in prayer in order to walk in the will of God.

The Bride knew about the legs of the Bridegroom because He had made her legs in His likeness. As her legs took on that same marble nature and became as spiritual pillars, she learned to walk in His revelation. And, as His Bride, she also had the sockets of gold to govern her walk according to the divine will and revelation of Christ.

Now let us turn again to the Queen in Psalm 45 and quickly note the stature of things that she did in order to become the King's wife.

Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house (Psalm 45:10).



1. Hearken

The Queen had to hearken in order to become the Bride. The **word** *hearken* means to behold, listen attentively, carefully, discern, give ear to. What a tragedy it is that the bulk of Christendom is engrossed with lesser things, that they fail to hear and to pay attention to what the Word of God actually says. Christians often choose to believe everything they hear rather than expending the necessary effort to search out the truth for themselves. The Church is encumbered with many ideas and doctrines of men. These teachings need to be sifted through and some of them discarded. With our minds cleared of men's doctrines, we can truly hearken to what the Spirit and the Word have to say to the Church.

2. Consider

Secondly, the Bride must *consider*, which means to see. She first had to hearken, open herself to the truth, then she could see and consider the truth. She must see its worth and consider it above the words of all others.

3. Incline

She must incline her ear, her hearing, to the Lord and His Word. The word *incline* means to stretch out, bend, spread out. It implies surrender and humble obedience. The word *incline* pictures a bending low in a humility position because of eagerness to hear and receive.

4. Forget

The Bride is to forget. We must forget our natural families as well as our spiritual families, in the sense that the Bridegroom must have priority above all others. Natural family ties or spiritual ties in the church are often a hindrance in our running on for God. Many times we must leave our closest loved ones behind. If they have no desire to follow in the footsteps of the Crucified Christ, then we must go on alone. There may be times when we must literally leave our own people. Our circle may narrow down to our closest relationships, and even here the espoused Bride cannot tarry in her journey.

There are many Christians who are perfectly content with what they have attained. They see no vision of the prize, the high calling of God. They are satisfied to be a virgin, a relative, a guest, a king's daughter, or a concubine, caring little for the prize of being in the Bride of Jesus Christ. If we are faithful to the vision of the prize, many separations will come our way as we endeavor to attain a oneness of relationship with the Bridegroom.

So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord [master-husband, His possession power]; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace (Psalm 45:11-15).

Verse nine speaks of *kings' daughters*, referring to more than one king and more than one daughter. Although these daughters hold honorable positions, they are not *THE KINGS DAUGHTER* mentioned in verse thirteen. She is the Bride. There is only one King of kings and there is only one, out of all those born into His family through the Blood, who has made the preparations necessary to be His Queen.

His Queen wears inward clothing of wrought gold, gold that has been hammered into thin sheets and then cut into fine threads to be woven into fabric. The hammering-out process is painful, and so is the pricking of the needlework in her raiment. Beautiful needlework is accomplished by meticulously following the details of the pattern and colors that must be woven into the fabric. What a great multitude of pricking experiences is necessary to weave the beautiful threads of scarlet, purple, blue and gold into our wedding garment. Scarlet pictures the beauty of Jesus Christ's surrender and obedience; the purple is the color of His royal ruling power; the blue is the color of His heavenly origin and authority; and the gold pictures the divine glory of His Word. The Bride's wedding garment is woven by the pricking experiences which come through countless times of painful suffering.

With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever (Psalm 45:15-17).

The Bride attains the head realm of maturity in the stature of Christ; therefore, she has the ability to help other Christians in their spiritual growth. We cannot lead someone beyond the place where we have walked personally. As she has separated herself from her own people, and even from her father's house, she is privileged to bring forth children, children who will be princes in all the earth. Her final exaltation is established when the people praise her for ever and ever.

This is the same worship that is promised to the Philadelphia Church in Revelation 3:9 "...behold, I will make

them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” This does not involve the worship of a mere mortal being; they are worshipping the Bride of Christ who has the nature of Jesus Christ worked in her. Since she bears His name (nature), she shares in His honor, glory, and even worship. The only church that God promised to write the name of Wife upon was the Philadelphia Church (Revelation 3:12; 21:2).

The children of the Bride, mentioned in Psalm 45, will grow up to the shoulder realm, the governmental realm in spiritual stature. Because they have learned to reign and rule over their own flesh, and over the world and the Devil, the rule of the New Earth in the Perfect Age will be entrusted to them. These people form the White Raiment group represented by the four and twenty elders and the four beasts in the Book of Revelation.

The princes who rule in all the earth (Psalm 45:16) are represented in the twelfth chapter of Revelation as the man child, who was brought to birth by the travail of the spiritual Bride of Christ, the Woman in Heaven. These shoulder realm saints (princes in the earth, the man child) will rule and reign on the New Earth as kings (Revelation 5:10). Revelation 12:5 verifies this position of rulership by saying that the man child will rule over the nations with a rod of iron. To rule means to pasture and to feed. Rod, in the Greek, means a sceptre or a staff of royalty, and the iron indicates the strength of his rule. As kings on the New Earth, they alone will have access to the New City. It is their privilege to go in and out of the New City in order to bring the leaves from the Tree of Life to feed the nations. These leaves will heal the inhabitants of the earth of their mortality. By eating the leaves from the Tree of Life, the people of the earth become immortal, physical human beings who will live upon the New Earth forever.

The so-called *fountain of youth* for which man has searched all the days of his life and never found, will be fulfilled by the leaves from the Tree of Life. These living leaves will keep man’s body alive forever in an incorruptible state.

Without intercession and travail, there is no spiritual birth. As the Woman, the Bride, gives herself in traveling prayer, she gives birth to a man child, one who will rule the nations with a rod of iron. No wonder the Dragon stands nearby, ready to devour her child as soon as it is born. God intervenes, however, and the child is caught away to Heaven before the Dragon can touch it. Although no particular reference is made to the rapture of the Bride, chapter twelve does especially mention the prince (her man child) who is raptured before the Great Tribulation begins, as well as all overcomers, whether dead or alive. The Antichrist makes himself known in the earth; then only a very brief time ensues before the Rapture takes place. This is the catching away of the entire wedding party, the guests, friends, bridesmaids, and the Bride.

The spiritual stature of the Bride is revealed in chapter twelve, displaying all her glory, as well as showing what she has been occupied with before the Rapture takes place. When the Apostle Paul defined the resurrection in I Corinthians 15:41,42, he established that all Christians will be resurrected in whatever degree of glory they have attained in this life. This glory, whether it be the differing degrees of star glory, or the moon glory, or the full mature sun glory, is to be our eternal garment or house. The Bride (the Woman) has attained all of these degrees and realms of glory. She has the star glory, the moon glory, and the sun glory.

Following the catching away of the man child into Heaven (the rapture of the whole wedding party), we see the other part of the Woman (the Church) fleeing into the wilderness. “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (Revelation 12:6). Part of the Church will go into the Great Tribulation for three and one half years. The Beast is going to war with the saints, and those whom he overcomes will either accept the mark of the Beast, or they will be martyred for their faith (Revelation 13:7). Those of the Church who flee to “a place prepared of God” will find themselves in a great spiritual wilderness.

The wilderness in which natural Israel found herself was a naturally barren and desolate place; yet God never forsook Israel even in her rebellion and unbelief. He fed and cared for her during all her forty years of wandering there. However, the wilderness mentioned in Revelation 12:6 is no natural wilderness. Instead, it is descriptive of the utter desolation and barrenness of the spiritual state that the Church finds herself in at this time. Yet, as with the type, God will be faithful to sustain supernaturally those who will stand true to Him and not receive the mark of the Beast.

The Rapture is closer than most of us realize. To be in the Rapture we must be overcomers, living up to all the light we possess on whatever level of spiritual growth we have attained in God. Luke gives us a good exhortation in connection with the Rapture.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that

dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:34-36).

Jesus was speaking to His own disciples and in response to their questions, He says: “take heed to yourselves.” In other words, watch that old “Self that is in you, for he can get you into trouble, serious trouble, even the missing of the Rapture.

Spiritual heart trouble can make us miss it. Jesus lists three heart problems that can be fatal to us if we do not overcome them.

1) Surfeiting. Over indulgence in food makes us sluggish, dull, earth-bound. How much are we given to fasting and prayer? Fasting and praying will keep us alert.

2) Drunkenness (intoxication whether it be on liquor or emotion). A drunken person cannot see straight or walk straight. We can be drunk with anger, envy, pride, many of the strong emotions that stagger and confuse us. With drunkenness it is impossible to think right or clearly.

3) Cares of this life. This is perhaps the most serious affliction of our day. We become so occupied with the affairs of this life that we have no time to study and pray and “seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness...”

The only solution that will guarantee our readiness for the Rapture of the overcoming Church is: “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape these things that shall come to pass [tribulation period], and to stand before the Son of man.” Carnal man’s misappropriation of Scripture has served as an opiate, deadening his spiritual senses, lulling him into a complacent sleep by reassuring him that salvation is all that he needs. “Get enough of the Blood of Jesus to secure your name being written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. This is all you need,” some preachers say. If we listen to carnal man, we have nothing to worry about. What a rude awakening many Christians will face one of these days. The Gospel writer warns: watch and pray ALWAYS that you may be *counted worthy* to escape the Great Tribulation.

The Antichrist will come up out of the Pit a short time, a few moments or perhaps as much as a half hour, before Jesus appears. The Lord shall descend with a shout, with the sword of the Word coming out of His mouth. He will give the command, the trumpet will be blown, and He will call God into remembrance of the Blood covenant by which He has redeemed man’s spirit, soul, and body.

When the trumpet is blown and the sharp two-edged sword comes out of Jesus’ mouth, the Devil is going to have to back off, and the bodies of the dead saints shall stand up in resurrection life. When the trumpet is blown, the body will rise from the grave and be joined with the spirit and soul that accompanies Jesus Christ from Heaven. Then the work of redemption is completed for these saints. Jesus has redeemed them spirit, soul, and body. The living overcomers will be changed in a moment from mortality into immortality, and together they shall ascend into Heaven with the resurrected saints to be with the Lord.

There is a reason why the dead saints come up first. God works by laws and principles, and He never violates them. A principle that accompanies the law of humility is that the deeper the humility the higher the exaltation. The dead saints have experienced a greater degree of humility because they have gone through the humiliation of having their bodies disintegrate and become dust. Therefore, they are resurrected first; they are exalted first. After they are raised, they are caught up with the living overcomers to meet Jesus Christ in the air.

In this chapter we have seen the spiritual separations within the Church of Jesus Christ. The first two verses of the twelfth chapter of Revelation reveal the part of the Church that is living in the heavenlies with Christ. This is His spiritual Bride who is laboring to bring a spiritual man child to birth. The man child grows to the shoulder realm of spiritual stature, which enables him to rule the nations of the earth with a rod of iron. This is not a fleshly rod of iron. This is not a fleshly cudgel, for the man child rules with the strong staff of the Word of God.

The Bride and her man child, along with overcomers of lesser spiritual stature, will be raptured at the very beginning of the tribulation. The rest of the Church, the believers who are not spiritual overcomers, are let to go through the tribulation. Some from this group will be spiritually overcome by the Antichrist. They will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Others will lay down their lives as martyrs for their testimony, while others will be

miraculously preserved by the Lord. This preservation is portrayed in Revelation 12:6 by the Woman who flees into the wilderness. Beloved, let us pray that we may be counted worthy to be in the Bride, the part of the Church that lives in the heavenlies with Christ Jesus.

¹⁰ B. R. Hicks, *Lucifer's Army*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972),

¹¹ B, R, Hicks, *Secrets to Real Power*. (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1972).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ANOTHER WONDER IN HEAVEN-THE DRAGON

(Revelation 12:3-17)

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads (Revelation 12:1-3).

Two great wonders are presented in the beginning of chapter twelve. What John sees at this time transpires before the Rapture of all overcomers. The first wonder is the Woman who is the part of the Church that has grown into full mature stature. She is seen clothed in the glory of the sun, supported by moon glory, and crowned with the twelve degrees of star glory. She cries and travails in birth pains to be delivered of a spiritual man child who is ready to be born.

The second fearful wonder that John sees in Heaven is the great red Dragon with his seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. During her earthly journey, the Woman seated in the heavenlies overcame the full stature of fallen Lucifer and gave birth to a spiritual man child.

Since the Dragon represents the head realm in the stature of fallen Lucifer, he has the full stature of his evil and wickedness. Perhaps we should pause to consider fallen Lucifer's full stature.

FULL STATURE OF FALLEN LUCIFER



All four names refer to one creature, fallen Lucifer. Each name emphasizes a different aspect of his nature¹² Here we shall only briefly mention the basic information concerning each of Lucifer's names.

I. SATAN

The name *Satan* means attacker, resister, adversary, one who attacks, one who resists, one who stands against. Satan's ministry is to stand against the saints of God with immovable resistance. The nature of Satan is clearly described in God's Word. We do not need to be ignorant about Satan or his tactics. His nature is to lie, to destroy, to tempt, to take advantage, to transform his ministers into angels of light, to buffet, to hinder, to bind, to sift, to deceive. Satan is a formidable enemy, but the Lord has provided victory for us if we but avail ourselves of God's spiritual weapons.

II. DEVIL

The name *Devil* means an accuser, to exhibit as a spectacle, a traducer (degrade, disgrace), to vilify. The Devil is the part of the nature of Lucifer that torments, accuses, blames when there is no blame, and ridicules to make one

feel like a spectacle. His nature is sinful, and sin is powerful. This wicked nature manifests itself in these various ways: tempts, steals, murders, lies, betrays, oppresses, is wiley, ensnares, deceives, sows tares.

III. SERPENT

The name *Serpent* is better understood by his other name, Leviathan, which means *to twine*, to unite, to lend, to abide with, to join. In the Book of Isaiah, God speaks prophetically of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; at this time He will punish Leviathan. “In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea” (Isaiah 27:1). This Scripture identifies the Serpent with Leviathan who is described in detail in Job 41. The Serpent side of fallen Lucifer is especially active in the area of natural and spiritual adultery. In the beginning Lucifer was in unity and harmony with God until pride exalted his mind. Because of his sin, his mind became corrupted and his wisdom perverted. With this perverted mind, Lucifer now works to serve Self. As the Serpent, fallen Lucifer has seven heads by which he opposes the people of God.

IV. DRAGON

The name *Dragon* identifies the highest realm in fallen Lucifer’s stature of wickedness. Therefore the Dragon’s power supersedes that of Satan, the Devil, and the Serpent.

The name *Dragon* means to elongate, to stretch out, to fascinate. It is the particular ability of the Dragon to elongate and exaggerate anything that he pleases. He is called the red Dragon. The word *red* means fire and lightning. This fire causes the human spirit and soul to burn with the satisfaction of exaltation in this world so that it feels no need of God. Let us consider his stature.



A. THE DRAGON'S MOUTH



I. The Dragon's Seven Heads

The number seven is the number of completion. Since the Dragon is just one being, he has only one mind. Yet his seven heads show that he is completely dedicated in purpose and intent. He is determined to use every possible means to war and to fight against all that is godly, all that is righteous, holy and pure. The wisdom of his mind is totally perverted. His seven heads identify the seven avenues, as it were, of thought which the Dragon uses to accomplish his own wicked will and purpose. The Dragon's seven heads are the same as the seven heads of the Serpent, also known as Leviathan. These heads are upon long serpent necks, and the heads wear seven crowns which indicate ruling power. Through the power of his perverted wisdom, the Dragon rules the minds of those who do not have their minds properly protected **with** the truth of God's Word.

In the days of Israel's exodus from Egypt, Pharaoh yielded his mind so completely to the perverted wisdom of the Serpent that his actions drew out a clear picture of the workings of Leviathan's and the Dragon's seven heads. In this lesson we are merely concentrating on the inter-relationship between the seven heads and the ten horns of the Dragon.

2. The Dragon's Ten Horns

On the seven heads are ten horns. God uses horns to show two classes of power: defensive power and aggressive power. Before his rebellion, Lucifer possessed a tenfold covering of beauty. His beautiful covering consisted of nine precious stones and gold (Ezekiel 28:13). When he rebelled against God, Lucifer perverted the nine stones and the gold into ten horns which he uses now for both defensive and aggressive warfare. These are the ten horns of power pictured in the Book of Revelation. In chapter thirteen the Dragon, representing the mature stature of Lucifer's power, will infuse his strength, power, and nature into the Antichrist who, in turn, will stand up in the full stature of fallen Lucifer.

With this thought in mind, let us consider the heads and the horns simultaneously as they work through the Dragon, through the Antichrist, during the tribulation, and how they affect us personally today.

a. Head of Affliction-Emerald Horn



The first head of the Dragon is the Head of Affliction, which carries the emerald horn. The word *emerald* means a break, a fracture. Before he sinned, Lucifer used the emerald stone to point others to the broken, fractured Son of God. He has now perverted it into an aggressive horn of interruption. When the Dragon attacks God's people with his head of affliction and its emerald horn of interruption, he lays heavy burdens on them, hoping that they will perish under the weight of their afflictions before they fulfill God's ordained plan for their lives. The Dragon purposes to destroy the Church and to prevent the saints from growing up into spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ.

The nature of this Head of Affliction manifests itself as a stealer of truth. The truth is that God is the Head over all things. Saints who let the Head of Affliction steal this truth soon find themselves murmuring against God's Headship in their lives.

In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation we see that the Dragon, the mature stature of Lucifer's power, will infuse his strength, power, and nature into the Antichrist, who will then stand in the full stature of fallen Lucifer. During the tribulation period, the Antichrist will use the Head of Affliction and its emerald horn as he persecutes and wars against the saints who failed to be ready for the Rapture. The Antichrist will use the Head of Affliction to steal the truth that Jesus Christ is Messiah, and will afflict the people with the disease of falsehood. Therefore, they will believe that the Antichrist is the Messiah and will esteem him to be God. They will consider him worthy of praise and worship in the temple.

We personally experience the warfare of the Head of Affliction with its emerald horn. Each added burden breaks into our prayer time, our study time, or our worship in one way or another. The horn of interruption seeks to cause a fracture in our home, for the Dragon knows the effectiveness of the joint prayers of a husband and a wife. He knows that if he can break that spiritual union, then he has weakened one of the strongest links in the chain called prayer power. He uses the horn of interruption to break friendships and to bring divisions in the Church. The Dragon will do anything to destroy unity and fellowship, anything that is good, or anything that is from God.

He is ever ready to steal the truth of God's Headship in our lives. If we let him steal this truth from us, it breaks our fellowship with God. The truth is that we are *worthy* of exactly what God gives us; we are worthy to be just where God places us. But Lucifer steals this truth from our hearts and minds and afflicts us with the disease of "I am worthy of more." Then we begin to look through his diseased eyes of pride. Suddenly, we feel that everyone is mistreating us and that God is unjust and unmerciful. When we are thinking with a mind afflicted with pride, we actually think that we are worthy and deserving of more.

b. Head of Death—Sardius Horn



The second head of the Dragon is the Head of Death, which carries the Sardius horn. The word *Sardius* means to be red, to show blood in the face, to separate, remove, scrape out. At one time Lucifer possessed the sardius stone, which caused his face to radiate with the life of God. He used his sardius stone to separate himself unto the Lord, to remove and scrape out everything that stood between him and his God. After he sinned, he continued to use it to separate; from that time on, he has used it to separate *from* God instead of *unto* God.

The nature of the Head of Death manifests itself as a liar. The Head of Death from Lucifer never reveals or presents itself in its true nature or color. It never comes as death. Instead, it presents itself as life. In the beginning, for example, Lucifer promised life to Adam male and female by assuring them that they would not die if they disobeyed God. The Head of Death with its horn of separation separates people from the Word and the will of God and then infuses them with its poison of death.

During the tribulation, the Antichrist uses the Head of Death with the sardius horn to separate and kill, literally and spiritually. He will promise life and prosperity to all who take his mark, but those who believe his lies and take his mark will spend eternity separated from what they could have had in God. All who accept the mark of the Beast are cast into the Lake of Fire, which is the second death. This will be the end of those who follow the Antichrist in the tribulation.

When the Head of Death and separation comes to us through the things of the world to tempt us to do things contrary to the Word and will of God, the lie is always the same "ye shall not surely die." In other words, Lucifer is saying "my headship is not a headship of death but of life. If you follow me, you can really live. You won't have to spend all your time reading the Bible and praying." But remember, beloved, it is the nature of the Head of Death to lie.

The Head of Death and the sardius horn of separation also work to separate husband from wife and to kill family affection. Likewise this head and horn works between parents and children and between brothers and sisters in the Lord. It brings separation between churches and also within the church. This horn and head can separate and kill our

love one for another and our respect for one another.

With this horn, the Dragon wars to separate us from the revealed Word of God. Weak and helpless without the quickened Word of the Lord, we are easily swept away by the flood from his Head of Death. The Head of Death lies about its true nature. It presents the things of death as light, sensational, wonderful, when all the time he knows that they will separate us from God and fill us with the darkness, sadness, and misery of death.

c. Head of Blasphemy-Sapphire Horn and Onyx Horn



The third head of the Dragon is the Head of Blasphemy, which carries two horns: the sapphire horn and the onyx horn. The word *sapphire* means stairs, pillar, to be hidden. The deep blue of the sapphire stone symbolizes the deep and hidden truths of God's Word. The idea of stairs conveys the thought of ascent or descent into the heights or the depths of God's Word or Spirit. The word *onyx* means to blanch, to take the color out, make lustrous. Originally, Lucifer used the onyx stone to blanch the color, the life, out of everything that distracted him from ascending and descending in the will of God. As long as he used it this way, he had no fear of falling, for he was supported by the sapphire stone of truth. In the present day, the Dragon uses the onyx stone as a horn of change, and then he uses the sapphire stone as a powerful horn to support the things he changes.

The nature of the Head of Blasphemy is manifested as proud arrogance. So that he might ascend into the high place and usurp God's rightful place, the Dragon blasphemes, belittles the truth, degrades the things of God, supports falsehoods with his sapphire horn of power, and changes law and order. The underlying purpose of each of His actions is to put himself in God's place.

Daniel's prophecy of the tribulation period described how the Antichrist will change the times and laws. The Dragon also will be working in the atmosphere to change and to upset the laws of nature. There will be upheaval in every sphere of activity in those fearful days.

We see the Head of Blasphemy and the horn of change and the horn of support at work during the tribulation period. The Head of Blasphemy which manifests itself through the Antichrist will cause him to open his mouth and blaspheme God, His name, His tabernacle, and His creation in Heaven. After blaspheming the things of God, the Antichrist will support his lie about being the Messiah by changing the law and order of true worship to God. He will proudly ascend and sit in the temple as God. The horn of support will be used to give life to the Beast and cause it to speak. Even now, the Dragon uses His Head of Blasphemy to make us degrade, vilify, and be ungrateful for the small everyday blessings of life. When we open our minds to the attack of his Head of Blasphemy, the horn of support devises many justifiable reasons for our blasphemy. Our belittling attitude makes way for the horn of change to nurture discontent, restlessness, and irritation, until we try to provoke everyone and everything around us into changing. Many people are driven to constant change so that they are never satisfied. The Dragon also takes to take the truth that God has quickened to our souls and belittle it, change it, so that it is no longer meaningful to us. When he accomplishes this, our zeal to obey the Word of God is also affected.

d. The Head of Rebellion—Diamond Horn



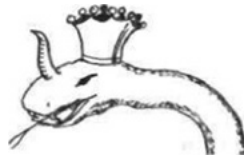
The fourth head of the Dragon is the Head of Rebellion or defiance, which carries the diamond horn. The word *diamond* means to cut, to eat, transparent, hard. In the beginning Lucifer used it to engrave the truth upon hearts. Now he uses it as a horn of unmerciful hardness. The nature of the Head of Rebellion manifests itself as a stubborn,

defiant resistor of the will of God.

From the beginning Lucifer has withstood, opposed, fought and worked against the will of God. The Dragon uses his Head of Rebellion, with its horn of unmercifulness and hardness, to split churches, ruin homes and lives. Lucifer does not care who he destroys. His primary objective is directed toward thwarting the wise design and plan in the hearts and lives of God's people. During the tribulation this Head of Rebellion and horn of hardness will be manifested in the Antichrist who will have no mercy or compassion. Those who refuse to accept the mark of the beast will be unable to buy or sell. Therefore, many will suffer and die from starvation. Those who hold true to their faith in Christ and refuse the mark of the Beast shall die as martyrs, unless they hide and escape.

The fleshly heart is naturally rebellious against the things of God, and the Dragon takes advantage of this fact. He uses his perverted wisdom, working through his Head of Rebellion, to stir up our fleshly rebellion. He knows that if he can persuade us to make an alliance with his demonic rebellion, then we will progress quickly from fleshly rebellion to open defiance against God and against all that is holy and righteous. When this happens, then the diamond horn of unmerciful hardness begins to wage aggressive warfare against the workings of God in our lives and the lives of others. Suddenly, nothing and nobody can please us, not even the Lord. As a result, we are quick to cut people down, since the unmerciful diamond stone manifests itself in clear, sharp words which eat into the very souls of those around us.

e. The Head of Ignorance—Jasper Horn



The fifth head of the Dragon is the Head of Ignorance, which carries the jasper horn. The word *jasper* means to polish, prevailing power, strength. A smooth or glossy polish is accomplished by friction. In other words, the roughness or the dullness of a stone is eliminated by someone who has the strength to repeatedly go over the same spot until he prevails over the condition of the stone.

Before he fell, Lucifer used this jasper stone as he carried God's Word among the angels. He had the strength of mind which enabled him to keep going over the same Word, until all the angels could see the truth glowing in its polished brilliance. But Lucifer perverted the jasper stone, and now he uses it in conjunction with his Head of Pretended Ignorance of the truth. The nature of this head is manifested as a betrayer of the truth.

When fallen Lucifer, speaking through the Serpent, approached Adam female, he did so by saying "Hath God said...?" In this way he betrayed the truth that he knew, and he prevailed over Adam female with pretended ignorance. By the repeated friction from his Head of Ignorance, fallen Lucifer eventually persuaded Adam female to betray the truth that had been committed unto her. Great is the power of the Head of Ignorance with its jasper horn of prevailing power.

The full stature of fallen Lucifer, with all his power and might, shall be manifested through the Antichrist during the tribulation period. Therefore, the Antichrist will also have the jasper horn of prevailing power from the Dragon. The Antichrist will use the Head of Pretended Ignorance of the truth to unite with the ignorance of the people so that there will be no awareness of the presence and power of God. Then he will use the perverted power of his jasper stone as a horn to make war against and prevail over the saints in the tribulation.

The Dragon uses the Head of Pretended Ignorance against us today by projecting his words into our minds. He starts by persuading us to question God's Headship in our lives. Then we may say, "How in the world can God be the head over such a tangled mass of confusion? Is God a God of order or not? Surely, you cannot believe that He had anything to do with *this* situation?" By his oft repeated words of ignorance, the Dragon prevails over us, and soon we find that we have betrayed the truth. What truth? The truth that God is the Head over ALL things. Since He is the Head over ALL things, then He has power over ALL things. He has power to redeem us from every situation which He permits to cross our pathway. The Head of Ignorance causes us to criticize, to feel discouraged and disappointed because we are unaware of the Headship of the Lord in ALL things. Beloved, the Head of Pretended Ignorance, with its corrupted horn of prevailing power, has brought many Christians down in defeat, but we have

overcoming power through the Lord Jesus Christ and His Spirit. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

f. The Head of Enchantment—Beryl Horn and Topaz Horn



The sixth head of the Dragon is the Head of Enchantment, which carries two horns: the beryl horn and the topaz horn. The word *beryl* means to test, to try or investigate. Lucifer once used this beryl stone to investigate the Word of God. He now uses it to provoke others to test, to try, to investigate the corrupted vices of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The word *topaz* means a pasture, a pleasant place, satisfaction, dwelling place.

Before he sinned, Lucifer possessed the topaz stone of truth, which enabled him to find pasture in the Word of God. He found the will of God a pleasant place, a satisfying place, a place where he could dwell in peace and contentment. In its perverted state, the beryl becomes a horn of experimenting which pushes men to try, to investigate the evil and wickedness of this world. The topaz stone has become a horn of delight and worship. It is this horn that drives men to seek pasture, to seek satisfaction and pleasure outside of the will of God. The nature of the Dragon's Head of Enchantment is to imitate. He has nothing real or satisfying; yet he uses his perverted power to make wickedness and evil and death seem more alluring than the pure, holy, righteous Word and will of God.

During the tribulation period, the Dragon will use his Head of Enchantment and the beryl horn to push people to the Beast, the Antichrist. He will cause them to experiment, to investigate the deep things of sin and wickedness through their worship of the Antichrist and his image. After using his Head of Enchantment to charm, to allure people to the Antichrist, and after he has pushed them with his beryl horn to investigate the depths of wickedness, then the Dragon will push them with the topaz horn of delight and worship so that they will be pleased and satisfied with their acceptance of the Antichrist as God. In turn, the Antichrist will use the beryl horn to test and to try the people of God, and thereby expose those whose trust and confidence in God is not well rooted and grounded.

The Dragon uses his Head of Enchantment with its horn of experimenting and its horn of delight as a powerful weapon of aggression against God's people. He charms us and causes us to experience delight and pleasure in things which are not of God and to bow down and worship them.

This particular head is directly responsible for many broken homes in the world today. He makes someone else's husband or wife seem much more appealing than the mate that they already have. Then the beryl horn pushes them to investigate the matter. Without realizing that they are under the enchantment of the Dragon's head, they may divorce their God-given companion and marry another. Even after the enchantment wears off, they are prodded by the topaz horn to continue to delight in their own perverse way. They worship their own will rather than to admit the truth that they have been tricked into settling for a cheap imitation for satisfaction.

The Dragon will accuse the things of God as being drab and uninteresting and unsatisfying. But he is a liar. Partaking of the pleasures that the Head of Enchantment offers with its imitative horns of experience and delight is not to be compared to the joy, ecstasy and delight found in the precious Lord Jesus Christ and in doing His will.

g. The Head of Deceit-Carbuncle Horn and Gold Horn



The seventh head of the Dragon is the Head of Deceit which carries the carbuncle horn and the gold horn. The word *carbuncle* means burning, flashing, like lightning. At one time Lucifer burned and flashed with the lightning power and zeal of Jehovah, but now he bums with zeal to exalt his purpose and his will. The gold is a picture of the divine nature of God, but the Dragon uses it now as a horn of show, a horn of exhibition, to attract men unto himself.

The nature of the Head of Deceit manifests itself as a separator. By using his Head of Deceit with its burning, flashing carbuncle horn and its shining horn of gold, Lucifer managed to deceive a third of the star angels of Heaven, and there he separated them from the divine will of God for their lives. Moreover, the angels who separated themselves unto Lucifer will experience an eternal separation from God and from all that is holy and pure.

During the tribulation, the Beast, the Antichrist, will use the carbuncle horn of glowing zeal to call down fire from Heaven. The Antichrist's Head of Deceit will be so skillful in presenting falsehood and his carbuncle horn so glowing with zeal, that he will deceive "them that dwell on the earth." What a fantastic show he will put on in that day in order to exalt himself before men. But, remember, all his power comes from the Dragon. The Head of Deceit also carries the gold which is the horn of show or exhibition. From the gold comes the horn to display and to make a show. With this horn the Antichrist will do miracles and exhibit his brilliance in order to deceive men. Those who follow after the Antichrist will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire, separated forever from the blessings and the personal presence of the Lord.

In our own day, we battle the Dragon's Head of Deceit. For example, many have been driven by this deceitful head and its carbuncle horn of burning zeal to the point of dying for their cause. Saints of God are sometimes motivated by the Dragon's horn of fiery zeal. They desire success, attention, reputation, and exaltation rather than the will of God. Many preachers have also come under the power of this horn of gold. When they minister with its brilliance and polish, they use it to show off and attract the people to themselves.

Thus, we have seen how Lucifer perverted his beautiful tenfold covering of beauty into ten horns of power which he also shares with the Antichrist. We are now ready to study about the Dragon's tail.

3. The Dragon's Tail

And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne (Revelation 12:4,5).

The Dragon's tail "drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth..." The tail speaks of apostasy. When the tail of the Dragon afflicts the children of God, they must war against the desire and temptation to apostatize. The desire to turn away from the truth is evidence of the working of the Dragon. It is his business to try to turn us away from the truth of God's Word. The children of Israel have always battled the Dragon's tail.

And die LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them..He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail (Deuteronomy 28:13-44).

God is speaking to Israel here, using the illustration of the tail to show them the position that they will have if they apostatize. In Isaiah 7:4-6 God likens the two apostate kings to tails. One sign of an apostate is his resistance to the truth. In actuality it is the Dragon's tail fighting God's truth through the apostates. Also in Isaiah 9:15 a false prophet is pictured as a tail because he teaches lies. Since the Devil is the father of all lies, it is not strange that the Dragon's tail ministers with this same lying spirit.

In chapter nine of Revelation we learned that the Locusts' tails had power to sting and to poison for five months with a torment like the torment of a scorpion when he strikes (Revelation 9:5). These horrible locust-like creatures are seen ascending from the Bottomless Pit as the fifth trumpet judgment is loosed upon the earth.

The Dragon uses his scorpion-like tail to draw the third part of the stars of Heaven and cast them to the earth. Some people say that these stars are drawn from the twelve stars in the Woman's crown, but this is contrary to what the Word says. It states that the stars are drawn out of Heaven, not out of the Woman's crown. Therefore, the stars mentioned here have to refer to the fallen angels. Angels are sometimes called stars in the Scriptures.

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:7).

Also, we can know from the point which we established in the beginning of this chapter that these stars could not be from the Woman's crown because she had overcome the full stature of fallen Lucifer. During her earthly

journey, the Bride, the Woman seated in the heavenlies, overcame Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, and the Dragon with his seven heads, his ten horns, his tail and his mouth. The overcoming power that she gained by stature is hers forever. Though the Woman has overcome the Dragon as far as her own spiritual growth is concerned, she still wars against him in order to bring the man child to birth. She is seen travailing in Heaven, but the man child is born on earth. We understand, then, that this is a spiritual birth of stature and growth that Christians on the earth, experience. It is the travailing and the crying of the Bride that is responsible for the man child attaining the shoulder realm of spiritual maturity. Those who grow to the shoulder realm possess ruling power.

The “dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born (Revelation 12:4). The Woman, the Bride, who had already attained to the head realm of the stature of Jesus Christ, contends with the Dragon which is the head realm stature of fallen Lucifer. Because of her overcoming power, she prevails over the Dragon and the man child is brought forth on the earth.

Whenever a spiritual birth takes place, the Dragon is greatly antagonized. Whenever children are being born into the Kingdom of God, we can expect the Dragon to be there with his power to war and to devour.

The man child whom the Woman travails to birth is “to rule all nations with a rod of iron.” In the original Greek, the word *rod* means to shepherd, pastor, supervise, a supervisor. In other words, the man child, the prince, will rule and reign upon the earth by leading and feeding the people with the Word of God during the Perfect Age. Beloved, the Truth is their royal sceptre of authority and strength.

The Dragon purposed to destroy the man child, but his plans are thwarted when the man child is caught up to God. The “catching away” of the man child occurs at the Rapture, which takes place just before the tribulation begins.

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days (Revelation 12:6).

The Rapture takes the overcomers out of the earth and leaves the other believers behind to go into the tribulation. This part of the Church goes into a wilderness state, spiritually speaking. All around them it is dry and barren because there is no water and no bread of the Word. The personal presence of the Holy Ghost will not be present to bless and to minister to the body of Christ as He does now. These believers will not be able to meet together in public church services, for the Antichrist will kill all Christians who show themselves openly. Unfortunately, some of these believers will succumb to the deceitfulness of the Antichrist and give their allegiance to him. This group will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Some of the Christians will be slain as martyrs at the very beginning of the tribulation period. They will give up their lives “for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held” (Revelation 6:9). Nevertheless, some of the Church will be nourished in the place prepared for her. This part of the Church will stand fast through the tribulation and will still be alive at the second coming of Christ with His Bride. Again, in verse six, we see the length of the Great Tribulation established as a thousand two hundred and threescore days or three and one half years.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him (Revelation 12:7-9).

Before the tribulation begins, there is war in Heaven! Michael and his angels fight against the Dragon and his angels. The Word of God mentions only one archangel by name, and that is Michael, also called the Chief Prince. The word *arch* means the one who is chief; therefore he is the commander of the angelic army of God. Some people say that Michael is the Son of God. However, this cannot be true because Michael will be with Jesus when He returns to catch away the wedding party (I Thessalonians 4:16).

We know from Daniel’s experience that Michael also wars in the realm of prayer. Daniel fell on his face, and a deep sleep came upon him. The Son of Man came in spirit and soul form and touched him and began to speak, saying:

...Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia

[not the literal prince, but the prince of this world who was behind the prince of Persia] withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, *Michael, one of the chief princes*, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days:... (Daniel 10:12-14).

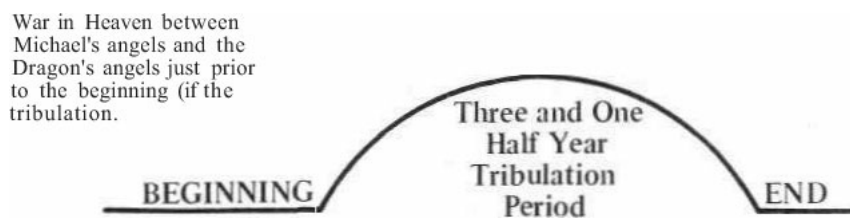
From the first day that Daniel began to pray and chasten himself, he was heard. But the spiritual prince of Persia withstood the Son of Man when He came to answer Daniel's prayer. Then Michael came to help in the warfare. In spite of spiritual resistance, Daniel's prayer was answered through the joint efforts of the Son of Man and Michael, the chief prince of God's army.

Not only does Michael war in prayer for us, but he also wars for the truth. "But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince" (Daniel 10:21).

Again Daniel prophetically sees Michael fighting for God's people at the end time, the end of the Gentile Age.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble [the Great Tribulation], such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book (Daniel 12:1).

Daniel received the revelation concerning a time of trouble such as has never been or ever will be again. Just prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation, which Daniel saw by prophetic vision, the two great opposing forces come to a final clash in Heaven.



Michael and his angels prevail against the Dragon and his forces utterly defeating them. The full stature of fallen Lucifer is cast out of Heaven forever. Up until this time, fallen Lucifer has had access to earth, to the heavens, and to the presence of God where he accuses the brethren day and night. But after this holy war, things are different: "neither was their place found any more in heaven." What beautiful words! The defeat of fallen Lucifer in Heaven is complete and final.

We have already taken a brief look at his seven heads, his ten horns of defensive and aggressive power, his tail. We shall now consider the Dragon's mouth.

4. The Dragon's Mouth

Fallen Lucifer once used his mouth to form words of praise and worship to God. He once spoke the truth and words of life, but now he uses his mouth to kill and to destroy.

a. Devours

...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born (Revelation 12:4).

The mouth of the Dragon devours. As the Woman was about to be delivered of the Man Child, the Dragon stood by, waiting to devour him. The Dragon hoped to destroy the Child before he reached his position of ruling and reigning which was appointed unto him.

b. Flood

And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth (Revelation 12:3 5,16).

A flood comes out of the Dragon's mouth. This is not a literal flood because the Dragon is a spiritual being. This is a flood of words which he spews out upon God's people who are left to go through the tribulation. Once before, the earth opened up to protect God's servants from a flood of words. This happened during Korah's rebellion. The sons of Korah unleashed a flood of accusations against the leadership of Moses and Aaron in order to destroy them. Although they cast forth their flood to drown God's appointed leaders, their efforts ended in failure, God judged Korah and caused the earth to open up and swallow the entire flood — the accusation and the accusers. The earth ministers again in the closing days by opening her mouth to swallow up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.

c. Frogs

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame (Revelation 16:13-15).

These three frog spirits are not just ordinary demon spirits, but they are the three supreme demons who control all the demons of covetousness, They are chief demons who covet the power and place of God and His Son.

As the tribulation nears an end, the Dragon, the False Prophet and the Beast, realizing that their time is short, enlist the help of these demons in order to make a last concerted effort to maintain their control of the throne in Jerusalem.

These three demons work miracles to draw together the armies of the whole world to war against Jesus Christ at Armageddon. They anoint the ten kings with a spirit of covetousness, so that they, too, desire the place and authority of the Christ; therefore, the kings bring their armies together in a united effort to keep the throne in Jerusalem for themselves.

It is not until they need reinforcements in their effort to hold their usurped place that the Beast, Dragon and False Prophet are willing to share their power with these three demons of covetousness. That is why we see the ten kings possessing power to war for just one hour.

The spirit of covetousness, which these frogs represent, resides in our carnal nature. People who covet a higher place, or more exaltation, are willing to share their sphere of influence and power with someone else who can be a stepping stone on the road to greater success, but they share their knowledge and ability only if it will further their own ambitions. What appears as an offer of friendship from such a person, turns out to be a seeking of more power and self-advancement.

Though it does not fit under any of the points on the outline of our study of the Dragon, at this place in chapter twelve of Revelation, there is a great rejoicing in Heaven when the accuser of the brethren is cast down to the earth. So we will deviate from our main study to briefly discuss this event.

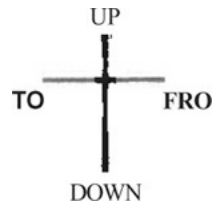
And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night (Revelation 12:10).

The "accuser of the brethren" refers particularly to the Satan side of the nature of fallen Lucifer. We see him in action in the Book of Job.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan [the adversary] came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan

answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face (Job 1:6-11).

Satan presented himself before the LORD and conversed freely with the LORD in Heaven. He had just come from the earth, from going to and fro and up and down (making the pattern of the cross).



The implication is that Satan has particular interest in those who are growing up in the stature of Jesus Christ. He threw a challenge into God's face concerning God's good servant who was perfect (as far as he had grown in his spiritual stature). Job was an upright and God-fearing man who hated evil. God accepted Satan's challenge, for He knew that Job would gain more spiritual stature if he were delivered from his self-righteousness.

Job successfully passed his first grueling test. He suffered the loss of his oxen, asses, sheep, camels, servants, and his sons and daughters. In spite of the losses sustained in the fierce testing, Job held fast to his integrity. But Satan was not content. In the second chapter of the Book of Job, Satan was back in Heaven accusing and degrading God's servant. This time he requested permission to afflict Job's flesh with horrible disease and suffering. He was convinced that personal suffering would surely provoke Job to curse God.

The accounts in the Book of Job clearly establish the insistent work of the accuser. He is determined to destroy the very servants of God. He accuses the brethren before God day and night. Day and night is a phrase that indicates the heights and depths of the great wheel of God. The day speaks of revelation and the great light of understanding; whereas the night relates to the hidden, obscure depths of the mysteries of God. We understand, then, that Satan is CONSTANTLY on the job.

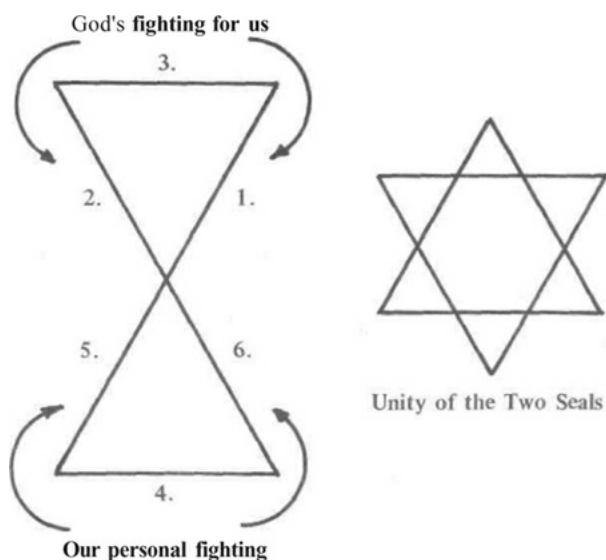
Just as long as God's wheel is turning, Satan is there to gouge, belittle, and accuse God's saints. The name *accuser* means to be against one in the assembly, to register a complaint at law; it comes from a root word which means opposition. Satan causes us much trouble when, as the Accuser, he approaches the judicial bench of Heaven and registers his complaints against the saints. It is particularly unfortunate if his charge against a saint is justifiable. Satan does not confine his accusations to facts, however. He is a deceiver and uses every device to degrade and destroy the servants of God. Beloved, we can take courage. We have an Advocate with the Father, and He is none other than Jesus Christ the righteous: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1).

B. VICTORY OVER THE DRAGON

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time (Revelation 12:11,12).

Some of the tribulation saints gain the victory over Satan, as well as the rest of fallen Lucifer's full stature of wickedness, and they use the same means that the saints of God have used to overcome him. The strategy for conquering any realm of Lucifer's wickedness has two aspects. Jesus Christ has already won the victory over all of Lucifer's power. Hence, half of the fighting against Lucifer's stature is done by Jesus on our behalf as we, by faith, claim His victory.

Revelation twelve shows the weapons which we, personally, must use to fight in order to win in this spiritual warfare. Together they form a seal of the Bride.



Regardless of the realm of spiritual wickedness that we are battling at any particular time, our part of the fight always remains the same. God's part of the warfare increases, however, in proportion to the degree of wickedness involved. God always has a realm of purity, holiness, and righteousness which is stronger and more powerful than any power of wickedness that Lucifer might use against us. However, since our subject is the Dragon, we shall limit our thoughts to how to gain the victory over the Dragon, the highest realm of spiritual wickedness.

God's fighting for us, His part of the battle against the Dragon, is revealed in the top triangle of the seal,

1. LORD Slays Him



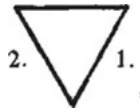
In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; *and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea* (Isaiah 27:1).

Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters (Psalm 74:13).

The name LORD, spelled with all capital letters, is used in the King James Version of the Bible to identify the tetragram name **JHVH**. Man has added the vowels to spell the name JeHoVaH, which means the Self-existent One who reveals Himself. Beloved, regardless of how the Dragon wars against us, God will reveal His Name, His Nature, in a measure that is able to slay the Dragon.

All that Israel had to do when the Red Sea was divided was to walk in the will of God that had been opened before them. The same waters that served as a wall of protection and a pathway of deliverance for the Israelites became the burial place for the Dragon-inspired forces that pursued them. Thus, the LORD revealed His Name which has power over the waters of death and over the Dragon power of fallen Lucifer. Hallelujah! This is the LORD'S victory.

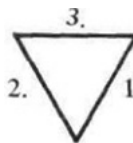
2. Arm of the LORD



Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? (Isaiah 51:9).

The right arm of the LORD signifies the overcoming power of the revealed Word of God. When the battle against the Dragon is great, we can cry unto the LORD to arise and bare His mighty right arm of truth. The revealed Word of the LORD has the authority and power to wound, to render powerless the Dragon's words of wickedness.

3. Tread under Foot

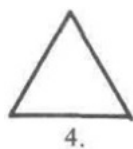


Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet (Psalm 91:13),

The 91st Psalm is rich with promise to those who will abide under the shadow of the Almighty, or in other words, live under the LORD's revealed Headship. Jesus Christ walked under His Father's revealed Headship all the days of His earthly journey. He died on the Cross and went to Death and Hell to obey His Father's Headship, but He did not stay dead. He did not stay in Hell. He came up with resurrection life! Beloved, with His crucified heel, Jesus trod the Dragon under His feet and used him as a stepping stone to higher heights in God. After His resurrection, Jesus the man, was made Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). He was made divine. The union that He maintained with the Father's will during the days of His flesh is now an eternal union. If we stay under the revealed Headship of Jesus Christ, He will use His crucified heel to tread the Dragon underfoot and let us move up higher in God.

Our part in the fight against the Dragon is the same as it is when we war against lesser degrees of fallen Lucifer's full stature. Our personal warfare is revealed in the bottom triangle of the seal.

4. Blood of the Lamb



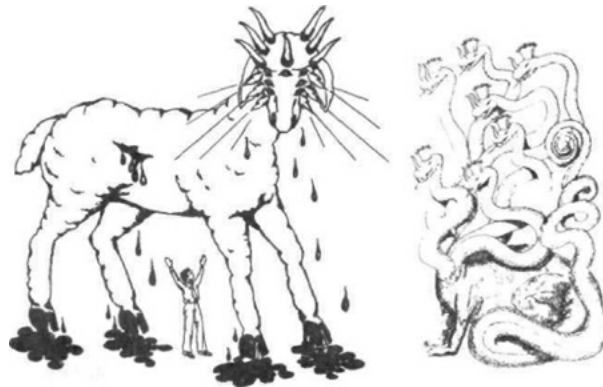
And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death (Revelation 12:11).

This particular verse gives us the last three points of the seal of the Bride. The second seal, or the bottom seal, is formed by our own personal effort. These are things which we must do for ourselves. God cannot do them for us. We are free moral agents with a will to choose to stand for God and righteousness. We must willingly choose to war and fight against fallen Lucifer's full stature of wickedness.

The first weapon that we must pick up and use is the Blood of the Lamb. Michael and his angelic army found the Lamb's Blood a powerful force against the Dragon and his army. It will also be a strong protection for us.

The Apostle John wept because he thought that none was worthy to open the sealed book, but one of the elders said "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." John turned, expecting to see a lion, and there stood a Lamb as it had been slain. Beloved, the slain Lamb has the nature of a lion to war and to protect those whom He gave His Blood to redeem.

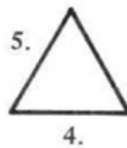
When the warfare against wickedness becomes intense, we can begin to plead the Blood of the Lamb, by faith, as a covering for our will, our mind, our spirit, our soul, and our body. Then the Lamb Blood will come and stand over us like a mighty Lion to protect His purchased possession.



We can place the whole man under the protection of His Blood. The Blood of God's Lamb, Jesus Christ, brings victory. His Blood has a voice, and it cries loudly in behalf of the truth. We are living in a world filled with demons, but we can withstand their influence and attack by putting the Blood round about our minds. Then the Blood will begin crying out for us. We can rejoice in the face of temptations, testings, and trials, for we have a fortress into which we can flee in times of need.

Just as the passover blood was efficacious for the children of Israel in the dreadful judgment of death that smote every firstborn in the nation, so is the Blood of Jesus Christ efficacious for us today. With His Blood upon the door posts and lintels of our hearts and lives, we, too, can rest in perfect safety,

5. Word of our Testimony

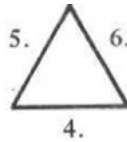


And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death (Revelation 12:11).

The second powerful force against the Dragon is the word of our testimony. In the heat of the battle we must begin to testify to the enemy about our personal faith in the power of the Blood to save us, to keep us, and to deliver us out of his hand. We must declare our faith and acknowledge that we are a Blood-bought child of God. We must use our own words to witness against the powers of darkness. As we testify, we place our minds and our thoughts in the area of light and truth. We also need to speak the Word of God, the Word of Truth.

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He withstood the tempter by testifying, by speaking the Word of God. Quoting the Word of God aloud is a wonderful way to strengthen and fortify our own faith in hours of dark testing and battle. Sometimes the battle pushes us down into discouragement and depression. This is the time to stand up and testify to ourselves, to others, to Satan, to the Devil, to the Serpent, and to the Dragon. It will not be long before we testify ourselves into victory. Words of truth are powerful. This is a real secret of being victorious in spiritual warfare. The Truth is our secret weapon, as it were, against the lying words of Lucifer.

6. Loved not their Lives unto Death



And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death (Revelation 12:11).

The last point on our seal for victory against the full stature of fallen Lucifer is found in the phrase “loved not their lives unto death.” It is natural for us all to love our lives, our physical life as well as our fleshly, carnal life. Self preservation is one of the strongest motivations in our lives. The enemy knows this and uses it against us, for he attacks us through fear. He knows just how to bind us up, how to threaten us with fear of death. It is difficult for mortal beings to be willing to die in their fight against sin rather than to live in sin. It may be difficult, but it is not impossible. The answer is crucifixion. We can surrender our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. After all, we are not our own. We have been bought with a precious price, the Blood of Jesus Christ. When striving against sin we have to lay our lives down at the feet of Jesus in full surrender and yieldedness to His will. He can make us willing even to die rather than yielding to sin by taking our own will and our own way. Beloved, when we love God’s will more than we love our own lives, either naturally or spiritually, we have victory.

We have just learned that victory over the Dragon is accomplished in a sixfold manner: (1) the LORD slays him; (2) the Arm of the LORD wounds him; (3) Jesus Christ treads him underfoot; (4) by the Blood of the Lamb; (5) by the word of our testimony; and (6) by loving not our lives. Beloved, there is never any question about God’s doing His part in our spiritual warfare against the Dragon. His defeat is inevitable if we do our part.

Michael and his angels won the victory in the heavenly warfare against the Dragon and his forces because they used the Blood in Heaven that Jesus placed there. Through the Lamb’s Blood, the word of their testimony, and by surrendering to lose their lives rather than to come under subjection to Lucifer’s wickedness, they overcame the enemy. So this is how they won their victory in the battle in Heaven.

Likewise, most of our battles are fought in the spiritual realm in the heavenlies. We do not fight against flesh and blood, but we battle in spiritual places against real spiritual forces, not figments of our imagination (Ephesians 6:12). We must war against the wicked thoughts, words, and deeds which fallen Lucifer puts in our minds, either directly or through other individuals who have yielded themselves to his control.

In view of the victory won in Heaven, when Lucifer is forever cast out, all Heaven and its inhabitants rejoice. Never again will fallen Lucifer show his face within the sacred courts of Heaven, The victory is irrevocable. The Dragon, the Serpent, the Devil, and Satan are forever shut out. Their defiling presence will no longer have to be endured.

Although this brings great joy and celebration in Heaven, it brings the pronouncement of “Woe,” misery, pain, suffering, torment, violence, death, deceit, wickedness, to the earth and the sea with its inhabitants. Now the full concentration of evil and wickedness is focused upon the earth; it is confined here as never before. Moreover, the Dragon comes in great wrath, for he boils with hatred and venom because of his recent defeat in Heaven. He has already had the death blow and he knows his time is short. He is going to make use of every bit of that time.

Lucifer knows that he is defeated and that his time is limited. After he is cast out of Heaven, he has only three and one half years left before he is cast into the Bottomless Pit for a thousand years. Lucifer has already been consigned to Hell, and his ultimate end will be the Lake of Fire. He knows that his time is short, and he knows his eternal destination. Yet for a small degree of pleasure, the pleasure of a little worship, he is willing to continue his route of rebellion.

The trinity of evil will be revealed in the Great Tribulation. The Dragon is a type of God, the Father; the Antichrist is a type of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and the False Prophet is the type of the Holy Ghost. Fallen Lucifer is going to imitate God in every way possible. God is a trinity; therefore, Lucifer will also arrange a trinity. Consider the determined effort of this created angelic being. He has worked viciously down through the centuries of time, ever since his rebellion in Heaven. Yet the height of satisfaction that he will know is experienced during the brief rule and reign of three and one half years when he is worshipped in the person of the Antichrist.

Since human beings have this same perverted satanic will in them, their behavior is much like that of fallen Lucifer. Countless human beings have utterly destroyed themselves and others in their desperate drive for a brief time of pleasure. Many families and homes have been wrecked for the sake of a few moments of lustful pleasure. Only God knows how many people have rejected His unspeakable gift of Jesus Christ for a few years of success, ambitious fulfillment, or some other sort of self-satisfaction. What are a few years in comparison with all eternity?

The Woman in Heaven (the Bride portion of the Church) has already won her victory. She is safe at home with her Heavenly Bridegroom, and with her are her children, the princes, the man child. All the entire wedding party have come home. They have all made their exodus from the earth and are now forever joined to the presence of the Lord. Heaven is prepared for a great wedding feast, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The wicked, defiling presence of fallen Lucifer has been removed. Ecstasy and delight and peace vibrate throughout the angelic realm. Finite beings cannot possibly imagine the rejoicing in Heaven at this time.

At this same time, the Woman on earth (the part of the Church that was not counted worthy to be raptured), feels the full blast of the wrath of the Dragon as he lashes out in his last struggle before his death. The full impact of his wrath is directed toward the Woman on earth.

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child (Revelation 12:12,13).

Although the Bride part of the Church has already made her exodus from earth by way of the Rapture, the saints who remain are still part of the Church. As far as the Dragon is concerned, the Church is the one who is responsible for his ignominy. It was the raptured Church and the man child whom she brought to birth who overcame the Dragon. So he vents his rage on the portion of the Church that is left.

C. THE CHURCH'S ADDED PROTECTION AGAINST THE DRAGON

And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:14-17).

The Church, or the Woman, on earth has four means of protection, which are weapons in the spiritual warfare that ensues: (1) the Blood of the Lamb, (2) the Word of their testimony, (3) loving not their lives unto the death, and (4) two wings of a great eagle. Since we have already discussed the first three protections in connection with how we get the victory over the Dragon, we shall concentrate on the two wings of the eagle.

Again we see a period of time mentioned that is equivalent to three and one half years, for she (*the* Woman) is nourished and sustained throughout the entire tribulation period. The tune is indicated as "a time (one year), and times (two years), and half a time (one-half year)." The wilderness into which she flees is a spiritual one. Since God's Word also specified "her place," then we know that God has provided a hiding place for her protection. The "two wings of a great eagle" must also be spiritual. Simple logic tells us that this cannot be a literal eagle with its two wings. Since we know that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we can be sure that this particular principle of His operation is explained by some happening in the past. Somewhere in God's Word there is a similar type of battle and a similar type of deliverance.

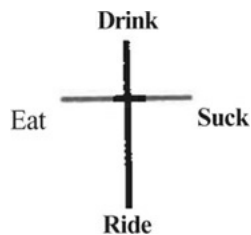
The nation of Israel serves as the example to show what these wings really are. Remember that Israel fled into the wilderness to escape the wrath of Pharaoh (a type of the Antichrist), and as they sojourned there, God provided for them and protected them against their enemy. God will preserve and nourish the Woman in the earth during the tribulation in the same manner, and He will keep her from the attacks of her arch enemy, the Antichrist.

And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou

say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how I bare you on eagles' wings*, and brought you unto myself (Exodus 19:3,4).

He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. *As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; So the LORD alone did lead him*, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the bread of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape (Deuteronomy 32:10-14).

Did Israel experience the eagle wings? She most surely did. This term is symbolic, for we know that Israel did not literally ride upon His wings and fly into Canaan's land with effortless ease. Nevertheless, God had some kind of wings that carried them along. These are the same wings that carry the Woman into the wilderness. Notice the rich blessings that Israel enjoyed as she rode upon the wings. There is a small stature of blessing that Israel partook of as long as she stayed on the Lord's wings.



God said, "I bore you like an eagle on wings." As long as Israel rode on these wings, as it were, she had the privilege of riding on the high places of the earth. There were no valleys in her experience. By gift the Lord lifted her above them. The mountain top experiences are our times of blessing, exaltation, and revelation; whereas the valleys symbolize our humiliations, battles, darkness, and hard trials. When carried along on the LORD'S eagle wings, we are not conscious of the valley experiences but only of the high places of the earth.

As long as we are in this earth, our experiences, as followers of Christ, will always fluctuate between the heights and the depths, for there are lessons to learn and treasures to be found in both places. Since this life's journey is our period of learning and preparation, our education encompasses both the humility aspect and the exaltation. But if we are walking in humility and obedience to the will of God, and if we are walking in fellowship with the Word and the Spirit, it matters little whether we are up or down, high or low. For example, because we fly in pressurized airplanes today, we are not conscious as far as our comfort is concerned, whether the plane is flying at 30,000 feet or at a lower altitude. We sit comfortably adjusted to the changes of altitude in our pressurized cabin and feel little or no distress, unless the change is sudden and violent. There is a place in God that can be likened to this pressurized cabin. There is a peace and a rest in Him that can be attained, now, by growth in spiritual stature. As long as we are rightly related to His will and fully absorbed in Him, our external circumstances have little effect on us. Even so, Israel was privileged to RIDE on the LORD's eagle wings, (LORD meaning Jehovah, the self-existent one, the God who reveals Himself).

In addition to saying that Israel could ride on the high places, the LORD said "that he might *eat* the increase of the fields." As they were riding on God's spiritual wings, they were also in the position to eat of the increase of the land. As long as she stayed in the riding position, Israel was assured that there would be no famine nor want of food. Instead, the opposite would be their experience, for they would feast upon the increase of the fields.

The third promise to Israel as they rode on the eagle wings was that they would *suck* honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, and enjoy the milk and the fat. The word *suck* in the Hebrew means to absorb with action or force. Before all this benefit could be enjoyed, Israel must first ride, then eat, and then suck. The rock is emphasized here, and we know that the Rock that followed Israel in the wilderness was the Christ (I Corinthians 10:4). Christ is the Word, and those who ride on the wings of the eagle shall know the joy of sucking out the honey, the oil, the milk, and the fat of the Word. There should be no leanness among us, for God has well provided for His people.

And fourthly, there was the promise of the blessing of drink; “and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.” Wine is a picture of the resurrected Blood of Jesus Christ. This speaks of the wine of joy and delight that is ours as we ride on the eagle wings of the LORD.

Let us return to Israel’s experience in order to see how they won their victory by the very same principles given in Revelation 12:11-14. The Woman overcomes by using the Blood, the word of her testimony, loving not her life unto death, and by the wings of the eagle. Therefore, we should find that these same principles worked with the Church of Israel. Israel’s experience in Egypt brought her into the wilderness phase of her journey, where she was called a Church.

And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians (Exodus 12:35,36).

The children of Israel slaughtered their passover lamb and applied its blood to the two side posts and the lintel of their doors. This blood protected the whole household of the believing Israelites that night while they partook of the roasted Lamb. All of the people were aware that the time of their exodus from Egypt was soon at hand. The “Blood of the Lamb” worked for them, even as it will work to protect the Church during the Great Tribulation. Moses further instructed them. They were to go to their neighbors and testify to them saying, “We are going to Canaan’s land! Lend [give] us some of your gold, silver, linen, and other fabrics.” This was the word of their testimony. They testified to the truth through *sheer faith*.

It took boldness and courage for slaves to walk into their captor’s households and ask for their wealth. The Egyptians could have resisted them, but the Israelites were willing to risk their lives to escape the bondage they were in. They surely appeared as irrational mad men to the Egyptians. Imagine the Egyptians’ reactions to being told that a mass of three million slaves were going to attempt a journey through a barren wilderness to an unknown land. They must have thought that the Hebrews were insane. It seemed utterly preposterous to even think that so many could be fed and cared for under such circumstances. But the Israelites loved not their lives unto death. They witnessed to their neighbors and walked away with the “spoils of the Egyptians,” so they left the land of bondage with enough wealth in their possession to build the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Taking their lives in their own hands, they dared to walk out on Pharaoh. Maybe they would all be killed. Surely Pharaoh would never allow them to simply walk out. Nevertheless, they started trudging along until they came to the Red Sea, where they reached an impasse. There seemed to be no way of escape.

As the Church in the tribulation will war against the seven heads of the Serpent-Dragon, so Israel fought the identical war with Pharaoh, who was just the tool of the Serpent. As we study Israel’s experience with Pharaoh, we see a clear picture of the seven heads of the Serpent.

Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of die dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness (Psalm 74:13,14).

The Psalmist was referring to the children of Israel’s flight through the Red Sea. God divided the Red Sea with His strength so that the Israelites could escape the pursuit of Pharaoh and his army. The perverted wisdom of the Serpent was at work through Pharaoh. When God brought the sea together, the waters closed upon them, and Pharaoh and his army were broken to pieces. And in the breaking of the natural army, the power of the seven heads of the Serpent was also broken. The broken heads became “meat” to the children of Israel encamped in the wilderness. They shouted, danced, and leaped for joy on the shores of the Red Sea. When the heads of the Serpent are broken, our meat, too, is joy.

The Serpent-Dragon still opposed the people of God. He wars with his seven heads (afflictions, death, blasphemy, rebellion, ignorance, enchantment, and deceit) against all those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, against those who seek to press into Canaan’s land of spiritual marriage union with the Lord. After the Dragon is cast out of Heaven into the earth, these seven heads will persecute the Woman who flees into the wilderness.

So we see the same principles put to use by the Israelites in their exodus from Egypt that operate for the Church

during the tribulation. But we have yet to identify the eagle wings which also carried them along into deliverance and victory. Let us read more about these wings.

And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people (Exodus 13:20-22).

This Scripture explains what the wings were. They were the Cloud and Fire. When Israel stayed under the Cloud and Fire, the flood which the Serpent spewed after them (as he worked through Pharaoh), could not touch them. The Cloud and Fire was their protection and guidance both by night and by day. The pillar of Fire was darkness to the Egyptians, but to the Israelites it was light, light that ministered trust, faith, confidence and assurance.

The Serpent-Dragon did not trouble the children of Israel as long as they were toiling in their servitude to Pharaoh. But as soon as the word got out that God had sent a man named Moses to lead God's people to Canaan's land, then the Serpent-Dragon started spewing forth a flood of affliction, a flood of death, a flood of blasphemy, a flood of rebellion, a flood of ignorance, a flood of enchantment, and a flood of deceit at them. But God helped Israel, and the Red Sea opened up and swallowed all of the Serpent-Dragon's spewings. The heads of the Serpent-Dragon were broken and destroyed in the Red Sea.

God gave Israel the Blood and the Word of their testimony. He gave them the power to love not their lives even unto the death, and He gave them the two eagle wings of the Holy Ghost (the Cloud and Fire). When Pharaoh and his army were closely pursuing Israel, God stretched His big eagle wings over His people and the Egyptians did not dare to come near the Israelites all night.

This secret of victory is applicable to us today, just as it will be for the Woman in the tribulation. God gives us His eagle wings of the Holy Ghost Cloud and Fire. If we will walk in the Spirit, be filled with the Spirit, live in the Spirit, then we will have nothing to fear. The Holy Ghost eagle wings will carry us along into safety, but they will be instruments of punishment to us if we rebel against the leading of the Holy Ghost.

An example of this is found in Israel's experience at Mount Sinai. Who brought the nation of Israel to Mount Sinai? The Scriptures state that the Cloud and Fire led them there. It was on Mount Sinai that Israel received the Law of God.

God ministered out of the Cloud and Fire to the children of Israel through His appointed leaders, Moses, Aaron and Miriam. These three led the nation of Israel to Canaan's land. Their journey had hardly begun when the Israelites began murmuring and complaining about many things, even against their leaders. However, God's appointed leaders stood under the protection and direction of the "eagle wings" of the Holy Ghost Cloud and Fire. When the people brought accusations against God's leaders, the guilty parties received a terrible flogging from the eagle's wings.

The wings of the eagle are the wings of the Holy Ghost Cloud and Fire that will lead us to the Lord. The ones who stayed inside the protection of the Cloud made it into Canaan's land. In fact, of the original adults who left Egypt, only four, Joshua, Caleb, Phineas and Eleazar, made it to Canaan's land. God raised up a new generation in the wilderness, and it was they who crossed over Jordan, plus the four who did not rebel against the Cloud and Fire.

Just as Israel was preserved from the Serpent-Dragon as he worked through Pharaoh, so God protects the Church by carrying her into the wilderness, thus saving her from the tremendous flood of deceit and lies which will pour forth from the Antichrist in the Great Tribulation period. The Serpent-Dragon will cast out of his mouth "water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." Even as the Woman flees into the wilderness, the Serpent follows her with his flood, water out of his mouth.

The word *water* means something appealing, tasty, something good to drink. Water gives strength and refreshment. But this is deceitful water because it comes out of the mouth of the Serpent-Dragon. The water that he offers the Church looks white, clear, beautiful, and refreshing, but it is a deceitful flood, a flood of false doctrines and lies that the vast majority of people on the earth will believe.

A flood speaks of overflowing water. There are different classes of water in the loins of God. For example, there are springs, fountains, rivers and seas. Then there are floods, waves, and billows. These great waters in the loins of God united with the procreating power of the living seed of the Word of God, and from this union issued forth all of His creative works.

When fallen Lucifer says or does something, we can be sure that he has stolen it from God. Originally Lucifer

had truth and reality, but the portion of the truth that he stole, he perverted and corrupted with His satanic will. Out of the eight classes of floods in the loins, fallen Lucifer stole the fourth class, which has to do with the flood of exaltation and prosperity.

When Lucifer was privileged to walk up and down in the midst of the stones of fire in God's loins, he stole a portion of this fourth class of flood. The word *stones* means a building, a creating, a begetting of children. These stones were the seeds of the souls and spirits of all men. Everything that God created has come out of His creative loins. Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, was privileged to walk up and down in the loins of God. While he had this position, he had occasion to observe what God had within Himself. Lucifer was exalted to this place by gift, not by spiritual stature. Had he stayed obedient to the will of God, no doubt he would have grown in his experience and relationship with God, but he rose in proud rebellion, and God cast him out of Heaven (Ezekiel 28:14-16). No doubt it was when Lucifer was privileged to walk in the loins of God that he stole some of this fourth class of floods.

So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him (Isaiah 59:19).

We may expect the enemy to come in like a flood. He comes in with the flood of prosperity and exaltation. His first approach to man was with a flood of words. He urged Adam female to eat of the forbidden fruit, for it would make her wise, prosperous, and exalted. In fact, she would be as the gods. Instead of mounting the wings of the Holy Ghost dove, or eagle (which is our standard against the enemy), she readily opened herself to the tasty and pleasurable flood that came out of the Serpent's mouth.

The natural eagle has an interesting characteristic. Usually carnivorous birds carry their young in their claws, but eagles carry their young on their wings. Nothing can touch their young, until it has first touched the parent bird. Beloved, the eagle wings of God will carry us along in complete safety and protection. We can mount up so high that we are oblivious to the Serpent's flood in our lives. Had Adam female climbed on the wings of God's Spirit (God's eagle), she would have mounted up above the Tempter and would have been victorious over the temptation. Instead, she opened her mouth and swallowed the flood that he offered her.

Our victory is in the Cross. Jesus Christ died there, both as a man and as God (God in flesh). He is our provision for victory over the Serpent and his flood.

And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth (Revelation 12:16).

Jesus, because He was human, had some earth, as it were. His earth will swallow up the deceitful floods of the Serpent-Dragon. The Spirit of the Lord will raise up as our standard, lifting us on the two wings of His Eagle, the wings of the Holy Ghost. Then where is our battle? We have none. Where is our temptation? We have overcome and mounted above the storm clouds, so we are privileged to ride above the storm. We are privileged to eat, to suck, and to drink of the nourishment, the joy and delight of the abundant supply of God's Word. When the flood from the Serpent's mouth offers us exaltation and prosperity outside of God's will, if we swallow it, it will be death to us, just as it was to Adam female.

Our earth is in a fallen and corrupt state because of its union with the perverted will of fallen Lucifer. Our earth is hard with pride; it has no power to swallow up the Serpent's flood, but Jesus' earth can. This is why we must frequently go to the *out pasture* of crucifixion. As we yield ourselves for a new measure of crucifixion to be worked in our lives, we can, by faith, offer up our flesh for a new experience of death. Death means separation. Through crucifixion we can be separated from our old carnal nature and find new union with the nature of Jesus Christ. We can lay hold of a new portion of His earth. When the enemy comes along like a flood, God will permit the humble earth of Jesus to open and swallow up the flood.

The word *flood* also means to assemble and to flow together. In other words, the water promises unity. It also means to enlighten. The Serpent-Dragon comes in like a flood to enlighten us. He promised Adam female light "you will *know* good and evil..."; and when his flood came down upon her, she began to see the tree of knowledge of good and evil as something pleasant. It was actually a tree of death, but looking at the tree through eyes of the Serpent, Adam female saw that it was a tree to be desired. When the flood of deceit engulfs a human being, white becomes black and black becomes white. Although all of the Serpent's promises are deceitful lies, he makes them sound reasonable and attractive. His promises are a flood of death, spiritual and physical, but the most serious is the

spiritual death. The thing that the Serpent presented which seemed so appealing to Adam female became God's rod of judgment upon her, because she partook of it outside of God's will. The principle of how our sin becomes the instrument of our judgment is vividly described in the twentieth chapter of Job:

His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth: Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him. He hath swallowed down riches, and shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly. He shall suck the poison of asps: the viper's tongue shall slay him. He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks or honey and butter (Job 20:11-17).

These Scriptures are not speaking of natural things, but truth is revealed through the use of natural pictures. The judgment of the wicked will be horrible. God will use the sinner's sin to punish him. These words of truth are a warning to us, for these wicked "shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks or honey and butter..." The wicked shall not see God's true flood of prosperity and exaltation, because they have swallowed the Serpent's flood of false exaltation.

If we desire true and lasting prosperity and exaltation, we must be directly opposite to the description given in the above verses. Instead of being wicked, we need to be pure. Instead of being dishonest, we need to be honest. Instead of being insincere, we need to be sincere. God has floods of prosperity, exaltation, and blessings to bestow upon those who love and obey His Word. His water is truly drinkable, enlightening, and unifying. The wings of the eagle will carry us unto God, who delights in giving us His floods of true prosperity and exaltation.

Fallen Lucifer is a liar. When he spews his floods (his waters), offering us exaltation, satisfaction, unity, enlightenment, never forget that his very nature is to deceive and to lie. When the Serpent's flood is spewed out against us, we must take a trip to the *out pasture* of crucifixion. Here we lay off some of our own fleshly nature and appropriate the earth of Jesus Christ by faith. His earth was crucified and buried, but it is now resurrected and exalted at the right hand of God. His earth has the power to swallow up the flood of the enemy. After we have partaken of His resurrection life, having crucified a portion of our Self-life, we are ready to climb onto the wings of God's eagle, the Holy Ghost, and fly up into the heights. The power of the Holy Ghost lifts us into God's presence and allows us to partake of His loins, His floods of prosperity and exaltation.

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

The Rapture ends the Dispensation of Grace. When this period of time draws to a close, it also ends everyone's chance for any additional spiritual growth. Whatever spiritual growth we attain must be achieved during the period of grace which God has allowed us. Once the Rapture has taken place there will be no chance of spiritual stature for those in Heaven or for those who are left behind to go into the tribulation.

During the tribulation, God's personal presence will not be felt as it is now because of the tremendous cloud of Lucifer's army that will cover the earth. Certainly it will be far more difficult to stand during the dreadful time of wickedness than it is to stand for God now. There will be no Christian church services where the truth of God's Word is preached. There will be no Holy Ghost anointed and empowered ministries such as we have today. The personal presence of the Holy Ghost will be lifted from the earth during the tribulation; nevertheless, He will be here by His omnipresence. The omnipresent eagle wings are powerful and strong to protect the believers in that day.

Although the mystery of iniquity is at work in the earth right now, the progress of wickedness and evil is restrained (II Thessalonians 2:1-12). During the tribulation these hindrances will be gone, and evil will be rampant. This is why the Antichrist will be able to overcome many believers (Revelation 13:7). Were it not for the mercy of God, which causes the earth to open up and swallow the flood of death spewed after the Woman, very few would survive.

The Dragon is enraged with the Woman and continues to fight her by warring with the remnant of her seed. The remnant are saved people who testify to their salvation through the Blood of the Lamb. Because they are Blood relatives to the Woman and keep the commandments of God, the Dragon hates them. As a result of the intense warfare, some Christians will surrender to the Antichrist and be lost. But others will stand true to Jesus Christ and their testimony and die as martyrs. Another portion of the Woman's seed will be hidden away in the wilderness and

nourished through the entire tribulation period.

It is the time of great WOE to the inhabitants of the earth!

¹² B. R. Hicks, *Lucifer*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1970).

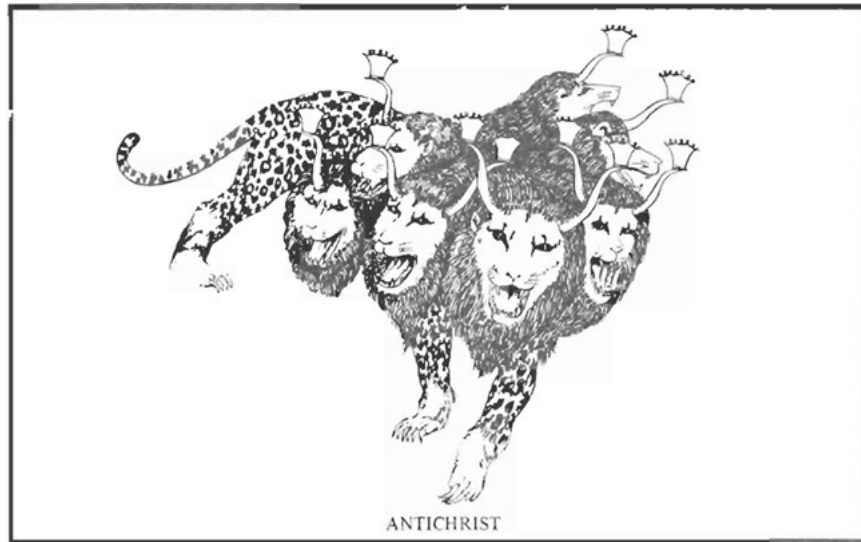
CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE STATURE OF THE ANTICHRIST (Revelation 13:1-10)

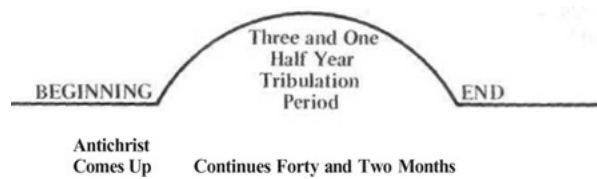
The spirit of Antichrist is already at work in the world, opposing and resisting all that is of God. This is why we see false Christs and prophets who forerun the Antichrist and deceive many. At the appointed time, the Antichrist will appear upon the earth as a resurrected human being who has great power to work miracles and wonders, and who speaks blasphemies against God, deceiving many.

The Antichrist, with his monstrous nature, will set forth the mystery of iniquity and tyranny for a season, until God brings judgment upon His seat of power and authority. Also the world and man's works are destined for the judgment of God. God will not be slack concerning His promise of judgment. Although the scoffers increase among us in the last days, this will not prevent God from fulfilling His Word. There are many things which prove to us that we are near the end of this dispensation. Men are lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (II Timothy 3:2-4). "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13). The stage is being set for the personal appearance of the Antichrist,

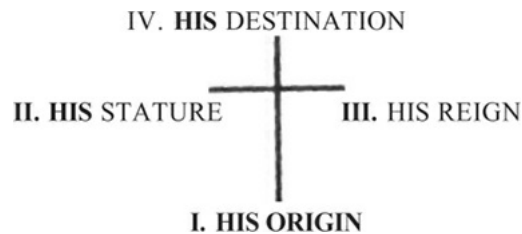
It behooves us, then, to know the truth, for we are in the day of seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The Word of God has not left us ignorant about the things that are yet to come.



In relation to the tribulation period, the Antichrist makes his appearance a very short time before the Rapture of the Bride and the wedding party. As soon as they are taken out of the earth, the Great Tribulation begins. The Antichrist is given power to continue forty and two months, or in other words, for the entire three-and-one-half-year tribulation period.



As children of light, we are forewarned to be forearmed. Let us study the stature of truth which exposes and reveals the Antichrist.



I. HIS ORIGIN

A. SEED OF THE SERPENT

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (Genesis 3:15).

The seed of the Antichrist had its origin in this present world in the Garden of Eden when Adam's female yielded to the Serpent's temptation and disobeyed God's command. As God spoke words of judgment upon present man's sin, at the same time He held forth a hope and a promise of a Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

When God referred to the Serpent's seed, this was the first mention of the ANTICHRIST in the Word of God. This was the beginning of the perpetual quarrel between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil. Since this time, war has been proclaimed between the seed of the woman and the seed of the Serpent. There has been an unceasing conflict between grace and corruption in the hearts of God's people. Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, and the Dragon assault, buffet, sift and seek to devour God's people. By the exercise of their graces, the people of God resist, wrestle, quench the enemy's fiery darts, and force him to flee from them. The woman's seed, JESUS CHRIST, was to bruise the head (head speaks of authority and power) of the Serpent; whereas the Serpent's seed was to bruise the heel of the Woman's seed. This prophecy was fulfilled when Judas betrayed Jesus into the hands of the enemy. When Jesus went to the Cross, He bruised the head of the Serpent.

Although the Antichrist, the seed of the Serpent, has not yet been revealed, we see his spirit working in the earth today (1 John 4:3).

B. BODY OF SATAN

Jesus answered them. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve (John 6:70,71).

The body of the Antichrist has its origin in the person of Judas Iscariot. Satan needs a physical body to work through, just as God had a body to work through in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. God prepared a body within the womb of the Virgin Mary, and He was called Jesus. When God sent the Angel Gabriel to give Mary a message, He was fulfilling the Eden prophecy about the coming of the woman's seed. While Mary was overshadowed by the power of the Almighty God, the divine seed of Christ, the Word, entered into the physical body of Jesus in its prenatal state.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS...The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that

holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:31 -35).

In like manner, Satan also entered a body, the body of Judas. Even before Judas betrayed Jesus, the Devil had access to Judas in a special way. Although we have no record of this fact, we can assume from other evidence that Satan sought out a woman with child; and in one way or another he corrupted her seed, for Judas was the fulfillment of God's prophecy that the Serpent's seed would bruise the heel of the woman's seed. We have only one record of Satan personally entering a human being and that person was Judas.

Jesus established this fact when He recognized that one of the twelve disciples was a devil. Jesus did not say that he was *possessed* with a devil, but that he *was* a devil. In the Greek this word devil is *diabolos* which in English means adversary, usually translated Satan. On the occasion of this revelation, Peter had undertaken to declare the faithfulness of the disciples to their Master, Jesus Christ. But Jesus corrected Peter by stating that Judas not only *had* a devil, but that he *was* a devil, or the seed of the Serpent. Again we find this statement concerning Judas in Luke 22:3: "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve."

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean...When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake...He then tying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly...He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night (John 13:10-30).

Judas Iscariot partook of the feast of the passover with Jesus and the disciples. He even dipped his hand into the dish to symbolize his loyalty and unity with Jesus. He permitted the Lord to bow in humility before him and wash his feet. After Judas received the sop from the hand of Jesus, Satan entered into him. From then on he was possessed with a prevailing prejudice against Christ and His doctrine. Satan excited him with the covetous desire of the wages of unrighteousness. Judas then openly manifested that he was a devil, the son of perdition. Thus, Judas' body became the property of Satan; by right of ownership, Judas' physical body became Satan's body. Jesus turned Judas over to Satan to do and to be what he chose. When Judas is resurrected to become the Antichrist, he will give himself completely to the control of Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, and the Dragon. Judas was the physical manifestation of the Serpent's seed, or Satan's body.

C. BOTTOMLESS PIT - Sea

The resurrected body of the Antichrist originates out of the Bottomless Pit, which is synonymous with the Sea.

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth..And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the *bottomless pit* shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them (Revelation 11:3-7).

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

The Antichrist imitates the Resurrected Christ in every possible way to deceive the world. It is stated twice that the beast *was* (has lived before), *is not* (died), *and shall ascend and yet is* (will live again).

The beast that thou sawest *was*, and is *not*; and *shall ascend* 'out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet *is*. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth...And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition (Revelation

17:8-11).

Some people have erroneously interpreted the seven heads and seven mountains upon which the woman sits to be the city of Rome situated upon its seven natural hills. However, the Word of God shows that the woman is none other than Old Jerusalem.

And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration (Revelation 17:5,6).

And the woman which thou sawest is that *great city* which reigneth over the kings of the earth (Revelation 17:18).

And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the *great dry*, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (Revelation 11:8).

And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth (Revelation 18:24).

The woman rides on the back of the Beast* The seven heads and seven mountains symbolize the heads of power and authority from the Dragon. We have already mentioned that there is a stature of names which designates the nature and person of fallen Lucifer.

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years (Revelation 20:2).



The Dragon represents the full stature of fallen Lucifer and signifies the apex of his diabolical power. The Beast, the Antichrist, will have the full image and stature of Satan, Devil, Serpent, and Dragon when he arises out of the Bottomless Pit.

And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast (Revelation 17:10-12).

Five of the kingdoms mentioned here had already passed into oblivion, namely: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media and Persia and Greece. The expression *one is* represents the Roman Empire, which was in supremacy at the time that the Book of Revelation was given to John on the Isle of Patmos. “And the other is not yet come” refers to the ten-toed kingdom that was recorded in Daniel’s prophecies (Daniel 2). We notice also, that the Beast is the eighth, and is *of* the seven. The sixth kingdom, the Roman Empire, existed in John’s day. The Jewish nation was part of that Empire. The seventh kingdom was to arise out of the division of the Roman Empire, of which the Jewish nation was still a part. Then an eighth kingdom was to arise out of part of the seventh kingdom. In other words, since the Antichrist has to be a Jew in order to imitate the true Christ, he must arise out of the Jewish section of the divided

Roman Empire.

The seventh kingdom, the last Gentile kingdom, will be destroyed by the Stone (Daniel 2:45). When this Stone, cut out of the Heavenly mountain, falls on the toes of the image, it shall destroy and break into pieces the entire statue that depicted the kingdoms of Gentile ruling power in the world. Jesus Christ is this Stone that shall appear, and His coming will bring judgment upon all nations and peoples of the earth. The twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel pertains to the subject we are discussing here. Portions of it describe fallen Lucifer and his rebellion in Heaven, while other portions describe the man, the Antichrist. In Ezekiel, the Antichrist is called the Prince of Tyrus because he sets himself up as God, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;" (Ezekiel 28:6).

The Antichrist grasps at both the spiritual and natural side of ruling and reigning power. When Lucifer was in the very presence of God as one of the anointed cherubs, something gave him the desire to possess the very Throne of God and the power of God. This same arrogant desire is imparted to the Beast, the Antichrist. He will seek to rule the world, not only as a dictator but as God, for he seeks worship as well. He sits in the Temple in Jerusalem and demands the people's worship.

Spiritual rebellion against the Headship of God caused the sons of Korah to rise up against the God-appointed leadership of Moses and Aaron. Thus, Korah's sons rose up against God's spiritual Headship and authority. The Antichrist is also directly related to the Prince of Tyrus, who set his heart as the heart of God. He determined in his heart to sit upon God's rightful throne; therefore, he was guilty of spiritual rebellion against God's rulership over the world. The Antichrist will be guilty of both forms of rebellion.

The Antichrist lived at one time, died, and will be resurrected. He makes his appearance from the Jewish part of the seventh Gentile kingdom, the divided Roman Empire, and becomes the eighth worldwide kingdom. He is related to both Korah and Tyrus, because of his rebellion against the Headship of God, and because of his spiritual desire for worship. He originated as a seed (mentioned prophetically in Genesis 3:15). Then he entered into a body, the physical body of Judas Iscariot. In his final appearance, the Antichrist comes forth in the resurrected body of Judas and stands up in the Dragon's full stature of wickedness and evil.

We see also that the Antichrist is destined to return to perdition. After the Antichrist is cast into the Lake of Fire, God will also cast the Bottomless Pit with its perdition into the Lake of Fire. Thus, the Antichrist can be said to inhabit the place of perdition within the Lake of Fire.

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.., And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition (Revelation 17:8-11).

That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place (Acts 1:25).

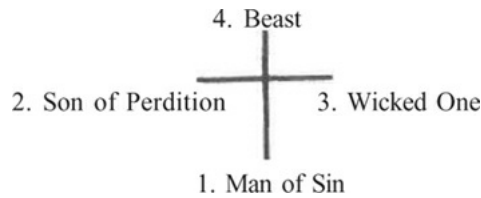
The Antichrist's own place is perdition in the Bottomless Pit.

We have seen the origin of the Antichrist: as the seed, as the body of Satan, and from the Bottomless Pit.

II. HIS STATURE

A. THE NAMES OF THE ANTICHRIST

Names are significant in Scripture, for they reveal nature, character, and authority. We have Jesus Christ revealed by many names, such as the Rose of Sharon, Lily of the Valley, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door, the Shepherd, the Bread, the Bright and Morning Star. What beautiful word pictures these names of Jesus create. Each name emphasizes a particular aspect of His nature. This is also true of the Antichrist who is revealed by various names. By observing his names, we can grasp a better understanding of who and what he is.



1. Man of Sin

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (II Thessalonians 2:3).

The Word of God declares that there will be a falling away from the truth of God, a general apostasy; this will prepare the way for the Antichrist, the Man of Sin. His name as the Man of Sin denotes flagrant wickedness. Not only is he addicted to the practices of wickedness, but he also promotes and commands sin and wickedness in others.

2. Son of Perdition

...that man of sin be revealed, *the son of perdition*; (II Thessalonians 2:3).

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the *son of perdition*; that the scripture might be fulfilled (John 17:12).

There is only one who is called the son of perdition in the Word of God, and that is Judas. Notice the Word of God does not say *a* son of perdition, or *one* of the sons of perdition, but it says *the* son of perdition. Therefore, we must conclude that Judas is the Antichrist, since the Word of God declares plainly that the Antichrist is the son of perdition and that the son of perdition is Judas.

The word *perdition* means destruction, depth, going to his own place, perdition, the bottom of it. It is used in conjunction with the Bottomless Pit. The Word of God declares that Judas went to his own place (Acts 1:25). And his place has been declared to be the place of perdition and the Bottomless Pit. As the son of perdition, the Antichrist devotes himself to the total destruction of many people (spirit, soul, and body) before he returns to perdition.

3. Wicked One

And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (II Thessalonians 2:8).

The name *Wicked* means lawless one; in other words, one who refuses to be- in subjection to God's laws. The Antichrist will be a lawless person who sets up a human power in competition with, and in contradiction to, the divine dominion and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Beast

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13:4).

The name of the Beast signifies the brutality, filthiness, and irrationality of the nature of the Antichrist. The name *of Beast* also tells us how contrary the Antichrist will be to the nature and dignity of man. These, then, are the names which describe the Antichrist: Man of Sin, Son of Perdition, the Wicked One, the Beast. He is a man with a sinful, destructive, wicked beastly nature.

And the *beast* which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority (Revelation 13:2).

Could we see the Beast in the spirit, he would be a horrid and hideous monster. Spiritually, the body of the Beast has the appearance of a leopard; that is, he will seize control of the kingdoms of this world, particularly the helm of the Jewish Nation, with the swiftness of a leopard. This Antichrist Beast will have strong feet like a bear. With this great strength, he will stomp all rule and reign of earthly kingdoms under his powerful feet and bring them under subjection. This beast will have a fierce mouth like a lion. When he roars with his powerful words, the hearts of his subjects will be stricken with terror and awe, and they will fall down and worship him. "...They that dwell on the earth shall wonder,...when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (Revelation 17:8).

The name, or names, of the Antichrist carries the mysterious number 666.

And that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (Revelation 13:17,18).

The word *number* in the Greek means to keep in suspense of mind, to lift up, sail away, weigh anchor, expiate sin, loose, to make doubt. The name and number of the Antichrist will imitate the name of Jesus Christ. With the diabolical power of the Dragon, the Antichrist will lift up the minds of people to such a place of suspense and delight, that they will think their sins are expiated by his power. Without this number, people under his rule will be unable to buy or sell in the markets of the world. What a subtle imitator and deceiver the Antichrist will be.

B. THE IMAGE OF THE ANTICHRIST

1. Personal Image

The image of the Beast is personified as a monster with seven heads and ten horns and ten crowns upon his ten horns. The seven heads show his pretense and imitation of the complete wisdom and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The ten horns and crowns imitate the true legal power and authority of Jesus Christ. Thus, with his great impressive image, he will deceive many people into receiving and accepting him as the true Christ, the true Messiah of Israel.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads" (Revelation 12:3). In this verse we have a description of the color, heads, horns and crowns of the Dragon, himself. He imparts almost the same stature to the Antichrist.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy (Revelation 13:1). The Antichrist has the same amount of heads and horns as does the Dragon. The difference is that the Dragon has seven crowns on his seven heads, whereas the Antichrist wears ten crowns upon his ten horns. In place of the crowns which the Dragon wore on his head, the Antichrist has the name of blasphemy. However, the total similarity is like a father to a son.

The Antichrist will use his seven heads and ten horns to bring about the establishment of his worldwide reign. His purpose for establishing his unified kingdom is to go to war against Jesus Christ at the battle of Armageddon.



And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive

power as kings one hour with the beast (Revelation 17:12).

The ten kings, which are to be crowned, receive power and authority to rule over their kingdoms from the perverted wisdom of the Antichrist, who has a personal image similar to fallen Lucifer's image.

2. Made Image

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

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed (Revelation 13:14,15).

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (Revelation 14:9-11).

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (Revelation 15:2).

And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image (Revelation 16:2).

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image...(Revelation 19:20).

The Antichrist will be so in love with his own person and will be filled with such haughtiness and pride that, like Nebuchadnezzar, he will desire to have an image made of himself. The word *image* means resemblance, likeness, profile, representation, statue, copy. People will not only worship the person of the Antichrist, but they will also worship his image or idol. The Antichrist's lust for more worship is so great that he is not satisfied with just worship of his own person, but he desires a great image and numerous smaller images of his person for additional worship. Thus, in his limited way, he tries to imitate God's omnipresence, which enables him to receive worship everywhere. God pronounces eternal judgment and damnation on all those who partake of this idol worship, this spiritual adultery.

C. THE NATURE OF THE ANTICHRIST

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority (Revelation 13:2).

The Beast, the Antichrist, bears the same nature as the various beasts that were revealed to Daniel. King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which revealed the full stature of Gentile powers. Each kingdom was represented by a metal. The last kingdom was a mixture of iron and clay. Daniel's dream which revealed the nature and disposition of the image shown to King Nebuchadnezzar, is recorded in chapter seven of Daniel. These same natures are seen in Revelation in relation to the description of the Antichrist.¹³

1. Leopard (swiftness)

The nature of the Greek kingdom was compared to the nature of a leopard because of the swiftness of conquest that the Greeks experienced under the leadership of Alexander the Great. When the Antichrist appears in the earth again, his conquest will be with swiftness, even as that of the leopard pouncing and springing suddenly upon its prey.

2. Bear (brute force)

The nature of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians was likened to the bear because of its tremendous strength and force. The Antichrist will not only be swift, but like the bear with his overcoming power to subdue and conquer, he will put all things under his feet.

3. Lion (ferocious and supreme rule)

The Antichrist will have a mouth like a lion. The Scripture refers to the cheek teeth of a lion. These are the powerful teeth that the lion uses to crush bones. This ferocious and crushing power will characterize the Antichrist, even as he sits in supremacy as a world ruler.

D. THE SPIRIT OF THE ANTICHRIST

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame (Revelation 16:13-15).

The same spirit that is seen in the Dragon and in the False Prophet is also seen in the Antichrist; they are one in spirit. Their spirits are depicted as frogs coming out of their mouths. In typology a frog indicates deceitfulness and covetousness. The Apostle Paul testified in Thessalonians that the Antichrist will work with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness. The Dragon's last effort to maintain his power over the world will be when he sends forth the three frog spirits from his mouth, from the mouth of the Antichrist, and from the mouth of the False Prophet. This evil trinity will work miracles to gather the armies of the world for the great decisive battle of Armageddon (II Thessalonians 2:9,10). But thanks be unto God; He will cause life, light and truth to conquer the powers of death, darkness and deceit.

III. HIS REIGN

A. THE GIFTS OF THE ANTICHRIST FROM THE DRAGON

How imitative the Antichrist is! He seeks to reproduce as close an image to Jesus Christ as possible. The Father bestowed gifts on Jesus Christ; therefore, the Dragon must bestow his gifts on the Antichrist. Let us consider first the gifts that Jesus received from the Father: (1) THE GIFT OF LIFE "For as the Father hath life in himself; *so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*," (John 5:26). This Scripture refers to the Son, Jesus. This life can be had in the body of Jesus Christ. Through His broken body, we can partake of the gift of His life. The Father gave the gifts of life unto His Son. First, when He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, He received natural life; and secondly, when Jesus was brought up from death and the grave, He received resurrection life. (2) THE GIFT OF WORKS. "But I have greater witness than that of John: *for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do*, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:36). So we see that the Father bestowed His Son Jesus Christ the gifts of Life as well as the gifts of works, which bore witness of His deity and origin. For example, the gift of works enabled Jesus to do the good works, the wonderful, the mighty works of His heavenly Father. (3) GIFT OF WORDS. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me*" (John 17:6-8). God the Father also gave unto the Son the gift of words, the very words of the Father, Himself.

And, in the incarnation, the Father also presented the Son with a physical body, a mouth with which He could speak these words unto ad men. (4) THE GIFT OF ALL POWER. As the Heavenly Father gave unto His Son, Jesus, the gifts of Life, the gifts of supernatural works, the gift of words to speak, He also gave Him ALL POWER. Jesus bore witness of this fact when He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Since Jesus Christ has now been deified, these gifts are His, and He can, in turn, bestow these same gifts upon those who follow Him.

Keeping in mind the gifts which the Father bestowed on Jesus Christ, let us note the imitative gifts which the Dragon bestows upon the Antichrist.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: *and the dragon gave Mm his power*, and his seat, and great authority) Revelation 13:2).

1. Power

a. Power to Continue

With his gift of power, the Antichrist will continue his rule and reign for three and one half years, the length of the tribulation period.

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months (Revelation 13:5).

b. Power to War

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints,...(Revelation 13:7).

The Dragon gives the Antichrist power to make war with the saints of God. His immediate attack will be made against the saints who missed the Rapture. They were not spiritual overcomers; therefore, they will not be counted worthy to escape the Great Tribulation (Luke 21:35,36). We have already seen how the Serpent-Dragon attacks the Woman who flees into the wilderness by spewing forth a flood of water from his mouth. God intervenes by causing the earth to open up and swallow the flood, or else she would never make it to her place of safety. She is also given two wings of the eagle to help transport her into the wilderness.

But the warfare continues. Although a part of the Woman goes into hiding and finds refuge in the wilderness, this does not include everyone who is a part of the Church. For example, in Revelation 12:17, the war is directed toward the "remnant of her seed." These are believers, for they "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

c. Power to Overcome

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:7,8).

At this time the warfare is primarily directed toward the remaining believers. The Antichrist wars with the saints and overcomes them. Some are martyred for their faith. As we have already stated, there are two classes of martyrs during the tribulation time: the first group of martyrs are slain in the very beginning of the tribulation (Revelation 6:9-11). The second group are martyred some time later during the three and one half years.

Other believers are spiritually overcome when they yield to the powerful influence and personage of the Antichrist, himself. Deceived and swept away by the tremendous spiritual forces at work, they confess, "I believe you are the Christ. I accept you as my Messiah." They receive his name and mark upon them, and the Antichrist leads them away as his captives.

After dealing first with the Christian element, the Antichrist proceeds to overcome ail kindreds, tongues, and nations. The whole world becomes his captive, not only politically speaking, but spiritually as well, for he is not

content until all the world worships at his feet.

As the Father gave gifts to His Son, Jesus Christ, the Dragon gives gifts to the Antichrist, his son, and one of them is the gift of power. His power shall be so great that it will cover the entire earth. Everyone who worships the Antichrist can never have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Their eternal destiny is the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15).

If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints (Revelation 13:9,10).

Again we hear the same cry that characterized the messages to the seven churches. To stress its importance, definite emphasis was placed at the close of each church message: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Notice how the message in chapter thirteen is emphasized: "If any man have an ear, let him hear." Would to God that Christians would awaken to realize the lateness of the hour. We should all take heed to ourselves and watch and pray that we may be counted worthy to escape all the things that are soon coming to pass.

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword..." In a sense, this statement is a summary of the whole conflict with the Antichrist. Just as he takes the whole world into captivity, even so will the Antichrist, himself, be taken captive by the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. As the Antichrist kills and martyrs the believers with his literal sword, so shall he be killed with the sword of the Word that proceeds out of the mouth of the triumphant Resurrected Christ at His second coming. "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15).

To further conclude the matter, it is stated: "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." Patience to endure the sword of the Antichrist will mean martyrdom to some of the saints, but that is a cheap price to pay. Their suffering lasts for a brief moment, but they gain glory and eternal life.

To accept the mark of the Beast means an eternity in the Lake of Fire. There are some tribulation saints who war against the Antichrist and overcome the Beast with his image, his mark, and the number of his name, but their end is martyrdom. These saints comprise the second group martyred in the tribulation. They shall be rewarded for their patience and their faith. At the end of the tribulation, they will be resurrected to assist in the rule of Christ's millennial reign on the earth (Revelation 20:4). It takes both patience and faith to face warfare at any time. But if we know that in due season there will be a reward and an end to all the strife, it is possible to persevere, even in the face of the Antichrist's overcoming power.

2. Seat (throne)

...and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority (Revelation 13:2).

Not only does the Antichrist receive the full stature of power of the Dragon, but he also accepts the gift of the Dragon's throne, his seat of ruling power. As the Father gave His Son, Jesus Christ, gifts of works, the Dragon will give his son, the Antichrist, a throne or seat from which he will work all deceit and unrighteousness. The Dragon will exalt the Antichrist to an official position of sovereign power and dignity. He will support the Antichrist in all his reign and will promote his interest in all the earth. The symbol of the Beast's sovereign power will be the mark that the False Prophet will cause to be placed in the right hand or forehead of the Antichrist's subjects.

And he [the False Prophet] causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name (Revelation 13:16,17).

The word *mark* in the Greek means to stamp as a badge of servitude, to scratch, etching, sculptured figure, statue. Unless the mark, the sculptured figure of the Antichrist, appears in the right hand or forehead, people will be unable to buy or sell during the tribulation time.

3. Authority

Revelation 13:2 mentions the Dragon's authority that is also bestowed upon the Antichrist. He will have the authority to command or to take dominion and control over the nation of Israel and the world. The authority of the Antichrist will also come from the great image and reputation which he builds before the people. What imposing gifts are the power, throne, and authority which the Dragon gives him.

4. Mouth

a. Great Things

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies;... (Revelation 13:5).

The world has an expression "talk is cheap," and certainly this is true of the Antichrist. He makes great swelling promises which he neither has the intention nor the power of fulfilling.

b. Blasphemies

And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven (Revelation 13:6).

In Revelation 13:2, the mouth that the Antichrist receives as a gift from the Dragon is described "as the mouth of a lion." The Antichrist will have the most deceitful, powerful, crushing mouth that any creature has ever had. With this mouth he will speak earth-shaking things that will cause people to swoon with either fear or delight. Notice the things that he will blaspheme, degrade, vilify, despise in particular:

1. God (His very Person and all that He entails).
2. God's very Name (His nature, character, authority).
3. God's Tabernacle (Jesus Christ).
4. All they that dwell in Heaven (the Redeemed and the Angelic Host).

God gave all power to Jesus, and in Him resided the fullness of God: "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). God literally emptied Himself into Jesus. Naturally, then, the great imitator, the Dragon, empties the fullness of himself into the person of the Antichrist. As the Father gave life, works, words, and power to His Son, Jesus, so the Dragon will give gifts to his son, the Antichrist: gifts of power, a throne, authority, and a m of darkness arrays itself for one of its last and great conflicts with the kingdom of light.

B. THE WORSHIP OF THE ANTICHRIST

And he [the False Prophet] exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed (Revelation 13:12).

The Antichrist is not content with simply a political kingdom of power and authority. He is determined to be above God, so he seeks the worship that belongs to God. Even as the sons of Korah rebelled against God appointed leadership, so the Antichrist demonstrates this same spirit of rebellion against God. The False Prophet exercises the same power as the Antichrist. He promotes the same interest and pursues the same design, in substance, which is to draw men away from worshipping the true God to worshipping the Antichrist whose nature is totally depraved. The False Prophet desires to subject the souls and consciences of men to the will and authority of other men who are in opposition to the will of God.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Revelation 13:3,4).

The world will also worship the Dragon, who gives power unto the Beast, just as Christians now worship the

Father, who gave gifts to Jesus Christ.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed (Revelation 13:15).

During the tribulation, the world will also worship the image of the Beast which will complete a diabolical trinity of worship: the Beast, the Dragon and the image of the Beast. And in spite of all of God's judgments on the earth, man will still refuse to cease his false worship. He will refuse to give the God of Heaven the glory that is due His Name. "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory" (Revelation 16:9).

C. THE FALSE PROPHET

And J beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire comedown from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed (Revelation 13: 11-15).

Here is a master stroke of imitation once more. Jesus Christ went back to the Father after His resurrection and sent the Comforter, the Holy Ghost down to earth. The Holy Ghost came with power, gifts, and fire. The Holy Ghost speaks not of Himself, but He directs all worship toward the Son. He leads and guides into all truth; thereby revealing the Son, Jesus Christ, unto us. The Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, causing us to glorify the Son of God. Likewise, the second Beast (the False Prophet) rises up out of the earth, speaking as the Dragon, and comes forth with great power in order to cause all men to worship the first Beast, the Antichrist. Just as the Holy Ghost directs worship toward Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the False Prophet will direct worship toward the Antichrist, the seed of the Serpent, or the Dragon.

In order to avoid confusion between the stature of the Antichrist and the stature of the False Prophet, we shall include the stature of the False Prophet in a separate chapter.

D. THE BRIDE OF THE ANTICHRIST

Jesus Christ will have a Bride, the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2); likewise the Antichrist will have his bride, as it were, in the form of Old Jerusalem. The Bride of the Antichrist will have let the full stature of wickedness grow to maturity in her heart, just as the Bride of Jesus Christ has let her Bridegroom perfect the stature of His humility in her heart.

Old Jerusalem is the great whore, who is seen riding on the Beast, the Antichrist, in Revelation seventeen. Upon her forehead is a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (verse 5). The Antichrist has his seat, his throne, in Old Jerusalem; and in turn we see the great whore riding upon the back of the Beast. This presents a similar picture to the second coming of Christ, who is seen riding on the white horse followed by His Bride, the heavenly armies, who are also seated upon white horses. In a sense, they come riding on the back of their Heavenly Bridegroom, even as the bride of the Antichrist comes riding on the back of the Beast. But here the similarity stops, for Jesus Christ dearly loves His Bride and will care for her in eternity; whereas the Antichrist will destroy his wife, Old Jerusalem through the power of his ten horns. This will be by God's appointment. "And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!" (Revelation 18:16).

And when they shall have finished their testimony the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them, [the two witnesses]. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (Revelation 11:7,8).

Old Jerusalem gave birth to the rebellion against Jesus Christ when the Jews rejected Jesus as their promised Messiah. It was Old

Jerusalem that finally crucified our precious Lord, and it is in the street of the great city that the bodies of the two dead witnesses shall lie. When the Antichrist comes to Old Jerusalem as their Messiah, they will accept him for a season. Jesus prophesied of this in John 5:43, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." From this fact alone, we realize that the Antichrist will of necessity be a Jew in order for Israel to receive him.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory ...And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath (Revelation 16:8-19).

The city of Old Jerusalem will be brought into remembrance before God for her rejection of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, and for her acceptance of the false messiah, the Antichrist. When Old Jerusalem rejected Jesus Christ, she rejected more than a man. She turned her back on God's living humility and righteousness. She crucified the only One who had pure, holy, undefiled Blood that was powerful and strong enough to wash her and cleanse her from her transgressions against her marriage covenant with God. In like manner, when she accepts the Antichrist, she will be accepting more than a man, for he is the embodiment of all that is wicked and contrary to God's Word, God's will, and God's purpose. Therefore, she will receive the just punishment that is her due. Old Jerusalem will be made into a heap, never to be rebuilt by wicked men. Beloved, it is a dangerous thing to see the truth and life of God's humility and reject it. Those who see the message of the Crucified and Resurrected Christ and what it means to grow into spiritual maturity, stand in the same position as Old Jerusalem did, spiritually speaking, when Jesus Christ trod its streets in a body of flesh.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk, of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:1-4).

While God is pouring out His wrath and judgment upon Old Jerusalem, God will preserve His saints who have remained in their chambers, their secret places, and will also preserve the sealed remnant who will accept Him at His second coming by warning them and calling them forth before the final destruction. God will supernaturally sustain His people with His bread even as He provided for Elijah in his time.

Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come (Revelation 18:8-10).

This surely is literal smoke and fire that is spoken of in these verses. Since Old Jerusalem has played the spiritual harlot by rejecting the true Messiah and accepting the false messiah, the Antichrist, she will be worthy of a double portion of judgment. During the Old Testament Dispensation, one of the judgments for the sin of adultery was to be burnt with fire (Leviticus 20:14). God will heap judgment upon her from above, and the Antichrist will heap fire upon her from below. What a dreadful destruction this will be! In one hour's time the fabulous city, Old Jerusalem (spiritually called Babylon) will be utterly destroyed under the judgment of God.

And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth (Revelation 17:16-18),

The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought...(Revelation 18:15-17).

The ten horns (ten kings) will turn in hatred against the great whore, Old Jerusalem, and will be the tools in God's hands to make her desolate, naked, consumed, and burnt with fire. What a great lament is heard over this sudden and quick destruction. The rest of the world weeps and wails over the lost beauty of the one who once was so royally decked out in fine linen, purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, and pearls. This was no self-adornment, for it was God who had so clothed her. These were His enriching adornments upon her, who was once called the Holy City. But now she is under His wrath because she played the harlot and prostituted herself, so God calls her "the great whore." It is wrong to attribute these portions of Scripture which are concerned with Babylon, the great whore, to the Catholic Church.

Much of Ezekiel 16 tells us how God adorned the Holy City, Jerusalem. Let us take note of a few descriptive expressions about Jerusalem: "thou wast naked and bare,...and thou becamest mine... I washed...anointed thee...clothed thee with brodered work...with fine linen...with silk...decked thee also with ornaments...decked with gold and silver...raiment was of fine linen...And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezekiel 16:7-14).

Israel, by covenant, was called the wife of God in the Old Testament Dispensation, and as her husband, God had royally provided for her. But she prostituted herself by joining in an adulterous union with the false gods of this world. Therefore, she is found under God's wrathful judgment. Rebellion and pride have brought her to this place; certainly she is a fit bride for the Antichrist.

Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her...And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth (Revelation 18:20-24).

It was out of the city of Jerusalem that the holy apostles came, not out of the Catholic Church. And it was in Jerusalem, not in Rome, that the voice of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, was heard. Jerusalem was where the blood of prophets and saints was spilled as Israel, time and again, rejected the voice of God through His servants.

How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of

righteousness, the faithful city (Isaiah 1:21-26).

During the millennium, the literal city of Jerusalem will be reconstructed under the Headship of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ. Once she is rightly related to her Messiah and has entered into His reign of righteousness and peace, Jerusalem shall be called the City of Righteousness and the Faithful City.

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low (Isaiah 25:5).

For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust (Isaiah 26:5).

There are many Scriptures which refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, The “terrible ones” mentioned in Isaiah 25:5 are those who have exalted themselves in pride. Isaiah 26:5 states again that God’s judgment will bring Jerusalem down to the dust because of her lofty pride.

The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction (Isaiah 24:10-12).

Jerusalem is called the city of confusion and the city of desolation. Never again will she be built by wicked men, but during the millennium, there will be a new city raised by spiritual men, under the rule of the Prince of Peace.

Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour, And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel (Isaiah 27:10-12).

Old Jerusalem shall be like a wilderness and will be made a grazing place for the beasts. But there will be a regathering of Israel. Those of the remnant whom the Lord has preserved in various parts of the earth as well as those in Old Jerusalem, will be gathered together by the Lord’s angels to worship in the Jerusalem that shall be built in the holy mount:

Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices. Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, *it shall be at an instant suddenly*. Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire (Isaiah 29:1-6).

These Scriptures in Isaiah tell that the fall of **Old** Jerusalem shall be “at an instant suddenly.” Jeremiah, as well as the Prophet Isaiah, had a revelation of the judgment of God upon Jerusalem:

And touching the house of the king of Judah, say, Hear ye the word of the LORD; O house of David, thus saith the LORD; Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, *lest my fury go out like fire, and bum that none can quench it*, because of the evil of your doings. Behold, I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley and rock of the plain, saith the LORD; which say, Who

shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations? But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it (Jeremiah 21:11-14).

Jeremiah spoke this message to the king of Judah who was located in the city of Jerusalem. He was prophesying of Jerusalem's coming destruction by the fire of God's anger.

Alas! for the day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it ...For thus saith the LORD, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous,..For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof (Jeremiah 30:7-18).

The prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem was coupled with the promise that a remnant would be saved and that Jerusalem would be restored again. Verse twelve states that her wound is incurable, which it is, for man cannot rebuild Jerusalem without the blessing and help of the Lord.

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle (Zechariah 14:1-3).

It is God who puts it into the hearts of the ten kings, or the ten horns, to rise up against Jerusalem. It is then that the Lord comes forth with His mighty army. He defeats the armies that have gathered together against Jerusalem, and the resulting carnage furnishes the great supper referred to in Revelation 19:17.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven. Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, both small and great (Revelation 19:14-18).

The Lord smites the kings and their armies with His breath of fire, which goes forth as a sharp sword out of His mouth. The fowls of the air consume the putrefying flesh, leaving only the bones to be buried.

The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: ail that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it (Zechariah 12:1 -3).

The Apostle John describes the great city of Babylon as a great millstone cast into the sea (Revelation 18:21), while the Prophet Zechariah describes Jerusalem as a burdensome stone.

There is a time, beloved, in our spiritual journey with God when we, too, feel that we are a burdensome stone, as it were. We feel as if we are an unnecessary weight and burden to the Lord, to ourselves, and to everyone who is associated with us. But just as God did not cast off the burdensome stone called Israel, so also will He bear patiently with us until He perfects His will in our lives.

It is also foretold that there will be a remnant which comes out of the tribulation period, a remnant that will know the Lord's defense on their behalf.

In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:8,9).

Verse nine relates to the ten horns of the Beast. They are given power to destroy Jerusalem only when God so dictates, and that power lasts for only one hour. When their work of destruction is finished, Jesus will appear in His second coming and smite these armies and nations with the breath of His mouth. The remnant of Israel will recognize their Messiah, and with great mourning they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced. After this He will rebuild Jerusalem.

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon, And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; (Zechariah 12:10-12).

In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness (Zechariah 13:1).

Perhaps there are those who question the severity of God's great judgment and wrath upon the city of Jerusalem. We must keep in mind the graciousness of the Lord. As husband to Israel He had exalted and adorned her, yet she proved herself a faithless wife by turning from Him to join herself to the false gods of this world and to the Antichrist. Israel had broken the principle of wedlock. When Israelites were guilty of being adulterers or adulteresses, they were stoned to death for their sin. However, when a priest's daughter was taken in adultery, a more severe punishment was instituted, she was burnt with fire.

Let us read the stringent laws that governed the sanctity of God's priests. Because a priest's daughter lived by and ate of the holy things which were dedicated to God, she was more severely punished for her whoredom. Her sin was evidence that she had not allowed the holy things of God to work holiness in her own life.

They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy. They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he is holy unto his God. Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy. And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire. And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes; Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother; Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD. And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife. Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him (Leviticus 21:6-15).

The demands of God upon the priesthood in the Old Testament Dispensation were extremely strict, and they are even more so in the New Testament Dispensation. Jesus introduced a new order, a new dispensation — the law of liberty. In comparison, the law of liberty is far more demanding than the Old Testament law. The law of Moses basically dealt with outward sins, whereas the law of liberty deals more extensively with inward sins.

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? (Hebrews 10:26-29).

The law of liberty is more exacting because we have the living Blood of Jesus Christ to work for us, the written Word of God, and the Holy Ghost teacher within us to search out and to reveal our inward heart to us. Greater light and experience bring greater responsibility. So it was with the daughter of the priest. She had more light and experience; therefore, she came under greater judgment. We see the Lord's emphasis on man's inward sins in His Sermon on the Mount.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of (he judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire...Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:21-28),

The city of Jerusalem stood in the same position of responsibility as the priest's daughter. She had great responsibility because of the light, experience and privilege that was hers.

Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright (Hebrews 12:16).

Esau is an illustration of a person who became profane because he chose one morsel of meat instead of respecting his birthright. The daughter of the priest ate of holy bread, the espousal bread, offered before the Lord. There was bread in the Courtyard, but this holy bread was special bread. It had absorbed the fragrance and the smoke of the incense that ascended from the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place. The incense represented the Name of Jesus, and in order for it to burn, it was joined to the fire from off the Great Altar in the Courtyard which represented the Fire of the Holy Ghost. The bread, then, was saturated with the Name, the nature of Jesus, and with the Fire of the Holy Ghost. Then, too, there was the fragrance from the oil and the frankincense that was set on top of the twelve loaves of bread which were offered upon the Table of Shewbread. Because the bread was called "bread of the face" and "bread of the presence," it must have been permeated with the warmth of the Shekinah Glory of God which dwelt in the Holiest of Holies. Surely this was *very special* bread of which the household of the priest was privileged to partake. His daughter had access to that bread, the espousal bread, the hidden manna in the Holy Place. This should have worked true righteousness and holiness in her, but when she lightly esteemed the bread and her privileges (as did Esau) and committed fornication, she was burned to death.

Jerusalem incurred God's wrath because she had been an espoused city, a married city. God called her "wife." She had eaten of her husband's bread, and then had broken wedlock. She took from her husband all that had abundantly and gloriously sustained and exalted her, but then she went out and poured forth her delight and love to the Antichrist, the false messiah. Israel played the part of the harlot and became the *great* whore, spiritually, just as an unfaithful wife would in the natural.

We cannot help but conclude that Old Jerusalem, figuratively speaking, is a fit symbol of the bride of the Antichrist. Her end is total destruction, in the literal sense as well as the spiritual sense. She shall be destroyed and laid as a heap. As a witness of God's just punishment, He burns the harlot city with fire. Not until Jesus Christ returns as LORD OF LORDS AND KING OF KINGS, will Jerusalem be raised again as a faithful, holy city. Then the throne of David will be established for the millennial reign of peace and righteousness.

IV. HIS DESTINATION

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he

deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Revelation 19:20).

The Lake of Fire, burning with brimstone, is the eternal destination of the Antichrist. Judas thought to usurp all the worship, the honor, and the glory which rightfully belongs to Jesus Christ; yet he will be brought into a place of torment, disgrace, and humiliation.

The victory which will be gained by the great and glorious Christ is marvelous. The Beast (the Antichrist) and the False Prophet, who rise up to fight against Jesus Christ and His Bride, are taken prisoners. He who led them by power, and he who led them by policy and falsehood are taken and cast into the Lake of Fire and rendered incapable of molesting the people of God anymore. Their followers are executed by the sharp sword of the Word of God proceeding out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. They make a huge feast for the fowls of Heaven.

Although the divine vengeance will chiefly fall on the Antichrist and False Prophet, it will not excuse his followers and fighters. Therefore, "Let us be wise, let us be instructed, let us kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and we perish from the earth, Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:10-12).

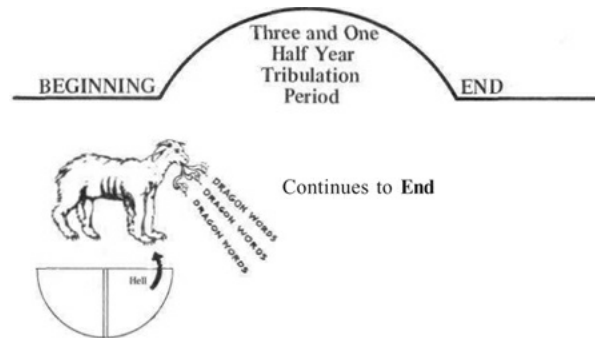
We have seen the origin of the Antichrist: the Serpent's seed, Satan's body, and the Bottomless Pit. We have also seen his stature, as pictured for us by his name, image, nature, and spirit. Although His reign is short-lived (only three and one half years time) it is powerful and exceedingly fearful. He uses gifts with which the Dragon empowers him; he usurps worship which rightfully belongs to God. The False Prophet directs the world's worship toward him. And last of all we see his bride, Old Jerusalem. His end is already settled and determined. He will be cast into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone. It is just a matter of time before the Antichrist will be forced to divulge the truth that he is an imposter. With his own mouth he will have to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father!

¹³ B. ft. Hicks, *Mysteries of Daniel Revealed*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1971).

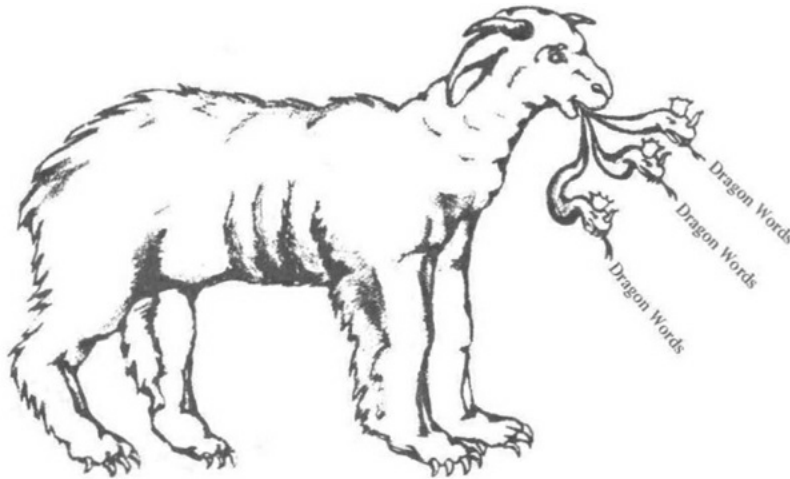
CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE FALSE PROPHET (Revelation 13:11-18)

No specific length of time is mentioned in regard to the False Prophet's ministry. However, we can be sure that he comes up about the same time as the Antichrist or just shortly thereafter. The False Prophet's whole ministry is directed toward deceiving the people of the world into worshipping the first Beasts' person and his image. After he appears on the earth, the False Prophet continues to perform his services until the end of the tribulation.



Let us consider the stature of truth concerning the False Prophet.



THE FALSE PROPHET



I. HIS ORIGIN - Up and Out of the Earth

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

The second beast, the False Prophet, comes up out of the earth. Since the False Prophet is likened to a beast, we know that he possesses qualities or impulses like an animal. Like the Antichrist, he is brutal, gross, vile, disgusting, and stupid. The only way that this creature could come up and out of the earth would be through the process of resurrection. This fact is further confirmed when we see his final destination: “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were CAST ALIVE into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Revelation 19:20).

The Lake of Fire is for the punishment of a person’s spirit, soul, and body. When a sinner dies, his spirit ascends upward, his soul goes to Hell, and his body goes to the grave. At the Great White Throne Judgment all sinners will be resurrected, judged, and cast into the Lake of Fire.

The False Prophet has experienced this threefold separation. Near the beginning of the tribulation, his soul is resurrected out of Hell, which is in the center of the earth, and his body is resurrected from the grave. His soul and body are then joined to his wicked spirit so that he can stand up and minister again. The Antichrist and the False Prophet are both cast alive into the Lake of Fire. Therefore, we understand that they are both resurrected human beings with resurrected bodies capable of eternal habitation in this horrible abode of the wicked. In fact they are the only two resurrected human beings alive during the Great Tribulation.

II. HIS STATURE

A. NAME - False Prophet

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Revelation 19:20).

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Revelation 20:10).

Name signifies nature and character. The name False Prophet unveils the real nature of the second beast. He is a liar, untruthful, dishonest, deceiving, and deliberately misleading in his prophecy, or his prediction of the future, and in his utterances in behalf of the Antichrist. He deceptively resembles a true prophet of God, but in reality he is a counterfeit, a sham, a cheat.

The Word of God gives us a number of clues that help us to identify the False Prophet. He is Balaam, the former prophet and priest of God. Balaam’s story begins in the twenty-second chapter of Numbers. This account is covered quite thoroughly in Revelation Book I, *Jesus Christ the Resurrected King*. We recall Balaam’s second prophecy given at Peor, which referred to the Star of Jacob who is Jesus Christ. Using the future tense, Balaam spoke prophetically, saying: “I *shall* see him, *but not now*. I *shall* behold him, *but not nigh*” {Numbers 24:17}.

The revelation of the Son of Man is related to the time when He shall come as a Star out of Jacob with a sceptre in His hand, the time of the second coming of Christ. Obviously, Balaam was not alive when Jesus came the first

time, clothed in humility. Balaam declared “I am going to be present at that scene when the Son of Man comes the second time. I am going to look upon Him, but I will not be close to Him.” How amazingly accurate is the Word of God in its most minute detail.

Balaam will see Him from afar. What is it that brings us nigh, close to Jesus? It takes His precious Blood (Ephesians 2:13). Balaam will not be numbered among the redeemed, for the end of his story reflects his rejection of God’s way. When Balaam speaks of “seeing him,” he cannot be referring to the Almighty God, for he had already seen Him by vision. He is speaking of the future; therefore, he can be referring to none other than our Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming. When Jesus comes as a Star out of Jacob and as a Sceptre out of Israel, He is going to literally judge all nations. He will judge the whole world for its sin.

There is only one way that Balaam can be alive at the second coming of the Son of Man and that is for him to be resurrected. The only two resurrected beings on earth who will be alive when Jesus Christ comes again, outside of the Bride who will return with Him, are the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

The False Prophet has a twofold nature represented by his two horns. His two horns are like a lamb which shows that he has been acquainted at one time with the power of God and the knowledge of the Lamb, or he would not be able to come up with such imitative power. The purpose of the two horns is for deception. He appears to be a real prophet of God, speaking such great things of the Antichrist that many people (both Jews and Gentiles) will be convinced that the Antichrist is the real Christ, the Messiah. Yet he “spake as a dragon,” for his words are provoked by the Dragon. In chapter 19 of Revelation we see Jesus Christ coming just as Balaam prophesied.

It is frightening to realize that in spite of the spiritual gifts and privileges which Balaam had received from God, he finally turned his back on it all because he had no real love for the truth.

...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

It is not enough to have a ministry, or to have knowledge of the Word of God, or to possess spiritual gifts. None of these assure final salvation. Balaam possessed them all; yet he died fighting against Israel and, therefore, against God (Numbers 31:8). Unless we let our wills become joined to the truth as it is revealed to us, we can lose out with God in the end. Such was the case with Balaam. He was false in the days of his earthly journey, and he is resurrected with the same false nature.

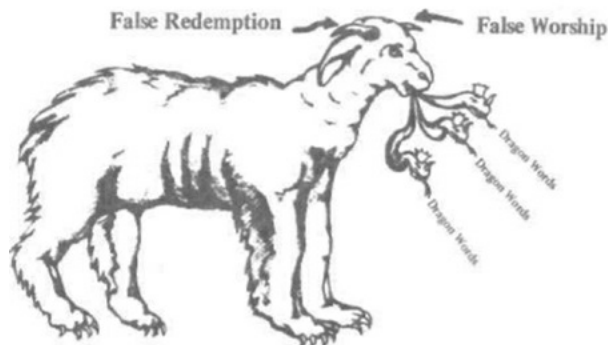
B. HIS TWO HORNS

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

- The False Prophet has two horns like a lamb. Horns speak of power. In a mild, gentle lamb-like manner, he promotes his idolatry and tyranny, but he is a great imposter. He claims to be related to the Lamb of God. He pretends through his lamb-like horns to be vested with power and authority from the Christ. In order for this one to imitate so realistically, he must have walked at one time with the Lamb of God.

Going back to the Old Testament Tabernacle, we find two pieces of furniture that carried horns. The sacrificial blood of redemption was applied to the horns on the great Brazen Altar (Exodus 29:12). The blood was applied also to the horns on the Golden Altar of Incense, the place of prayer. The horns on the Great Altar speak of redemption, and the horns on the Altar of Incense speak of worship in prayer. This suggests the meaning of the two horns of the False Beast.

FALSE PROPHET



The False Prophet stands up from out of the earth with two horns like a lamb, giving the appearance of being related to the Lamb of God. With these deceptive, imitative horns, he offers the inhabitants of the earth redemption (portrayed by the horns on the Brazen Altar) and worship (portrayed by the horns on the Golden Altar), for he teaches that the Antichrist is the Christ, the Messiah.

C. HIS WORDS

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



The speech of the False Prophet betrays him, for he gives forth false doctrines and cruel decrees, which prove that he belongs to the Dragon and not to the Lamb of God.

III. HIS REIGN

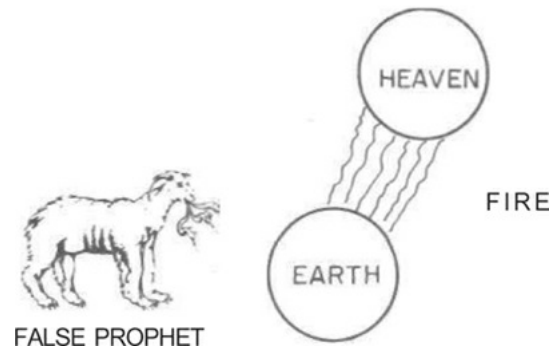
The word *reign* always suggests ruling power and authority, and certainly the False Prophet is not lacking in power.

A. POWER OF THE FIRST BEAST

And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed (Revelation 13:12).

The False Prophet exercises all the power of the first Beast. He promotes the same interest and pursues the same purpose as the Antichrist. This purpose is to draw all men from worshipping the one true God and cause them to worship the Antichrist. The False Prophet works to subject the souls of men to the will and authority of the Antichrist, which is in opposition to the will of God. He uses his powerful horn of worship to prevail over men in such a manner that the world will fall down and worship the image of the Beast.

B. POWER OF WONDER AND MIRACLES



The False Prophet does supernatural things. He has power to call fire down from Heaven. Thus, he pretends to be a mighty prophet like the Old Testament prophets, some of whom called down fire. God permits the False Prophet to do wonders and miracles, just as He let the magicians of Egypt perform wonders. This is done so that rebellors and rejecters of the truth may be deluded into worshipping the Antichrist. The False Prophet uses his wonders and miracles to convince the people of the earth to make a new image and shape of the Antichrist and thus add to then idolatrous practices. Although there is one main image made of the Antichrist, yet according to Revelation 9:20, there will be numerous small images made in his likeness. The idols have to be images of the Antichrist, for he will not share his worship with another.

The False Prophet does great wonders; yet the fact that great and marvelous wonders and miracles are performed in no way concludes that this is the supernatural work of God, or that the False Prophet is anointed by God. Bear in mind that the Dragon has great powers of anointing, which he stole when he walked up and down in the loins of God. This accounts for the supernatural anointing that is on the servants of the Dragon.

We see a similar circumstance of evil anointing in the kingly court of the Egyptian Pharaoh, Through then enchantments, the sorcerers and magicians of the king's court duplicated some of the supernatural wonders that Moses and Aaron performed. They turned their rods into serpents and the water into blood. They caused the frogs to come upon the land of Egypt. However, their magic art failed to duplicate the miracle of changing the dust into lice. The magicians' anointing was limited; they could go no further. In regard to Moses' anointing, they confessed to Pharaoh "This is the finger of God:..." (Exodus 8:19).

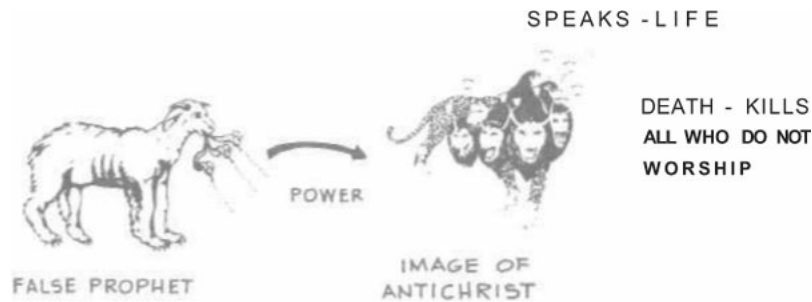
We learn something of their power of anointing in Revelation 16. The two Beasts are mightily anointed by the Dragon. We must keep in mind that an anointing is not always of God. Fallen Lucifer also has his anointings.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (Revelation 16:13,14).

These unclean spirits with the appearance of frogs are three special devils that empower the Beast and the False Prophet to do miracles and signs and wonders. The frog spirits are seen in the mouths of the trinity of wickedness in the mouth of the Dragon, in the mouth of the Antichrist, and in the mouth of the False Prophet. Spirits often appear in the form of various kinds of creatures. Since the natural always types the spiritual, we can learn something in these frog-like spirits by noting some characteristics of natural frogs. They are night creatures which inhabit the muddy, slimy places of the earth. Frogs have a real aversion to the light. They typify the nature of these unclean spirits that come out of the mouths of the Dragon, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet. Their words are anointed by devil spirits of darkness, spirits of uncleanness, spirits that hate the light. The anointing of these frog-like, devil spirits works miracles and wonders to ensnare the hearts of men.

C. POWER OF LIFE

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed (Revelation 13:15).



The False Prophet has the power to give life to the image. It is so life-like that it actually speaks. This indeed will be a rare and peculiar image. The fact that it speaks shows the presence of life, but it is a perverted form of life. This image will also have the power of death. The fact that it will kill all those who refuse to worship it indicates an intelligent discernment.

D. POWER OVER THE PEOPLE

The False Prophet has tremendous reigning power. So far we have seen three aspects of this power: it is the same type of power as the Antichrist's; he uses it to perform wonders and miracles, and it imparts life to the Beast's image. Now let us examine the fourth portion of his reigning power which is his power over the people.

Through his reigning power the False Prophet forces the people to worship the Antichrist. He also forces the people to make an image. If the people do not worship the image, the image is given the power to kill them. The False Prophet reigns over the people by causing them to take the mark, the name, or the number of the Antichrist. Human beings will not be allowed to enjoy their natural, civil, or municipal rights if they refuse to worship the Beast and his image. The False Prophet will force a public profession of subjection and obedience to the Beast by causing each person to wear a visible mark, name or number of the Antichrist. This mark, name, and number will be the badge to all commercial success during the tribulation.

It is amazing that anyone would accept the limited power of a mere human even though he is a resurrected being, and reject the limitless power of the pure, holy, resurrected Jesus, who has been deified and made both Lord and Christ. Yet God's Word says that they will.

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive (John 5:43).

Jesus was speaking of His rejection by men. Coming as God's legitimate Son, He was rejected by His own. They would not receive Him, but when the Antichrist comes (if another shall come...), him they will receive. There is a basic principle here. If we reject the truth, we have no other recourse than to accept the untruth. If we reject the real, we have no other choice but to accept the false. This principle is obvious in the tribulation period. Although the world has been wonderfully blessed with the proclamation of the Gospel and has experienced many blessings through the Lord Jesus Christ, yet the majority of men have no love for the truth. Such men will readily fall under the charms and mesmerizing powers of the False Prophet and the Antichrist. They will easily accept the Antichrist as their redeemer and their god.

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (Revelation 13:16-18).

The False Prophet has to have tremendous power in order to cause people to take a mark, a name, or a number that will damn their soul in eternity. The mark is the badge of servitude. The definition of the word *mark* (to scratch, to etch, a sculptured figure, a statue) suggests that it will be an etching of the image of the Antichrist, himself. Without this magical number and mark, there can be no purchasing or selling. All secular life comes to a complete

standstill without this authorization, for no business can be transacted without it.

IV. THE DESTINATION OF THE FALSE PROPHET

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Revelation 19:20).

The eternal destination of the False Prophet is the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone. After playing the frightful role of the False Prophet, Balaam comes to a horrible, destructive end. He shares his eternal destiny with all those whose names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 20:14,15).

The ultimate and final destruction of all pride, all wickedness, and all rebellious defiance against the truth is accomplished by the Living Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. No pride can stand before the presence of His glorious humility, No wickedness nor sin can prevail against the sharp sword that precedes out of His mouth. All rebellious defiance will be brought down under the feet of God's surrendered Lamb. Jesus Christ and His Bride, who in her lifetime married her human will to His humility and obedience, will reign in exalted glory over all the enemies of the Truth. Beloved, being in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest privilege and the highest honor afforded to mortal man in time or in eternity.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE BRIDE ON MOUNT ZION (Revelation 14:1-5)

Remember that the revelation given unto John continually alternates between Heaven and earth. This key of knowledge will help us to interpret and understand what we read in the fabulous revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Revelation is a book of judgment. The first three chapters take place on the earth, where Jesus Christ stands as KING in the midst of the seven churches of Asia Minor. In chapter four an open door is set before John, and the vision moves to Heaven, where he is privileged to see the wheel of God in operation. He sees the Throne of God, the rainbow that encircles it, the four and twenty thrones arranged in a circular formation around God's Throne, with the four and twenty elders sitting upon them. In the midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne (like spokes of a wheel) are seen the four beasts. Proceeding out of the Throne are lightnings, thunderings, and voices; seven lamps of fire burn before the Throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. The Sea of Glass, like unto crystal, is before the Throne.

Chapter five continues the heavenly scene by revealing a book and the Lamb of God, who alone is worthy to open the seven seals that sealed the book. All of Heaven is seen worshipping the Lamb, who bears the testimonial evidence of His vicarious death, and who has seven horns and seven eyes. Here stands the Lion-Lamb of God.

The scene in chapter six remains in Heaven, where the Lamb is seen opening the seven seals. Each seal loosens another form of judgment upon the earth, and a steady progression of misery and suffering pours forth upon its inhabitants.

Chapter seven introduces an earthly scene, the sealing of the 144,000 Jews. Twelve thousand out of each of the eleven tribes of Israel, plus a double portion out of the tribe of Joseph, fills out the number of 144,000. These are the remnant that God has promised to Abraham. The remnant of 144,000 Jews are to be preserved throughout the entire three and one half years of tribulation. "...Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:3).

The source of much confusion and erroneous interpretation of the ninth chapter of Daniel stems from a lack of understanding, because it is primarily concerned with the Messiah, not the Antichrist. While Daniel was seeking further light on Jeremiah's prophecy about the seventy years captivity in Babylon (Jeremiah 25:11,12; 29:10), God gave him the revelation of the seventy prophetic weeks of events for Israel. The birth of the Messiah, the Prince, Jesus Christ closed the period of sixty-nine weeks and left the seventieth prophetic week, or seven years to be fulfilled. One prophetic week is equal to seven years. In the middle of the last week, or in other words, at the end of three and one half years, Messiah was cut off and rejected.



And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the

prince [Titus] that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined (Daniel 9:26).

This verse has nothing to do with the Antichrist whatsoever, but relates to the coming of Titus, the prince, who completely and utterly destroyed Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. This man was God's instrument to bring judgment on Jerusalem because of her rejection of Jesus Christ.

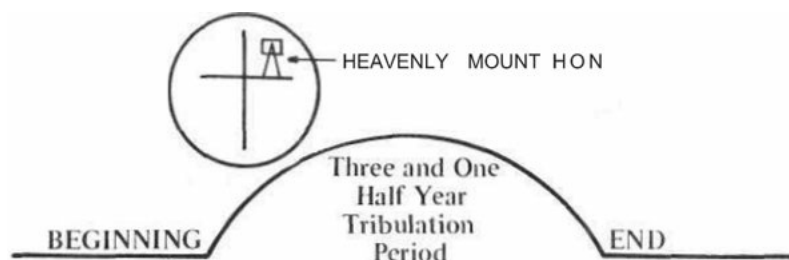
And he [the Messiah] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he [the Messiah] shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he [the Messiah] shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (Daniel 9:27).

The sacrifices ceased in the middle of the week, at the close of the first three and one half years. This was fulfilled when Jesus Christ offered Himself as the Lamb of God upon the Cross. When He died, there was no need for animal oblations and sacrifices to be offered any longer. There was no need for the type and shadow when the Living Revelation had come. When Jesus Christ died upon the Cross, the veil in the Temple was rent in twain as a demonstration that the Living Blood of Jesus Christ had made a way whereby man might be restored to the relationship of unity and obedience which he once knew with God, But Israel rejected her Messiah. She repaired the rent veil and continued to bring sacrificial animals with their blood into the Temple. They chose the impotent blood of bulls and goats in preference to the living, resurrected, omnipresent Blood of God's only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, What an abomination in the sight of God!

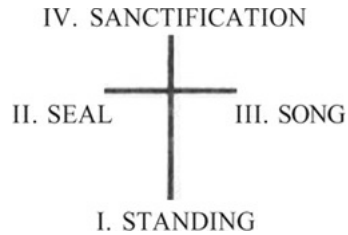
Jesus ministered publicly for three and one half years, and then He was slain as a sacrifice for sin. None besides the Son of God had power to cause the Old Testament sacrifices to cease, and He did it by fulfilling in His own body all the types and shadows, by fulfilling all of the Law.

There was a remnant who remained from the period of the three and one half years of Jesus' ministry with whom He made a covenant: namely, the 120 in the upper room. Now we are left with the last half of the seventieth week, or three and one half years, or the tribulation period, in which God will deal particularly with the nation of Israel. Although Daniel had a vision of the seventy prophetic weeks determined upon the nation of Israel, he did not have a revelation of the Church Age, the dispensation in which God deals primarily with the Gentiles. Daniel did not see the centuries of time that separated the first half of the prophetic week (3 1/2 years) from the second half of the week (3 1/2 years). The entire seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy relate to God's special dealings with His chosen people; the Jews. Here in Revelation seven, God makes a covenant with the remnant Jews again to preserve them through this period of three and one half years of God's judgment on earth.

Some people teach that the 144,000 Jews in chapter seven are the same group which is seen in Revelation fourteen. This is not scriptural. Chapter seven describes an earthly scene; it concerns human beings who will be sealed for preservation through the time when God's devastating judgments and wrath are being poured out upon the earth. Chapter fourteen is a heavenly scene which is concerned with a special group of redeemed people who are exalted in Heaven. There is a literal, earthly Mount Zion in Jerusalem, but there is also a heavenly Mount Sion in Heaven. John saw this scene at the beginning of the Tribulation.



Let us proceed in the study of the 144,000 who are seen in Heaven in Revelation 14:1-5. Our study covers the following stature of truth.



I. STANDING

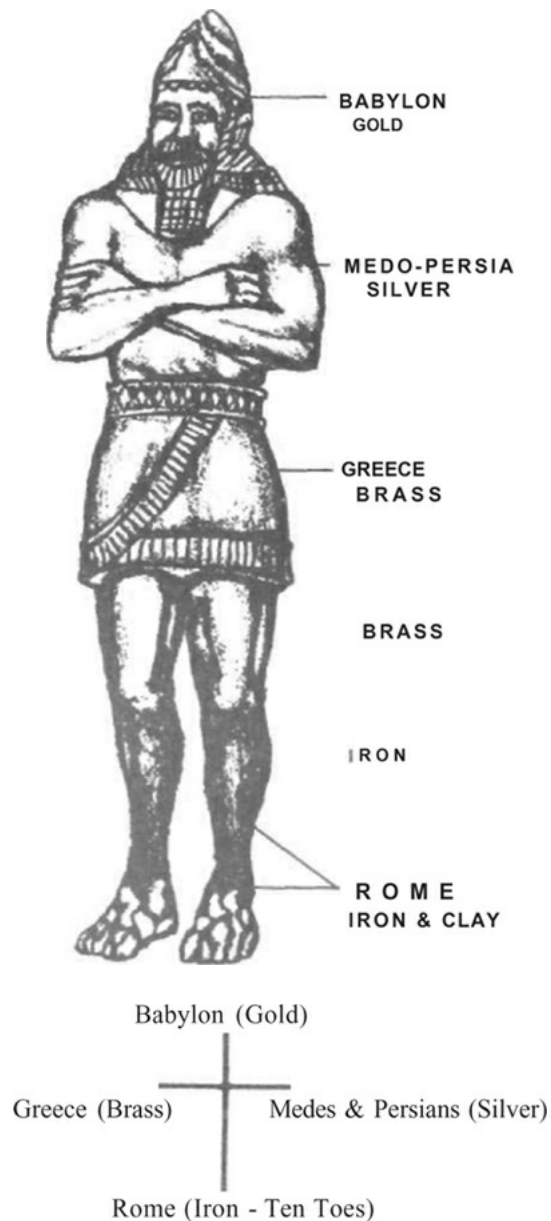
And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads (Revelation 14:1).

The word *stand* means to stand, to abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set up, stanch, stand (by, forth, still, up). From the definition of this word we understand that it represents a position of exaltation for this group of 144,000. While they are standing in relation to the rest of Heaven and earth, their wills are lying down in relation to the Lamb. Let us consider where and with whom they are standing.

A. ON MOUNT SION

This cannot possibly be an earthly scene, for every detail indicates its heavenly location. These people are not on the earth because they stand in a very special place, the heavenly Mount Sion. This scene presents a most beautiful and pleasing sight as the Lord Jesus Christ stands at the head of His faithful adherents and attendants, His Bride. The fact that this scene takes place before the Throne of God and in the presence of the beasts and four and twenty elders proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the scene is heavenly and not earthly. The book of Daniel tells of the existence of the heavenly Mount Zion.

The second chapter of Daniel reveals an image which represents the four great Gentile kingdoms that comprise the full stature of Gentile world power. Each degree of power is symbolized by a particular metal. The stature begins with the head (which is always the highest realm) and works downward to the feet of the image.



Beginning with verse 40 in Daniel 2, we have the Roman Empire which was divided, as it were, into ten toes, or into the democratic kingdoms (clay) and the totalitarian kingdoms (iron).¹⁴

The golden head of the image represented the highest, strongest, and most illustrious kingdom in the Gentile powers. This position was held by Babylon. The inferiority of the second kingdom, the Medes and Persians, was identified by its position in the body (the breast and arms) and by the silver metal. The power of the second kingdom was revealed in the vision of the ram with two horns (Daniel 8:3,4).

The third kingdom, Greece, formed the belly and thighs of the image and was represented by the brass. The power of the Greek kingdom was seen as a he goat with a notable horn between his eyes (Daniel 8:5). The notable horn was Alexander the Great. Like all worldly rulers, he waxed strong for a season, but at the age of thirty-three he was broken. His conquests were divided among his four great captains, who were pictured as four notable horns toward the four winds of Heaven (Daniel 8:8). Out of one of these horns came a little horn which waxed exceedingly great. All agree that this little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes, or Antiochus Epimanes. He referred to himself as Antiochus Epiphanes, which means *the illustrious*. However, others called him Antiochus Epimanes, which means *the furious*. Both names refer to the same man. Antiochus had a base, servile, contemptible disposition with no

princely qualities.

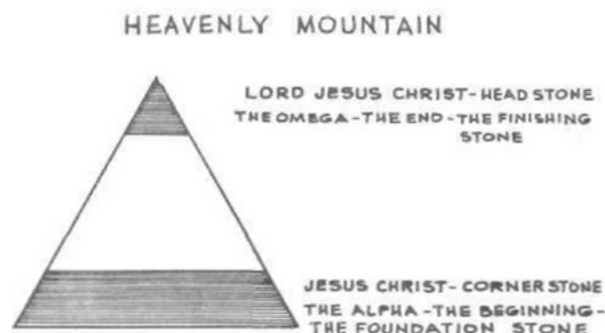
He mistreated the Jews and desecrated the worship of God (Daniel 8:9-14). History tells us that he took away the daily sacrifice (the evening and the morning oblation) and had the audacity to offer swine's flesh on God's altar. He cast down the Lord's sanctuary, as it were, when he made it a temple of Jupiter Olympius and set his image in it. He cast the truth to the ground when he trampled upon the Book of the Law, the Word of Truth. He tore it and burnt it and did what he could to destroy it. Yet in spite of his mighty thrust against the truth, he was still just a man. He had no power to cause the oblations to cease. God continued to require animal sacrifice from man until the Blood of Jesus Christ was shed on Calvary's Cross. Only then did God cease to demand animal oblations.

Antiochus Epiphanes was a type and shadow of the Antichrist, whose kingdom comes out of one of the ten toes of the fourth kingdom, the Roman kingdom. Although the stature of the Roman kingdom reached only to the legs of the image, it was strong as iron in its beginning. Later the Roman kingdom was divided into ten toes, or kingdoms, which were seen as a mixture of iron and clay. The ten toes represent the democratic kingdoms (clay) and the totalitarian kingdoms (iron) which are present in the world today. The Antichrist is a resurrected human being whose kingdom comes out of one of these ten toes. His kingdom is a part of the world kingdoms upon which the stone from the heavenly mountain will **fall**.

And in the days of these kings [representing kingdoms] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure (Daniel 2:44,45).

The mountain from which the stone is cut is a heavenly mountain. The whole mountain does not come back to the earth, just a portion of it, a Stone. As the Antichrist stands up, representing the full stature of enmity against God, the Stone, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, will come rolling out of Heaven with His Bride, and He breaks in pieces the whole stature of enmity of world powers that have arrayed themselves against God. This Stone will grow until it fills the whole earth. Jesus Christ is not seen by everyone at the time of the Rapture; therefore, this crushing power has to do with His second coming, the time when He as the Stone out of the heavenly mountain, comes back to earth with His Bride.

Mount Sion is a spiritual kingdom in Heaven. In the Perfect Age, this mountain will be separated again, so to speak, with each portion of the mountain taking its rightful place. The beginning of this process of separation takes place with the Stone "cut out of the mountain without hands." He is the Head Stone. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He was the corner stone in the beginning of the building, and He is the finishing stone seen upon the completion of the building. Those who grow into spiritual maturity and become one with Jesus Christ will be the ones who will come back with the Stone, the Bridegroom, when He comes rolling out of Heaven to crush the kingdoms of the world. Remember, Jesus Christ and His Bride come from the mountain in Heaven.



Let us note some pertinent facts about the standing of the 144,000 on Mount Sion in Heaven: they are located *on* Mount Sion, and they are standing on the very *top* of it with the Lamb.

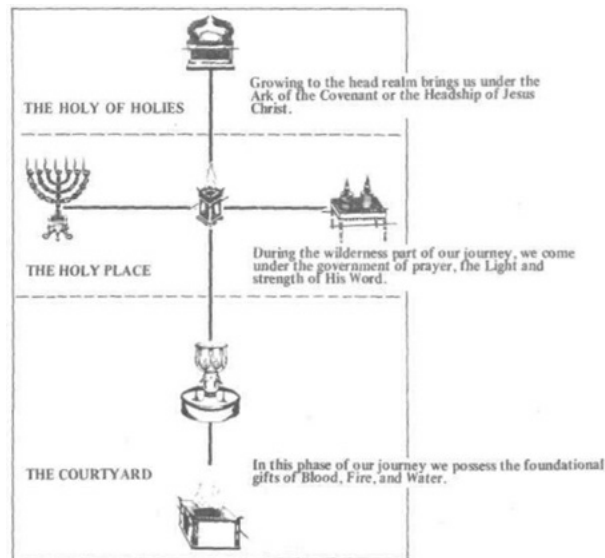
B. WITH THE LAMB

This group was standing *on* Mount Sion *with* the Lamb. We have already studied the distinctions made in the varying degrees of glory which serve as garments or coverings for the saints throughout eternity. The saints who grow to the Courtyard or spiritual stature and know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Baptizer are clothed in white robes. The shoulder realm saints are those who know and have experienced the governmental authority of Jesus Christ in their lives; they wear white raiment. The head realm saints (the Bride) who have known marriage union with the will of God, wear white linen. Out of the number which makes the Bride comes a group of 144,000 who have attained the *highest realm* of the Bride. They have been made one with the Lamb. They are seen in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation on Mount Sion, which has to do with the full Headship of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Spiritual growing and maturing in God is what makes the Christian life an exciting, progressive, ever-changing walk with the Lord. Through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, God has graciously given the foundational gifts of the Blood, the Fire of the Holy Ghost, and the Waters of His Name, Death, and Life for all believers' appropriation. With these three gifts we have all the seed substance that we need in order to grow up into the full stature of the Son, and then into the full stature of the Father, and the Holy Ghost. This is a big study in itself, but a brief explanation will help us to better understand the standing (positionwise) of the 144,000 seen on top of Mount Sion.

The full stature of the Son is illustrated in minute detail in the Old Testament Tabernacle. Every aspect of the Tabernacle presents some experience and some portion of Jesus Christ that we are privileged to appropriate in our spiritual journey of growing up to be like Him.

As the true vine must war against the wild vine, and as the wheat must war against the tares, even so each progressive stage of growth into the stature of Jesus Christ presents some new area of spiritual warfare and some new adversary to overcome. Although we war against the world and the Devil, our greatest battles involve overcoming our own flesh, or in other words, the "Self life. The Mosaic Tabernacle divides our spiritual journey of growing up into the stature of Jesus Christ (from His foot to His head) into three major divisions: the Courtyard, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies.



This simple diagram gives, in capsule form, what it means to grow up into the stature of Jesus Christ, as mentioned in Ephesians 4:15: "...grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." The purpose of growth in the stature of the Son is *to* attain a oneness of relationship with Him, so that He might reign and rule over our carnal nature and bring it under His control and divine Headship. Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan's land follows the identical pattern set forth in the Tabernacle. It was not until Israel crossed the River Jordan, marching into the land by passing under the Ark of the Covenant (indicating His Headship), that she entered into marriage relationship and was called a Wife.

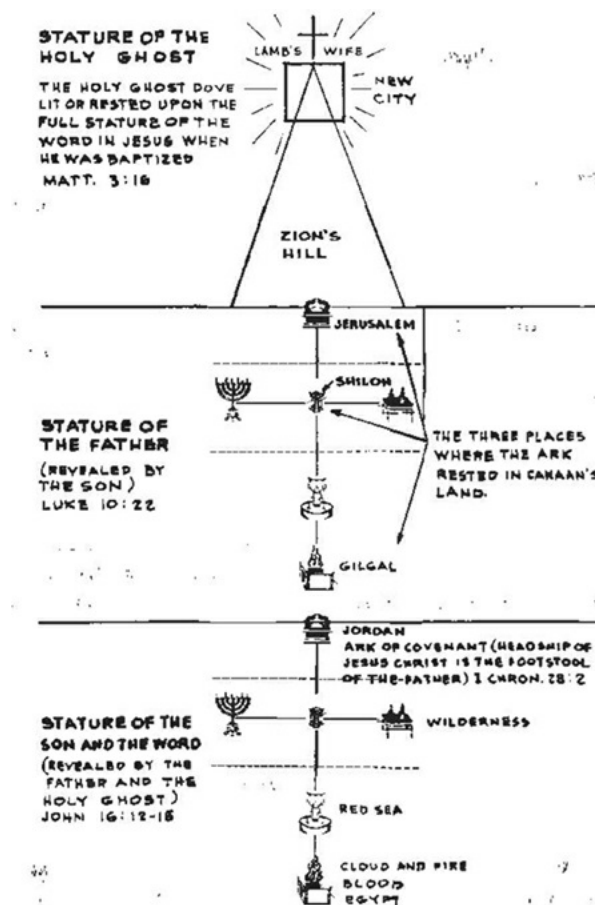
What a joyous privilege it is to press upward into the stature of Jesus Christ. Daily we find new and exciting opportunities to lay down our own will so that we can pick up His will. Each new circumstance or situation of life

offers us fresh opportunities to lay down our corrupt nature in order to pick up His divine nature, lay down our depravity in order to pick up His beauty, lay down the stench of the "Self" life in order to pick up the fragrance of His holiness. After we attain the full stature of Jesus Christ by growing up into His Headship and coming under His reign and rule, there is still the stature of the Father into which we can grow. The Father reveals the Son and in turn, the Son reveals the Father.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him (Matthew 11:27).

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believes! thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake (John 14:9-11).

O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:25,26).



When we have arrived in our spiritual maturity to the head realm of the Son, we have then come to the footstool of the Father, or the beginning of our spiritual growth in the stature of the Father realm of God. The stature of the Son deals with the ruling power of the Christ over our carnal nature. As we grow in the Father realm of God, the

spiritual man, or nature, within the Christian comes under the control, direction, and rule of the Father. While there are different kinds of spiritual experiences to be had in the stature of the Father, there are more new areas of growth in what was found in the stature of the Son. A greater degree of glory, power, and unity is attained in the Father's stature.

The Ark, symbolic of the Son's Headship (ruling and reigning power), rested in three places in Canaan's land, or Beulah land, "marriage land). Each place is a type of greater unity that depicts the degree of spiritual growth in the stature of the Father. The stature of the Father realm begins at His footstool, which is the head realm, or the place of marriage relationship with Jesus Christ, the Son. Before the Father can assume the rule and the headship over our spiritual man, our carnal man must be brought under the rule and Headship of Jesus Christ, the Son and the Word, who will crucify the rebellion of the carnal man and resurrect him in Christ's own image. Jesus Christ subdues our carnal nature and brings it under subjection to His feet, so that He might have complete rule and reign over it.

Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: (I Chronicles 28:2).

Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? (Isaiah 66:1).

When our personal earth conies under the Headship of Jesus Christ, then we are privileged to continue our spiritual growth into greater oneness of relationship in the Father's stature. After we have progressed through the Father's stature, we can climb Mount Zion, which is the stature of the Holy Ghost and be anointed with a new holy fragrant anointing of union on our sanctified natural man, and the stature of the Son and the Father. As the city, Old Jerusalem, was located on Mount Zion in the natural, so the New City, New Jerusalem, is located on Mount Zion in the spiritual.

The word *Zion* means a sunny slope. In other words, Zion is a place where the sun is always shining. There is no *night* in the New City which is upon spiritual Mount Zion, because the sun of righteousness is always shining there. When the Holy Ghost anoints us with a new fragrant anointing of gratitude for the Headship of the Son and the Father in our lives, the sunshine of delight, joy and love *continually* fills our personal temples. Then we, too, can follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

This is the place where the 144,000 stand. In view of what we have briefly mentioned here, we understand that these 144,000 represent the highest realm of the Bride of Jesus Christ. Just as there are degrees of experience and spiritual growth all the way up the stature of Jesus Christ, the stature of the Father-realm of God, the stature of the anointing of the Holy Ghost; so are there degrees in the Bride of Christ. These degrees are directly related to spiritual growth in the oneness of relationship with God. As we have already stated so often, our spiritual growth determines our degree of glory and our eternal position in the eternal realms of God.

There is a price to pay in order to grow up in God. It requires complete abdication of the "Self" from the throne of our heart. We must give up any rights that we feel we have to rule our lives, and give the throne of our hearts to Jesus Christ. When we do this, God will be faithful, through Christ Jesus, to give us eternal rewards for every step we have taken in Him and for every work we have done for Him. "...behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation. 2:12).

The 144,000 are seen standing *with* the Lamb on top of Mount Zion. During the tribulation period, before His return to earth at His second coming, the Lamb alternates His positions from His place in the midst of the throne, to standing on the top of spiritual Mount Zion. Although John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The real unveiling of the Lamb comes during the tribulation period when the wrath of the Lamb is poured out from Heaven. The Lamb was rejected by the world in general, when He went as a Lamb to Calvary's Cross. Since the world rejected the blessing side of the Lamb, they will see the other side of the Lamb, his judgment side or the wrath side, as it is poured out from Heaven during the tribulation period. The whole world rejected the Lamb and His vicarious Blood; there-fore, the Lamb is going to mete out his judgment to the world in proportion to its rejection of Him as the Lamb. But when Jesus Christ comes to the earth the second time, He will not come as a Lamb. At the close of the tribulation period, he makes His triumphal entry with His Bride as the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

We find another reference to spiritual Mount Zion in the Book of Hebrews.

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they had heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye *are come unto mount Sion*, and unto the city of the living God, *the heavenly Jerusalem*, [that is the Bride] and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly [these are the guests] and the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:18-24).

A distinction is made in this description of Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, in that there is an innumerable company of angels present in this heavenly scene, plus the “general assembly and church of the firstborn” who are the redeemed, born again believers that will be part of the guests at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. The Book of Galatians also refers to the heavenly Jerusalem.

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which tilings are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, [this is Old Jerusalem] and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4:22-26).

The question has been raised as to whether or not the number 144,000 is a specific number in this Scripture as it is in chapter seven, or if it is a symbolic number, as in the case of the twenty-four elders and the four beasts. The Word of God does not establish this fact. While it may be symbolic, it is more probable a literal, exact number. Since this number denotes the highest realm of the Bride of Jesus Christ, there are few people who are willing to pay the price to attain this height of position in God. As we have noticed before, the number twelve is the number of perfect government, and this number is emphasized in the New City, the New Jerusalem. The number 144 bears this same emphasis, since twelve times twelve is equal to 144. This implies the most mature and complete governmental rule of God.

II. SEAL

We have seen the *standing of the* 144,000 on spiritual Mount Sion with the Lamb. Lest we be confused in any way over the identity of this group, another conclusive detail is added, which identifies them with the Bride of Christ. This group bears a seal. God mentions seven different kinds of seals in His Word. The 144,000 Jews who were sealed in chapter seven were sealed in their foreheads as the “servants of our God.” The seal that the 144,000 in chapter fourteen wears is the seal of the Bride.

...an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads (Revelation 14:1).

They are sealed with the Father’s name. What name is this? Jesus said, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not...” (John 5:43). Jesus did not name Himself. He was named by the Father before his birth. The name of Jesus is the legal name of the Father, and through this name of Jesus, the Father has chosen to bring glory unto Himself. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a *name* which is above every name:...And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9,11). God has established His family name: “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*” (Ephesians 3:14,15). Clearly then, the Father’s name is the name of LORD JESUS CHRIST. When we view God in His oneness of unity, we see Him as LORD JESUS CHRIST. When we view God in the separations of Himself as seen in the Trinity, we see God the Father, we see God the Word, and we see God the Holy Ghost. The family name of God is the Lord Jesus Christ, the anointed one. This then, is the

name that seals the forehead of the Bride-LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Let us consider the message of the Seven Churches again. They are of great personal interest because they depict the spiritual journey of growing up in the stature of Jesus Christ. Each church directly relates to one of the seven pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle. And their spiritual state gives us a practical picture of the flesh that we must battle, and the overcoming power we must gain, in order to grow to the head realm of maturity in the stature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as there are two pieces of furniture in the Holy of Holies, so there are two churches that have grown to the head realm of spiritual stature. The Philadelphia Church presents a parallel study to the Ark of the Covenant, and the Laodicean Church parallels the study of the Mercy Seat which covered the Ark. The Philadelphia Church is of particular importance, for we see that this is the only church that bears the name of New Jerusalem, or Bride, upon her forehead.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name (Revelation 3:12).

The subject of these three names is more fully taught in chapter nine of Revelation Book One, *Jesus Christ the Resurrected King*, but let us briefly review the significance of these three names. Name means nature, character, and authority. In our study of the Old Testament priest, we saw the three names that he bore: one on his forehead, one on his shoulders, and one on his chest close to his heart. Likewise, the returning, resurrected, triumphant Christ bears three names: one on His forehead, one on His vesture, and one on His thigh.

In the Priest's commendation of the Philadelphia Church, we read, "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" (Revelation 3:8). The word *write* means to break, to fracture, to wound, and to engrave. The Prophet said "Because you have not denied my name, I am going to write the name of God, the name of deity, upon you." It will be through suffering and humiliation that the Bride will be joined to the Name of God, the Name of the New City, and the new Name of Jesus. We know from Revelation 14:1 that the Name of God is inscribed upon the forehead of the Bride. Revelation 22:3,4 again mentions the Bride with the Name of God written on her forehead.

And there shall be no more curse: but the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants [Bride] shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads (Revelation 22:3,4).

The Name of God comes from the Hebrew word *Elohim*, which refers to His creating power. In eternity the Bride of Christ will be endowed with creating power. The second Name, New Jerusalem, is the Name of the New City which stands upon twelve foundations of precious stones, which relate to the various aspects of the nature of the Rock, the Christ, the Word. The Bride wears this Name, also, for it indicates her union with the Christ. She has upheld the natures of *this* Name, as well, and has taken on the nature of the Word, the Christ, the Rock. A third Name is promised, "my new name." This is a portion of His nature that she has never previously experienced. In Revelation 19 when Jesus Christ comes to set up His millennial reign, we see Him with His new Name-LORD OF LORDS. LORD means the self-existent One who reveals Himself. As the LORD's Bride, she will be able to reveal herself in her rightful relationship with the Bridegroom. As for now, the world sees only her humiliation, surrender, and her many experiences of crucifixion. The writing of the three Names does not take place all at one time, but the Bride suffers over and over as each of the Names, the natures of God, is chiseled little by little into her being.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).

Yes, there is suffering in order to attain the Philadelphia realm in Jesus Christ, but notice the other promises of reward that He made to the Philadelphia Church. She was promised "an open door, and no man can shut it."

This is the door into the bridal chamber. It is a solitary door, for each must enter it alone. The key of David has to do with the opening of the bridal chamber, into the secrets, mysteries, and treasures of the Bride.

Another promise Jesus gave her was to make her enemies, those who pretended to be spiritual Jews and were

not, to come and worship before her feet (Revelation 3:9). This worship will be hers because she is one with the Bridegroom.

“I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Revelation 3:10). This specific promise pertains to the Rapture. The Bride will not have to go through the fearful time of judgment during the tribulation.

“...no man take thy crown” (Revelation 3:11). This implies that she is already crowned. Since she has grown up to the head realm in the stature of the Son, she already possesses the power of ruling and reigning, which is evidenced in her complete subjection to the will of her Bridegroom.

“...will I make a pillar in the temple of my God” (Revelation 3:12). It is one thing to have Christ *in you*, but it is far greater to have *you in Christ*. In chapter four, the Lamb is seen in the *midst* of the Throne. He is the shaft or the directing axle of the great wheel of God. In the Bride’s oneness of relationship to the Lamb, she is promised to be a pillar, or a shaft in Him, in the Lamb. Bear in mind that in the New City there is no other temple than the personal Temple of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb (Revelation 21:22).

Surely the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. It is pitiful to see so many of God’s redeemed content with just their foundational experience of salvation through the Blood. Because they fail to hear the message of God’s Word but choose rather to accept the placating doctrines of men’s own interpretation, they drift on through life never realizing that there is such a high calling for us all. Some may move even a bit higher in their spiritual experiences until they receive the Holy Ghost Fire and the Waters of the Name, Death, and Life of Jesus Christ, but these are still foundational experiences.

In no way do we belittle the greatness of each of these precious gifts of God, but, beloved, God’s intended purpose for giving each of these gifts is thwarted in the lives of many Christians. Instead of using the Blood, Fire, and Water in their daily lives as tools to help them grow into mature Christians, many believers let the world, the flesh, and the Devil stunt their spiritual growth. They become stalled in their journey without ever realizing what it is all about.

Beloved, there is a prize for the person who will run for it. Many run this race of life but never run to win the prize. Oh, that our contemplation of this Trumpet-Book of Revelation will awaken the children of God to their calling — to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ!

III. SONG

The 144,000 bursts forth into thunderous song as they stand on top of Mount Sion with the Bridegroom, the Lamb.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth (Revelation 14:2,3).

This song is unique and singular in that no other group shall learn it or sing it, for it is the song of the Bride. Only those who have grown into the heights of the stature of God and the Lamb will know enough about this song to sing it, because this is a song of unity and love.

We shall consider in detail this fantastic song which is described in a fourfold revelation.



A. LIKE MANY WATERS

The first thing that we learn about their voice is that it sounds like many waters. We find this identical thought in connection with the voice of Jesus Christ, "...and his voice as the sound of many waters" (Revelation 1:15). When we studied this Scripture in Revelation Book One, *Jesus Christ the Resurrected King*, we saw that His voice sounds like the bubbling of a spring and like overflowing fountains. Also His voice sounds like a deep well and like streams of gushing water. The Bride possesses the same voice because she has grown up in the Word of God and has become acquainted with the springs of truth, the fountains of the beauty of the fear of the Lord, the wells of life, and the streams of righteousness. Her voice is just like His voice. Her song is like His song.

B. LIKE THUNDER

Their combined voices are heard as a single voice likened to the sound of many waters and likened to the sound of great thunder. The voice of the Bride is heard in its oneness of unity here as well as in the 19th chapter: "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise *our* God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:5,6). Looking back to Revelation 4:5 we read "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices:..." The plural form is used in this case to help us understand that the Bride is more than one individual, she is a compound unity—one composed of many.

As we have mentioned before, there is a threefold witness of the Godhead. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" (I John 5:7,8). In like manner there is the threefold witness of the Bride: lightnings of separation, thunderings of union, and voices of an even greater union of oneness of relationship. (Although the lightning of separation is not specifically mentioned in chapter fourteen, we know that the Bride experienced separation because lightning always precedes thunder). The three witnesses correspond with the three divisions in the Tabernacle: the Courtyard, the witness of separation; Holy Place, the witness of union; the Holy of Holies, the witness of marriage union.

Thunders are always preceded by lightnings. Thunders are the unity witnesses of union. The 144,000 have a witness of their unity with Him.

C. HARP

The voice sounded like the music of harpers harping with their harps. Literal harps symbolize the spiritual harps of humility. The spiritual Bride plays this beautiful music of humility upon her harp, which is formed at the Table of Shewbread. The natural, carnal heart of man must first be cleansed and renovated; then it can be strung with the strings of humility, surrender, and obedience of Jesus. When people come along and begin to pluck at us with their misunderstandings, accusations, and suspicions, for example, only the lovely sounds of praise and thanksgivings unto the Lord will be heard. Beloved, it takes full spiritual maturity to be able to respond perfectly in this fashion.

There is no indication in the Word of God that the White Robed saints under the Brazen Altar possess these harps. The White Robed saints at the Laver (the Sea of Glass) *do* have harps because they have overcome in a higher degree, having acquired more of the humble nature of Christ.

Through their humility they gained the victory over the Beast, over his image, over his mark, and over the number of his name (Revelation 15:2). The twenty-four elders and the four beasts also have harps of humility. These shoulder realm saints have the formation of the harp of humility to the degree of spiritual stature to which they have grown, but the Bride's harp of humility is tuned perfectly with the Lamb's harp.

D. NEW SONG

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth (Revelation 14:3).

This was a new song, one they had never sung before, a song of joy and exultation born out of a new oneness of relationship with the Bridegroom. Each time we experience a new relationship with the Lord, we receive a new song

of joy. For example, a sinner cannot sing the song of joy that comes through the experience of salvation because he knows nothing about salvation. Our first relationship with the Lord is salvation through the Blood, and each successive relationship increases our joy and delight in Him.

Likewise, those who grow into the stature of the surrendered, Crucified Christ are the only ones who can learn this *new* song. We must experience a personal relationship with His surrender, His suffering, and His obedience, for it is this personal union with the Bridegroom that gives birth to this particular class of joy and ecstasy. The new song of the Bride (the 144,000 on Mount Sion) is a song of joy and ecstasy over their union with the Bridegroom. The twenty-four Elders and the four Beasts are privileged to hear this song, but they do not learn it or join in the singing of it,

IV. SANCTIFICATION

The Hebrew word *sanctification* means to be (make, pronounce or observe as) clean (ceremonially or morally), appoint, consecrate, dedicate, hallow, holy place, purpose, proclaim, purify, sanctify self wholly. The Greek word *sanctification* means purification, the state of being holy, purity, a purifier. We understand, then, that the 144,000 seen on the top of Mount Sion are saints who have let the Lamb make them clean and pure in body, soul, spirit, will and mind. They have been consecrated, dedicated, hallowed, and set apart for the Bridegroom, because they allowed Him to crucify their “Self life. Let us now consider the sanctification of the highest realm in the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. REDEEMED FROM THE EARTH

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:4).

We begin with this point because it is so basic to the identification of the 144,000. Clearly, they are redeemed people from the earth. As such, they began their spiritual journey just as all other believers; they started with redemption and salvation through the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Now we see them on the top of Mount Sion in their eternal glory, after having been caught away from the earth.

On another occasion we see redeemed people singing *their* new song.

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; (Revelation 5:9).

The fact is obvious from these accounts that distinctions are made in Heaven between those who are redeemed out of the earth. In each separate case (Revelation 5:9 and 14:3), they sing a new song of worship and praise to the Lamb who was slain for their redemption. In chapter five we see the four and twenty elders and the four beasts singing this song of praise to the Lamb. No mention is made in chapter 5:9 that this “new song” cannot be learned by any other, however, chapter 14:3 states that only the 144,000 can sing their particular new song.

The “new song” of the shoulder realm saints in chapter 5:9 relates to the degree of their personal maturity in the stature of the Lamb. The White Robed group cannot learn the new song of the White Raiment (shoulder realm saints) group because they never learned its melody in their earthly journey. However, the Bride can learn the new song that the priests and kings will sing in Heaven because she already knows the old song of the shoulder realm saints. Since she grew to full maturity in her earthly journey, she has already sung the song of the White Robed group, the song of the White Raiment group, and pressed on to learn the song of the Bride. She can sing all songs with all of God’s redeemed people, plus she is privileged to learn a song which none of the rest can learn because they did not learn the words, or the melody, of the Bride’s song of humility on earth.

B. NOT DEFILED WITH WOMEN

These are they which were not defiled with women;...(Revelation 14:4).

This description could not be of natural, physical men. If these were literal men, there would be discrimination in the Kingdom of God on the basis of a person's sex. We would have to conclude, then, that no women are included in the Bride of Christ. However, this cannot be true, for it is contrary to other portions of the Word of God. We read in Galatians 3:28 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.' If we interpret Revelation 14:4 to mean literal men only, then the additional phrase "for they are virgins" excludes all married men. This presents another reason why a literal rendition of this Scripture is impossible. The inspired writer of the Book of Hebrews declared: "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled;..." (Hebrews 13:4).

We must conclude then, that this Scripture describes a spiritual state, A natural eunuch, one who has been separated from his own procreating power, is used here to depict a spiritual eunuch. Beloved, the Bride of Jesus Christ will have this eunuch nature formed within her. It was customary among Eastern kings to make many of their men servants eunuchs, for in this way they assured themselves of good servitude, unhampered by human relationships of family and home,

- This principle is somewhat the same in regard to the Bride, Her ministry to her spiritual husband, her king, is to be performed without fleshly distractions. To avoid any misunderstanding of this matter, let us pause to consider briefly the various degrees found among natural eunuchs.

For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it (Matthew 19:12).

Some people are born eunuchs; that is, they are born with a gift of continence. Others, as we have mentioned before, are deprived of their procreating powers against their wills, through accidents and wars, for example. Then there is a special group who, for love of the Bridegroom and for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, willingly accept this humiliation and this suffering in order to live above sin. Their love for the spiritual Bridegroom constrains them to make this supreme sacrifice so that they might live holy, clean lives before God and before man. Not every man can walk this way in the physical realm, nor does God require it of all men. Nevertheless, this degree of physical consecration is a reality for *some* who help to make up the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not all who are in the Bride are required to give up their physical procreating powers and live without a mate. However, all who are in the Bride will experience this degree of consecration in the spiritual realm. They willingly surrender for the Lord to cut and sever any and all earthly relationships and loves that keep them from following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Every desire of the Bride's heart and all of her affection is wholly separated unto Him, for she seeks to do His will and to serve Him exclusively. She has a virgin heart, a sealed heart.

The woman is often used in the Scripture to personify different natures, sometimes in the good sense and sometimes in the bad. This is true in the case of other metaphors which are used in God's Word. For example, leaven is used to represent sin on one hand; while on the other hand, it represents resurrection power. The lion is used to depict the nature of the Devil who goes about like a lion seeking whom he may devour. Yet a lion is also used to describe the nature of Jesus Christ. He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Elsewhere in the Word of God the metaphor of a woman is used when the seven churches are referred to. In the Book of Proverbs wisdom is personified as a woman, one to be courted and wooed.

King Solomon also depicts different classes of evil as women, as something from which to flee, as something to shun and to put away. He presents twelve classes of women as the personification of twelve classes of evil that are defiling to the spiritual man.

Although the Bride of Christ is represented as a woman which places her in the feminine gender, she can also be viewed from the masculine gender in the sense that within her dwells the Christ, the Word, who is masculine in gender. For this reason, we see the 144,000 presented first in the masculine aspect "which were not defiled with women," while the very next aspect is couched in a feminine attribute-"for they are virgins."

Let us take just a brief look at the twelve defiling women who are presented in the Book of Proverbs. Although we cannot study them in depth, we can become acquainted with their existence and the spiritual defilement that each represents.

1. Strange Woman of Spiritual Pride

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words; which

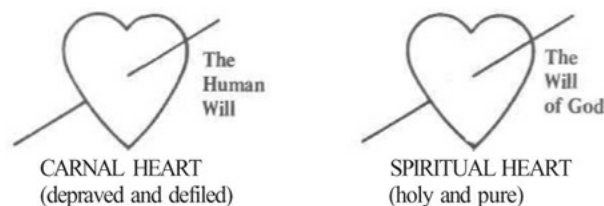
forsaketh the guide other youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God (Proverbs 2:16,17).

The Book of Proverbs has much to say about the particular woman who personifies spiritual pride, and who entices with her words of flattery. The greatest poison in all the world to the human heart, and especially to the spiritually minded man, is the poison of flattery. Pride is utterly incompatible and diametrically opposed to everything that is of God. In fact all sin (regardless of what realm or dispensation) is traced back to the root of pride that is so deeply imbedded in the heart and nature of every man. Since the strange woman of pride presents a problem of such a serious nature, we shall consider her in more detail than the other defiling women who are exposed in the Book of Proverbs.

It is a mystery why people, even Christians, defile themselves with the strange woman of pride. Our answer goes back to the example of Adam male and female in the Garden of Eden. They chose to seek satisfaction and happiness through their own independent will apart from God's will. They chose to eat of the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The knowledge of good meant prosperity, happiness, delight, and pleasure to them, but it was happiness and pleasure outside of the will of God. Much to their sorrow and dismay, they soon found that the good was joined to the evil. The word *evil* means misery, woe, affliction, and sorrow. There can never be any spiritual marriage relationship with Jesus Christ until we yield our human will to His control. As long as we function independently of His divine will, we tend to join ourselves to the strange woman of pride, for the human heart seeks after exaltation, honor, preeminence, attention and praise. However, true happiness and satisfaction can be found only *in* the will of God. To be in the Bride, we must surrender our human will in order to know a new oneness of relationship with the divine will of Jesus Christ.

In chapter two of Proverbs, King Solomon, the wise man, tells us about wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Staturewise, the Book of Proverbs fits together with the Golden Candlestick in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. The three points of emphasis in the Book of Proverbs correspond with the three degrees of light attainable at the Candlestick. In its every detail, the Candlestick, itself, is a type of Christ, the Word of God. The oil of the Candlestick is a symbol of wisdom; the fire is the symbol of understanding; and the light is a symbol of knowledge of the Word.

We must bear in mind that the Christian has two natures, two hearts, two wills. Perhaps if we separate these two hearts, it will help us to understand our two natures.



The spiritual heart grows in the same degree that the carnal heart surrenders to crucifixion and death. The old nature must make way for the new. As the new nature grows, it begins to possess the old heart, and fill it with mercy, compassion, lowliness, and meekness. Only then is our heart a fit spiritual womb for the shaft of His divine will to enter, thus filling man's will with a new degree of union with God's divine will.

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; Who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in ways of darkness; Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked: Whose ways are crooked, and they are froward in their paths: (Proverbs 2:10-15).

Wisdom, in the book of Proverbs, relates to the Crucified Christ and His humility, while understanding pertains to the Spirit of the Resurrected Christ. When we permit the shaft of the wisdom of the Crucified Christ to come into union with our will so that it can motivate and direct our hearts, then discretion and understanding will preserve and keep us. It will deliver us from "the way of the evil man" who personifies our fleshly nature. Our flesh speaks froward, self-willed things about what we want, or what we intend to do. But the humility and wisdom of the

Crucified Christ will deliver us from our carnal nature, because it moves us to do God's will rather than our own. This shaft of wisdom will deliver us from the paths of unrighteousness, the ways of darkness, evil and delight, the frowardness of the wicked, and the crooked paths of pride. Humility wisdom delivers us from the strange woman of pride.

The 144,000 on top of Mount Sion have not defiled themselves with this strange woman of pride because they have the shaft of humility, the shaft of the Crucified Christ, formed in them. They have become "married" to Jesus in their hearts, in their wills.

Let us consider the first description of the strange woman of pride.

a. First Description

The strange woman of pride has certain qualities of behavior which help us to recognize her when she approaches us in the spiritual realm.

1) She Flatters

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words (Proverbs 2:16).

To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids (Proverbs 6:24,25),

This strange woman of pride flatters with her tongue. People have learned that they can win favor with others by using flattery. This principle works in the business world, in the social world, and even in the religious world. Some ministries for example, become prosperous by employing this same principle of flattery. They are able to grow into great organizations because they take advantage of the use of this kind of psychology in handling people. Oftentimes it is difficult and painful for a minister to preach the WHOLE TRUTH as he sees it, for he knows that if he does, he will cause many offenses. The truth cuts and wounds, and the fear of offending people often causes a minister to compromise in preaching the truth of God's Word. Flattery is a well-known tool of both the flesh and the Devil. Because it exalts, flattery makes little gods of people, and pushes them to find their pleasure and satisfaction apart from the will of God, as it did in the case of Adam male and female. Every human heart desires exaltation, but the Bride of Christ must divorce herself from these fleshly appetites that war so viciously against the things of the Spirit and the will of God.

2) Forsaketh Guide

Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God (Proverbs 2:17).

The woman of pride has forsaken the guide of her youth, her Holy Ghost guide. Whether it be a denomination, a church, or an individual, we see this "forsaking of the guide of their youth" taking place around us. While we are still in the youthful stage, in the uncertainty of our beginning and immaturity, we are usually willing to humbly follow our guide, the Holy Ghost. But when we reach the stage of maturity and adulthood, we no longer feel a sense of dependency on the Spirit of God. It is not uncommon to see people strike out on their own, completely deceived by the strange woman of pride and her exalting words of flattery.

3) Forgets Covenant

...and forgetteth the covenant of her God (Proverbs 2:17).

The Church of Ephesus illustrates this sad state. In the beginning she had a genuine love relationship with Jesus Christ. But she drifted from this first relationship of love with her Bridegroom into a love for her works. So the Lord rebuked her and exhorted her to repent. Ephesus was commanded to do her first works over.

Every believer who has had a genuine experience of born again salvation through faith in Jesus Christ has had a taste of the same wonderful Bridegroom love that the Church of Ephesus had for her Saviour. How ennobling is the first love that fills our hearts with fervent desire to know Him, to serve Him, to please Him. Nothing seems as important as our new found love. But as time moves on, it is easy to forget this exhilarating first love. The flattery of the strange woman of pride causes us to forget the covenant that we made with God in the beginning to follow Him.

4) Lives in a House of Death

For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead (Proverbs 2:18).

The word *house* means house, family, court, daughter, door, dungeon, hangings, inside palace, place, prison, steward, tablet, temple, web. The word *incline* means to sink, to bow down, incline, humble. Beloved, the strange woman of pride presents her house as a place of grandeur, magnificence, nobility, and dignity. She even describes it as a sacred place. Regardless of what fair hangings she uses, those who go into her house find that the web of pride is as strong as a dungeon. They find that it is a prison house which sinks daily into greater degradation and humiliation of spiritual death. Her house leans in the wrong direction. Instead of paths of life, her paths lead to ultimate and final death. Merely being entertained by her in her house is dangerous fellowship and communion. These are leanings toward death, eternal spiritual death.

5) Walks in Paths of the Dead

..and her paths unto the dead (Proverbs 2:18).

Only the dead walk here. Once an individual fully commits himself to this house of death, he will never turn around and come back out of it. There is only one path out of the house of pride, and that is the pathway of death,

6) Ensnares Her victims

None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life (Proverbs 2:19).

The power of pride is so great that once she firmly grips souls, they are ensnared forever. She holds them in her clutches. She maintains power over them by promising to satisfy every longing of their fleshly desires. Her captives are so deceived that they think **that** having their carnal appetites fed are spiritual blessings from God. In reality, God resists the proud.

Spiritual adultery begins quite innocently, in a flirting stage, but it ultimately ends in illicit intercourse, in a forbidden relationship. If a person chooses to marry his soul and will to the strange woman of pride in preference to the Word of God and if he goes **far** enough in this union, there is no returning for that individual. When we play around with the strange woman of pride, we are playing with death, death from which none return. Once complete **union** is made with her, there is no coming back out of her house of death.

7) Holds Her Victims

...neither take they hold of the paths of life (Proverbs 2:19).

Pride keeps the souls of those whom she lures into her house. Never again can the ensnared ones walk in the paths of life. This strange woman of pride has tremendous enticing and holding power. She holds them in her web of deceit.

We have seen the strange woman of pride described quite thoroughly in chapter two. Another sevenfold description of her is given in chapter five to emphasize the fearfulness of this creature. As an admonition to all believers, the wise man gives explicit and detailed warning about her.

b. Second Description

Solomon begins by saying, "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding; That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge"¹ (Proverbs 5:1,2), In other words, my son, does not

the wisdom of the Crucified Christ **cry** out to you? And does not the understanding of the Resurrected Christ cry also? Why is Solomon concerned? Why is he crying? Because he is trying to alert people to the danger that stands so close at hand.

The following Scriptures give Solomon's second, sevenfold description of the strange woman of pride.

1) Her Lips

For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: (Proverbs 5:3).

Honeycomb speaks of sweetness. However, Pride's sweetness is an imitative sweetness, for the Word of God does not state that it is honeycomb. Instead, it is mentioned only *as* an honeycomb.

In the Song of Solomon, the Bride's heart is pictured as a garden filled with fragrance and fruits, and a full stature of the waters of the Word. After their marriage is consummated, the Bridegroom speaks of His Bride, saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk:..." (Song of Solomon 5:1). The Bride has the genuine honeycomb of God's Word. Her heart was filled with the sweetness of the truth that came to her as she lived in the pages of the Word of God, until He revealed it and made it sweet to her soul.

The imitative sweetness of the strange woman of pride is a substitute for the real sweetness possessed by the Bride of Christ. The woman of pride substitutes the temporary sweetness of material things, of positions, of carnal pleasures, and other soul satisfying things, because she is a stranger to the sweetness known to the Bridegroom and His Bride.

2) Her Mouth

„her mouth is smoother than oil: (Proverbs 5:3).

The strange woman of pride has anointed lips, but again, they are just an imitation. We know that God has a Holy Ghost anointing for His servants and His people. When fallen Lucifer was cast out of Heaven with the rest of the fallen angels, he stole some of God's possessions. Lucifer anoints his servants with this stolen anointing to make them instruments of evil. He seeks to imitate everything that God has. The strange woman of pride is not to be underestimated as an enemy, for her lips drop with false sweetness, and her mouth is filled with the powerful anointing of fallen Lucifer, himself.

3) Her End

But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword (Proverbs 5:4).

Few people stop to consider the end of pride. They are taken up with the deceitfulness of her sweetness and oil and seldom realize that her end is as bitter as wormwood. Wormwood is the punishment for the proud. When the third trumpet judgment is sounded, and God's wrath is poured out on the earth during the Great Tribulation, we see that one-third part of the rivers and fountains of waters become wormwood (Revelation 8:11). The word *wormwood* means to curse. Wormwood is regarded as poisonous; therefore it would be considered a curse. The end of pride is cursed, or it is poisonous and as bitter as gall. Her end is also as "sharp as a two-edged sword." The word *sharp* means cutting, piercing, suffering. A bitter, suffering, cutting, and tearing judgment awaits the strange woman of pride and those who join themselves to her house and walk in her pathway of death.

Beloved, there is no possible way that we can bypass suffering, bitterness, and the humility that is served to us in this life. We can either accept it by surrendering to walk in the crucified steps of Jesus, the way of the Cross and fellowship His sufferings, being made conformable unto his death (Philippians 3:10), or we can take the route of pride. If we choose to marry our soul to pride, we will share her horrible destiny.

People think that they can escape the two-edged sword of the Word of God, but we either come under His sword in this life, or we will meet it on the day of judgment. The only difference is that if we accept the judgment of the Word now, we will receive the Word in blessing. As we open ourselves to the sharp sword of the Word of God now, He cuts away the flesh, the superfluous things of the world, and the weights of sin that keep us from growing spiritually and being conformed into the image of the Son of God.

4) Her Feet

Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell (Proverbs 5:5).

The pathway of pride is death. Although her mouth promises glory, exaltation and life, her feet go in the opposite direction. She walks in death, and those who follow her also walk in spiritual death in this life and in eternity.

5) Her Steps

...her steps take hold on hell (Proverbs 5:5).

This shows that the progression into darkness, separation, bitterness, suffering, and death is a continuous moving from one depth into a deeper depth. Pride is never content to stay in one degree of evil and darkness. She is ever ready to explore new depths of sin and wickedness. Furthermore, she is dedicated to leading all her strange lovers into the same depths of degradation and shame. Who can fully comprehend the end of the strange woman of pride and the end of those who marry themselves to her?

6) Her Path

Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them (Proverbs 5:6).

Pride has one basic motive in all that she does. Fearful lest men consider the path of Life (who is Jesus Christ), she works diligently to pull all men into *her* path of death and judgment. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Apart from Him we must settle for a trial that is a transitory cheap substitute. The strange woman of pride is insistent and proficient; she works industriously to lead men's hearts astray. Pride lures men to wander into the downward paths of death which can result only in their being accursed from the presence of God for all eternity. Man is so blind and foolish that all too frequently he settles for cheap and tawdry things, when the "altogether lovely" One stands with open arms, inviting the weary travelers to come to Him and find rest for their souls.

Beloved, we should each ask ourselves, "Which lover am I choosing today, pride or the humble Christ?" Have we made Jesus Christ our choice with all of our being? Tomorrow is too late. The die is cast in this life. Those who choose to marry pride will never know the Life, or the exquisite delight of the Spiritual Bridegroom.

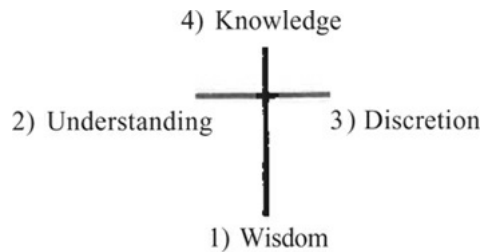
7) Her Ways

..her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them (Proverbs 5:6).

There is nothing fixed nor permanent in the ways of pride, for she practices deceitful trickery. This constant shifting about is for the purpose of creating confusion and preventing others from knowing her ways. She does not have a standard avenue of attack, for while she may approach from one angle of pride one time, we cannot be sure that she will use the same route next time. Pride has many devious ways of ensnaring us. This is why we see people who have married themselves to the strange woman of pride filled with a multiplicity of false things. Their changing facade makes it difficult to pin them down in anything. They are always shifting. However, their changes are not indicative of a change of disposition, attitude, or heart. Changeableness is all part of the techniques of the deceitful trickery of the strange woman of pride.

c. How to Overcome the Strange Woman of Pride

Let us consider a small stature of how we overcome this strange woman of pride.



1) Wisdom

My son, attend unto my wisdom,...(Proverbs 5:1).

Attend means prick up the ears, hearken, attend, cause to hear, give heed, incline, mark well. Our ears are being attacked daily by sounds, words, and voices that seek entrance into our conscious mind and heart. No wonder Solomon exhorted his son to attend to the counsel of wisdom.

As he ministered before the Lord, the priest in the Mosaic Tabernacle used oil and fire to produce light in the Holy Place. This speaks to us of the wisdom, understanding and knowledge of the humble mind of Christ. The oil of His humility will lubricate our minds and hearts and make it easy for us to discern the oily voice of the spirit of spiritual adultery as she whispers smooth words of pride. She suggests, "You deserve more honor and recognition. These people just fail to appreciate your superior abilities. They should see that the hand of God is upon you in a special way." But Wisdom faithfully reminds the heart, "You were a poor, lost, sinner with no way to pay your debt of sin. The fire of Hell waited to receive your soul, but Jesus reached down in mercy and saved you by His Blood. Therefore, anything you receive in this life is much better than you deserve." Give heed, attend to the words of wisdom, the words of humility, for they will protect you from the strange woman of pride.. James 1:5 tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

2) Understanding

...and bow thine ear to my understanding: (Proverbs 5:1).

When the oil of humility covers our minds and hearts, it is easy for the Holy Ghost to set the soul ablaze with the fire of understanding. As this fire circles our minds, none of the burning thoughts of pride can penetrate the heart and will. Paul prayed: 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints' (Ephesians 1:17,18). Understanding will open our spiritual eyes and show us that God's desire and plan for our life far surpasses any momentary pleasure that pride offers. Although she lures us with temporal pleasure and satisfaction, she will damn our soul in a devil's hell. Attend to understanding, for she teaches that Jesus Christ is the source of **all** true satisfaction.

3) Discretion

That thou mayest regard discretion,...(Proverbs 5:2).

Guard means *to* hedge about (as with thorns), guard, protect, beware, be circumspect, keep self, reserve, watchmen. To attend something, to prick up our ears and heart is one thing, to guard the truth is another. God instructed Adam male and female to dress the Garden and to keep it. He was warning, "Beware, an enemy is coming; be on guard." Because they failed to heed the admonition, the Serpent entered with his proud way and deceived them into eating the forbidden fruit. After God expelled them He sent angels with flaming swords to guard the entrance to the Garden of Eden, lest they eat of the tree of Life and live forever in their fallen state. Christians would do well to receive the warning that Solomon gave his son. Guard discretion! Erect a wall of truth around the revelation and instructions which God gives because a strange woman is coming with proud thoughts. She ever

seeks to entice souls away from following the will of God in their lives.

4) Knowledge

...and that thy lips may keep knowledge (Proverbs 5:2).

Knowledge is light produced from the union of the oil of wisdom and the fire of understanding. Spiritual pride seeks to distort the truth, change light into darkness, and blind the eyes to the pain, suffering and death found along her pathway. But humility and understanding illuminate the dark recesses of the heart and allow the soul to consider the way of pride from the proper perspective. Spending eternity in Hell is too great a price to pay for the satisfaction and pleasure that pride offers.

The priest in the Old Testament carefully inspected each sacrifice in order to see if it were without blemish. It had to be a spotless offering unto the Lord. As we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, our priest, Jesus, will inspect even the motives and intents of our heart with the light of His knowledge. "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 2:7). Our human hearts are so desperately wicked and deceitful that only the piercing eyes of the Priest can expose pride's subtle maneuvering as she seeks self-exaltation. However, the light from His eyes will reveal every spot and blemish of pride in our hearts. After we receive the light of knowledge from the Priest, we must guard it by living at the Golden Altar of prayer in intercession and travail for God to perfect His will and nature in us.

We have seen two sevenfold revelations of the nature of the strange woman of pride. Surely we now realize what a vile creature she is and what a formidable foe. Thank the Lord that He has provided a way to overcome this strange lover of pride.

We have been viewing the sanctification of the 144,000 on Mount Sion with the Lamb, her spiritual Husband, and we are now pursuing the fact that they are those who have not defiled themselves with women. These are spiritual concepts presented through the symbology of a woman. The first and no doubt the most dangerous of all the women we are studying is the strange woman of pride. Let us continue to identify the other eleven classes of "evil which are revealed in the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

2. Evil Woman of Sadness

To keep thee from the evil woman,..(Proverbs 6:24),

Evil means misery, sadness, woe, and affliction. How often Christians flirt and accept union with the spirit of sadness and self-pity. This is evil in the sight of God. When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we have joy unspeakable, for "...the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17).

What, then, makes us sad? We feel sad because we cannot have our own way. This is the root of all sadness. Because we fail to recognize the Headship of the Lord in all things, we feel sad when things fail to go our way. Too often we blame the Devil for our depression and our frustrations, when actually these feelings of sadness are coming out of our own fleshly nature. The truth is that no circumstance or person can touch us unless God permits them to do so. In Job's case the Devil could touch him only with God's permission. Since this is true, we can be assured that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). All power belongs to God—not to the Devil.

3. Whorish Woman of Lust

For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life (Proverbs 6:26).

To be *whorish* means to be highly fed and wanton. One expression of the lustful presence of the whorish woman is a spirit of gluttony. God's people are not to be bound by a gluttonous spirit which keeps their minds on food all the time. When we neglect to fast and pray, we are soon open prey to the whorish woman who keeps our thoughts occupied with delightful anticipation of food. People can sit in the house of God under the ministry of the Living Word of God, and meanwhile their thoughts are relishing their next meal. Undoubtedly many Sunday dinners have

robbed the saints of God of eternal riches.

Of course this whorish woman can express herself in other areas and realms besides food. To be *wanton* means malicious, lewd, a loose woman. Whatever we lust after with strong desires outside of God's will, is a manifestation of the whorish woman.

The 144,000 have not defiled themselves with this woman. They have grown beyond the shoulder realm and have come under the governmental rule of Jesus Christ. The Bride knows what self-control is; she is well acquainted with the mountain of continence. The defilement of the whorish woman is not found within their temples.

4. Foolish Woman of Frivolity

A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing (Proverbs 9:13).

Perhaps one of the most common afflictions of Christians is this silly, foolish, and frivolous spirit. Most generally the person who is always the down of the crowd is motivated by a desire for attention. The "life of the party" is usually the insecure person, the one who needs the satisfaction of being the center of attention. In the Hebrew, the word *foolish* means to be silly, and to make play. The Greek definition of *foolish* means dull, stupid (as if shut up), heedless, blockhead, apparently absurd, foolish. The definition of the word foolish does not paint a very flattering picture of a person who is joined to the woman of frivolity.

The spirit of lasciviousness follows right behind the foolish woman. Lasciviousness is one of the thirteen steps down into the human heart which are listed in Mark 7:22. It is that unrestrained nature within us that can lure. In the Greek the word *wantonness* is the same word as lasciviousness. Wantonness works especially through unrestrained, suggestive, and provocative eyes. Adultery and fornication have many times begun as an innocent, foolish, silly and frivolous desire to be the center of attention. The foolish woman opens the door for many of her companions to lure and entice men into a sin in which they never intended to indulge.

5. The Fair Woman of Hypocrisy

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion (Proverbs 11:22).

The word *fair* in Hebrew means beautiful, comely, fair, pleasant, well. Although this woman is outwardly fair, it is only a facade. Inwardly she is without discretion, meaning without taste, perception, intelligence, behavior, judgment, reason, and understanding. The inward character of such a woman completely cancels her outward appearance of comely beauty. The fair woman personifies the lying spirit of duplicity. Her fair outward appearance hides an inward corruption, ignorance, and lack of wisdom and understanding. In fact, the fair woman is described "as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout." Although this description is humorous, hypocrisy is not funny in any sense.

The Bride has a heart that is not defiled with women, a virgin heart that is scaled up, walled up for only her Bridegroom. She never permitted her heart and will to be married to any other, but grew to where she could keep herself pure and undefiled from these strange women of the flesh. What is it that makes a person flirt with the things of pride? Every human will has a desire that reaches out for satisfaction from human beings instead of desiring JESUS CHRIST as its satisfying portion. We are too easily influenced and affected by what human beings say to us. If they feed us words that flatter and exalt us, we feel elated. But if they feed us critical, humiliating words, then we marry ourselves to sadness and drape our despondency all over everybody else.

When we become bigger in God, nothing that people say, whether it be good or evil, detours us from God's will. We simply sail on our chartered course, never deviating in the slightest because we are headed for a prize. We are too busy running the race to be bothered with men's fluctuating opinions. Often the situations and circumstances of life that seem the most promising are nothing but empty disappointments. The true inner nature of the matter lies hidden. In fact, it is like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. If we look beyond its glitter, we will see its hypocritical, lying nature.

6. The Brawling Woman of Strife

It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house (Proverbs 21:9).

There are other Scriptures in Proverbs about this woman, but it is sufficient for us to realize that this woman exists. A *brawling* woman is one of discord, strife, and malice. When things do not go just as we think they should, it is easy to pick up the spirit of this brawling woman and join our soul to her strife, discord and malice. When we keep company with the brawling woman, our eyesight comes under her influence and control. Everyone else shows up in a bad light, and everyone else is to blame but us. The Bride does not defile herself with a spirit of discord and strife; she keeps her heart open for the Lord to show her where the blame really lies, thus closing her heart to the brawling woman who never admits any wrong.

7. The Contentious Woman of Incontinence

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman (Proverbs 21:19).

The word *contentious* means incontinence, the lack of self-control. How easy it is to flirt with this woman, until she has such a grip on us that it becomes impossible to hold our tongues. Even though we know something should not be said, there is the power of the contentious woman in us that makes it utterly impossible to hold back the words. When this woman rules over our flesh, her influence is evidenced by a contentious spirit and complete lack of self-control. The Bride of Christ has grown in the Ox nature of self-control, and has matured to the point that she has become like her Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

8. The Angry Woman of Provocation

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman (Proverbs 21:19).

This verse lists two of the women of pride. The word *angry* means vexation, anger, angry, grief, indignation, provocation, provoking, sore, sorrow, spite, wrath. The angry woman is a woman of provocation. Her delight is to provoke others, so that she might have an excuse to express the anger which festers within her heart. Basically her sore anger is rooted in resentment against God's Headship in her life. Since she cannot vent her wrath against God Himself, she is quick to provoke occasions which cause contentions so that she can vent her indignation and anger against anyone whom the Lord allows to cross her pathway.

9. The Adulterous Woman of Infidelity

Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness (Proverbs 30:20).

A spirit of infidelity will cause us to commit adultery, either naturally or spiritually. We think of infidelity as not being faithful, loyal, or true to one's spouse, but the spirit of the adulterous woman can be evidenced in different ways. By betraying someone's confidence and trust, we can prove ourselves unfaithful and adulterous in our hearts.

10. The Odious Woman of Hate

For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress (Proverbs 30:23).

To be odious is to be hateful. If we have been guilty of flirting with this woman, we show it by a hateful, mean spirit toward others, even though there has been no provocation. We excuse ourselves by saying, "Oh, I just got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning."¹ Or we say, "I feel a bit out of sorts today because I had a bad night last night." We make all manner of excuses for our hateful words and attitudes. However, as we grow in God, we learn to part company with this odious woman. Instead we keep ourselves full of the sweetness of the Lord. Then, in spite of hostile circumstances, we can still be courteous and considerate of the feelings of others.

11. The Singing Woman of Fleshly Pleasure

I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments and that of all sorts (Ecclesiastes 2:8).

In Ecclesiastes the wise man speaks of the woman of pleasure. Solomon gathered about him all the material things of pleasure, including women singers. All the things mentioned in this verse stand for things which please and entertain the fleshly man. But, at the same time, they are things which choke the Word of God in our lives and hinder the spiritual man from being fruitful. The mature ones in God find their source of pleasure in the presence of their King, in doing His will, in seeking out the treasure of His Word, and in exploring the realms of the Spirit. There is no profit in the woman of pleasure. This was also the conclusion of the wise man, for he said: 'Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun' (Ecclesiastes 2:11).

12. The Snaring Woman of Perfidy

And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her (Ecclesiastes 7:26).

The word *perfidy* means to betray, to deceive by trust, the quality or state of being faithless or disloyal. The woman of snares and nets is just such a woman. She is treacherous and faithless. Until it is crucified by Jesus Christ, perfidy is a spirit that exists in the carnal heart. It plots and manipulates circumstances and situations, arranging them like snares and nets, so that we might make people bow to the wants and desires of our carnal will. The Bride on Mount Sion has this spirit crucified, and her only desire is to plot and to plan under the Headship of the Bridegroom in order to get people to bow to God's will.

We have seen the twelve defiling women described in the Book of Proverbs and in the Book of Ecclesiastes. The 144,000 who stood on top of Mount Sion with their Bridegroom were not defiled with these women.

Through the metaphor of a woman, we have studied another aspect of the human heart, the carnal heart, the old heart, the old man. The Word of God calls it many things, but it still relates to our outward, fleshly, carnal, fallen nature. When we accept salvation through the Blood of Jesus Christ, we immediately receive a new heart, a new spirit, a new man. By gift we are made partakers of His divine nature. Although this new heart is like a small baby heart in its beginning, there is a small portion of the pure and holy will of God to act as a shaft in directing that new little heart. No sin dwells in this part of a Christian; it is undefiled and cannot sin. Keep in mind, however, that the old nature, the old depraved heart is still very much present and is still controlled by the human will, which is so perverted and contrary to the will of God.

These twelve women of pride are personifications of the spirits that inhabit our old heart. The Bride of Christ will have dealt with these attitudes by crucifying her old nature and by giving herself to the control of her new spiritual man. As the new man, new nature, new spirit, new heart is fed and nurtured, it grows and grows until the old nature loses its power and control completely. When this happens, our hearts become walled-in hearts, sealed hearts; and they are no longer an open concourse for the spirits of the flesh, or the perverse human will, or the influence of things around about them. Then they are sealed up as virgin hearts only for the Bridegroom. No longer do they defile themselves with strange women of pride, but they are kept pure and virgin, solely for the Lord Jesus Christ,

C. VIRGINS

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins...(Revelation 14:4).

A natural virgin is one who has never experienced intercourse. The 144,000 live in this state, spiritually speaking. In the Song of Solomon we have a description of the espoused Bride, At the time of her engagement, she does not have a virgin heart. Her problem was caused by the little foxes. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (Song of Solomon 2:15).

The fox is a sly and deceitful creature. Interestingly, in the Hebrew, the word *fox* means handful, hollow of the hand. The foxes found access to the spiritual heart of the Bride and consumed her grapes of joy and her delight in her Bridegroom. We, too, get so busy directing our own lives, giving handfuls of ourselves, as it were, to first one thing and then another, that we do not have time to enjoy the Lord's presence. Because we walk by our own revelation, we give handfuls of our strength, our energy, our interest, our affection to all sorts of trivial, unimportant things in life, and then deceive ourselves into thinking that the Lord is leading us. The foxes are little. It is the little portions of time that we pass out here and there for foolish things that rob us of our time in the prayer closet and in

the Word with the Bridegroom-Roe.¹⁵

The marriage of the espoused Bride to her Husbandman-Bridegroom takes place in chapter four of the Song of Solomon. She is now ready for the consummation of the marriage, ready for the Husbandman to break the virgin seal and to enter her heart, her garden, her spring, her fountain. In order to become a wife, the Bride had to grow to full maturity under the tutorship of the King, the Shepherd, and the Roe. By the time that she has reached the stage of full maturity, the Bride has a virgin heart which she has kept for Him alone. Her heart has been kept virgin by the new wall which was built around it by the Spirit and the Word. The Spouse-Bride has not let her heart be joined to any other. She has no other lovers; her heart is a virgin heart.

If we are to be a part of the New Jerusalem, we must have the same wall of truth built around our hearts. We must choose the truth in every situation. When we learn to put the truth around our hearts, we are protecting the precious hope, love and determination that the Lord plants within us. We will know a marriage union with Jesus Christ when our hearts are walled in with the truth and the fear of the Lord. The marriage relationship is used in the Word of God to express the thought of union and oneness of relationship, a union of will and spirit.

The inward wall around the heart of the Bride, pictured by the sealed fountain, is the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord, this fountain sealed, protects our hearts against displeasing God, against strange lovers, against idols.

Fleshly fear has torment. This is not the kind of fear that walls up the Bride's heart; her fear is a reverential fear of the Lord. The power that motivates the Bride is her desire to please her Bridegroom. Because the Bride has spent much time in her secret prayer chamber, the Spirit and the Word have torn down her wall of pride and have built a double wall of truth and fear of the Lord around her heart. This wall of TRUTH and FEAR completely protects her heart for her Beloved.

Virginity is the distinctive quality that characterizes the 144,000 on the top of Mount Sion. This is the Bride of Jesus Christ. They are not defiled with women; in other words, they know no other lovers, no other union in the spiritual realm. They are virgins in heart.

D. FOLLOW THE LAMB WHITHERSOEVER HE GOETH

...These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth... (Revelation 14:4).

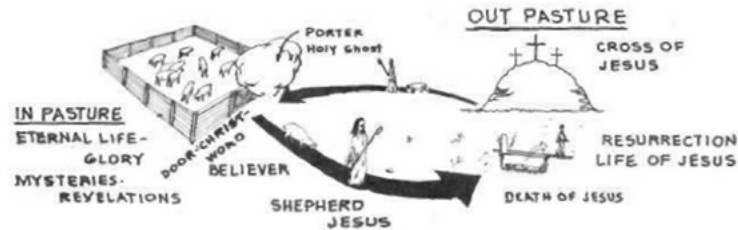
To follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth means that we follow Him as the Master, the Head. It also means that there will be times when we must learn to walk alone as far as other human beings are concerned.

And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead (Matthew 8:19-22).

Jesus was speaking spiritually here. He had personal friers., whose homes were opened to Him, but He said, in so many words, "I walk alone. I walk a solitary way." To illustrate His point He referred to homes which the foxes and the birds live in during the mating season. But Jesus had no life companion; He walked alone.

Regardless of whether one is married or single in the natural, he must learn to walk alone spiritually. Beloved, there is only one pair of the precious footprints of Jesus Christ left in this world. If we are to walk in our Master's footsteps, each one of us must personally place our two feet, as it were, in His footprints of humility and obedience. The further we go on with God, the more solitary our way becomes. Before long the crowds get left behind. The ranks thin out, but the Bride follows all the way; she goes whithersoever He goeth.

We must first learn to follow the Lamb to the Cross. This is where His earthly journey took Him, and His footprints of humility will lead those who choose to follow Him to the same place, to the Cross for crucifixion of the "Self" life. In John ten we learn some precious things about the Shepherd and His sheep. His sheep follow the voice of the true Shepherd. From the hireling shepherd they flee. Our beloved Shepherd leads His sheep in and out to find pasture. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go *in* and *out*, and find pasture" (John 10:9). The Shepherd is our leader and if we follow Him, we find that His footsteps go to the "out pasture" and to the "in pasture."



The Bride is faithful to follow the Bridegroom to the “out pasture,” to feed on His crucifixion, humiliation, and death. Then she faithfully follows Him to the “in pasture” of exaltation and revelation of the Word.

E. FIRSTFRUITS

These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:4).

Leviticus 23:9-14 established the Feast of Firstfruits among the children of Israel after they were living in Canaan’s land. On the first day of the week, the Jews were to bring a sheaf of their firstfruits of harvest unto the priest, who was to wave it before the LORD. The sheaf that ripened first was to be offered to the LORD for *His special portion of the harvest*. The firstfruits were set aside for a special place in the House of God and for a special possession for the LORD. The sheaf was waved before the LORD as a demonstration of surrender to Him, the LORD GOD, the giver of life and power.

The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated on the morrow (day) after the weekly sabbath day, which was Saturday. In other words, it was offered on the first day of the week, Sunday, the resurrection day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The firstfruits of harvest present a picture of resurrection life because the seed of the wheat had to lie planted in the ground, in death, before new life sprang forth. As a witness of the Israelites’ deliverance from the land of bondage and death, they were to bring the offering of their firstfruits and wave them before the Lord. In a sense, Israel, too, had been resurrected from the dead.

On the morrow after the Sabbath, Jesus Christ arose from the dead to be the Firstfruits from the dead, and as such, He guarantees our resurrection. In I Corinthians 15:20-23, we read that all are going to be raised in their own order in the resurrection. This includes all dead, whether they be Christian believers or wicked sinners. All are going to get up, but each in his own order. The word *order* means rank, troop, class, an orderly arrangement. The sinner will be resurrected to stand in the degree of spiritual darkness in which he walked during his lifetime. The redeemed will rise in resurrection power and life. However, there are different orders, ranks, and classes in the resurrection of the believers. Each shall be resurrected according to the degree of glory that he attained in this life, according to the extent of his spiritual growth in the stature of Christ.

The Bride of Christ is included with Jesus in the sheaf of the firstfruits. She is the first one in which the plants of perfect unity and harmony with the Bridegroom have ripened by spiritual growth and stature. Therefore she has a special place in the New City and is set aside as the firstfruits of unity and harmony for a special possession for God. The 144,000 seen in Revelation 14 is the Bride of Jesus Christ who has ripened to oneness of relationship with God and the Lamb by spiritual growth in stature. The other saved people in the New Heavens and the New Earth, who have not reached full mature stature by growth, will all enjoy a ripeness of unity and harmony by gift. It is by the gift of God that they are placed in the Perfect Age where all things of sin and wickedness, which have caused disunity and disharmony, will be shut up in the Lake of Fire.

What is acquired by stature is a living daily experience of union with the Truth. What is received by gift is a foretaste of revealed truth. Since the Bride’s oneness of relationship with her Bridegroom has been attained by stature, she will rule with Him over the New Heavens and New Earth. She will be with her Bridegroom in the midst of the Throne of God Almighty and the Lamb. She shares this fantastic position of exaltation by virtue of her union with her Heavenly Bridegroom, the Lamb.

F. NO GUILT

And in their mouth was found no guile...(Revelation 14:5).

Guile speaks of craftiness, trickery, decay, deceitfulness, rotten, and corrupt. The Bride will not have words from the river of deceit flowing out of one side of her mouth while words of truth flow out of the other side. There will be no duplicity, no trickery, no deceitfulness, nor any of the rottenness and corruption from the carnal nature coming out of her heart. She will have gone through a complete transformation.

Paul exhorts us in Romans 13:14: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof." Again he implores: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1,2). The word *transformed* comes from the word metamorphosis. While on our earthly journey, it is our privilege as believers to be transformed, to go through the stages of spiritual metamorphosis. We begin in the worm stage, as it were, a period of humbling ourselves at the feet of Jesus. When the larva encloses itself in an envelope of silk, it enters the cocoon stage, which is a picture of the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus spun His own cocoon voluntarily. We must also voluntarily take on His death, for out of this death comes stature, a new growth. Hidden away from the eyes of men, the ugly worm is transformed, during the process of metamorphosis, into a beautiful creature. Such has been the experience of the Bride of Christ. Beginning in the ugly, despicable worm stage, she finally reaches full maturity. When at last she emerges, she stands transformed in the image and likeness of her Bridegroom.

G. BLAMELESS

...for they are without fault before the throne of God (Revelation 14:5).

The expression *without fault* means to have no blame. The 144,000 stand blameless before the Throne of God. When the Bride is unveiled at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, she will stand in the perfection of her Heavenly Bridegroom. Through the Bride will be the unveiling of the stature of God and the Lamb. He who has seen the Bride has seen the fullness of God and the Lamb.

During our earthly journey, we often stand accused. Sometimes the accusations are unjust, but sometimes the charge against us is justified. God often uses people to call attention to our faults. The only One who knows whether or not we are to be blamed is God, Himself. We must learn to take the accusations brought against us and lay them before God. If He says, "You are not to blame before Me," then we can jump up with a happy heart and go on about our Father's business. On the other hand, should the Lord say, "You are to blame," then we must accept the rebuke, humble ourselves, and repent. This is how we grow in God. It requires us to be completely honest with ourselves.

Because the Bride of Christ has been faithful to deal with the many faults that are common to all flesh, she stands exalted in the presence of her Bridegroom. That is why John's description of the Bride says, "...for they are without fault before the throne of God."

This concludes the study of the 144,000. The points that we have covered are: (1) their standing on Mount Sion with the Lamb, (2) their seal, which was the Father's Name written in their foreheads, (3) their song, which was a song of unity and love, and (4) their sanctification, which included a sevenfold description of their beauty.

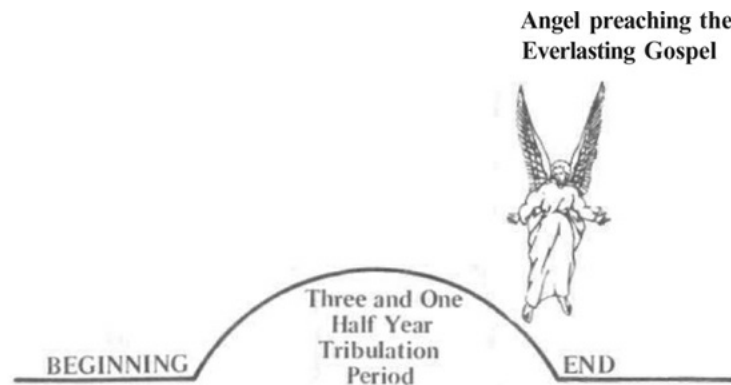
- ¹⁴ B. R. Hicks, *Mysteries of Daniel Revealed*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1971),
- ¹⁵ B. R. Hicks, *The Song of Love*, (Jeffersonville, Indiana, 1966).

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE MESSAGES OF THE THREE ANGELS (Revelation 14:6-13)

The first angel that John sees in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation is sent to preach the everlasting gospel to those who dwell on the earth. The second angel carries the message of the fall of Mystery Babylon, or Old Jerusalem, And the third angel carries a message of warning and judgment to those who would worship the Beast and his image and receive his mark.

I. FIRST ANGEL - The Everlasting Gospel



The first angel is sent on an errand prior to the fall of Mystery Babylon. That errand is to preach the everlasting gospel to the earth's inhabitants. There are four different classes of gospels mentioned in the Word of God. Distinct descriptions are given of them:



ANGEL PREACHING THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

1. Gospel of Jesus Christ for Salvation

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (Mark 1:1).

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son,...(Romans 1:9).

Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel,... (II Corinthians 2:12).

2. Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 4:17).

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom,... (Matthew 4:23).

3. Gospel of the Kingdom of God

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of

God,...(Mark 1:14),

The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseseth into it (Luke 16:16).

4. The Everlasting Gospel

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,... (Revelation 14:6).

It is the fourth class of gospel, or good news, that the angel preaches. The very nature of the Gospel is everlasting because the Word of God is everlasting; its consequences are everlasting. It endureth forever.

The angel's message is for the whole earth, for all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. As long as man exists on the earth, God proves His impartiality. He desires the whole earth to hear this everlasting gospel, even though they have received the Antichrist. God delegates the responsibility of the message to an angel who can fly in the midst of Heaven, out of the reach of the Antichrist. God is faithful to minister the truth of His gospel to a needy world. He employs this miraculous means of ministering to assure that the truth of His Word comes through loud and clear. The preaching of the everlasting gospel is done during the tribulation time to give man warning, so that he might turn to the living God before He pours out His wrath in its fullness. In the very beginning of the Great Tribulation there are some believers who dare to cry out against the Antichrist, exposing him as an imposter, but they are quickly silenced by death.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 14:6,7).

The angel announces God's coming judgment in an effort to get men to repent. Again and again God has displayed His anger and wrath upon the face of the earth. Each visitation of His wrathful judgment is God's mercy in operation as he tries to turn men to Himself in the midst of their great distress and suffering. God's purpose is to bring men to repentance so that they will cry out to Him for forgiveness and mercy.

But in the tribulation their cry is never heard. The Antichrist has people so enslaved, outwardly and inwardly, that they are seemingly incapable, of thinking independently. There is no scriptural evidence of any great revival on the earth during the tribulation. Some people hold to the idea that there will be a great revival among the Jews. This cannot be, however, for at the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Jews are still just as blind and deceived as they were before. They do not recognize Jesus Christ as their Messiah when He first returns at His second coming. Their ignorance of His identity is evidenced by the question that they ask. "Where did you get those wounds?" they inquire. Jesus will respond, "In the house of my friends" (Zechariah 13:6).

God also sends two special human beings, the Two Witnesses, who prophesy faithfully throughout the entire tribulation period. Great power and miraculous signs confirm their words. Yet we read of no great sweeping revival. Instead, as the witnesses lie dead in the streets of Jerusalem, a great celebration takes place. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth" (Revelation 11:10). Even though the witnesses, who have lain in the streets for three and one half days, are resurrected to stand on their feet before the eyes of the whole world, and though the people are frightened with "a great fear," there is no indication that they repent. How utterly hardened are the hearts of mankind. How hopelessly ensnared and enamored they are with the Antichrist. Having rejected Jesus Christ, they have accepted the Antichrist as their prince of peace (John 5:43).

In addition to the Two Witnesses on earth, an angelic messenger comes to preach a gospel to the sorely afflicted world. His message is a fourfold one:



A. FEAR GOD

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God,...(Revelation 14:7).

The angel has a voice of authority and strength. “FEAR GOD! he says. This is a timely message in any generation. God’s Word declares, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever” (Psalm 111:10). Reverential fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. It is a beginning that God always requires men to make and the tribulation period is no exception. Even though they do not know Jesus Christ or the Holy Ghost, God expects them to fear Him.

God’s grace and mercy are beyond comprehension. Although He is resisted and rejected again and again by the people on earth, still He dispatches another messenger. God asks only that men fear Him. Were they to fear God, they would have the wisdom to see who the Antichrist really is, and they would turn from then worship of him and be saved. The angel urges all men to reconsider their positions. They have accepted a stranger and acknowledged him to be God. And at the same time, they have done everything to resist and reject the One TRUE God, the God of love, mercy, forgiveness, grace, truth, and the God of **ALL** eternity. Yet, they despise Him. If men would receive the everlasting gospel, it would bring them to fear God and to give glory to Him.

B. GIVE GLORY

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him;...(Revelation 14:7).

Fear God and give glory to Him. God tries to awaken men to the fact that the man, the Antichrist, is not worthy of glory so why should they give glory unto him? The everlasting gospel is an exhortation to man *to* give glory to the true God who is the Creator and governor of all things. To God, alone, belongs all honor and glory, not to the Antichrist and his image and the numerous idols of himself. It is through the preaching of the gospel by the angel that God seeks to revive reverential fear in man and retrieve His rightful glory in this world. To worship anyone or thing besides God, who created all things, is idolatry.

C. JUDGMENT

... for the hour of his judgment is come: ...(Revelation 14:7).

The angel calls men’s attention to the fact that God’s judgments are being poured out on them. The Antichrist will originate some plausible reasons in an effort to explain away the strange phenomena which is taking place in all the earth. To prevent men from focusing their thoughts on God, the Antichrist will explain away God’s judgment as something entirely unrelated to acts of God, though all of the laws of nature will be in utter chaos. The Antichrist tries to keep men so occupied that they never direct a thought toward the true God. In spite of all this, God is faithful to send a messenger to prophesy to the people of the earth that the time of the fullness of His judgment is come. His past judgment, which has been poured out on the earth, is small in comparison to the judgment to be poured out at Armageddon and thereafter.

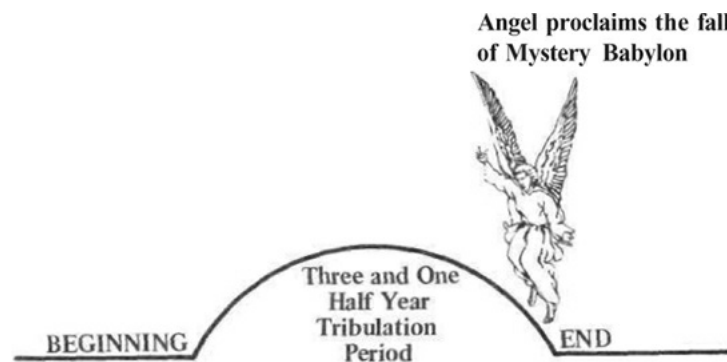
D. WORSHIP

...and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 14:7).

God requires the people in each dispensation of time to meet certain conditions. In the case of the tribulation time, all that He requires is that men fear God, give glory to God, recognize God's judgment, and worship their Creator. God is worthy of worship, for He created all things. Though man is the most excellent of all God's creation, he still owes God recognition as the Creator. Man's superiority does not place him above God!

In summary, the main gospel that will be preached during the tribulation period is the everlasting gospel. **All** that God will require of people in general, then, is that they recognize Almighty God in Heaven, for by this recognition they will reject the Antichrist's false claims that *he* is God.

II. THE SECOND ANGEL - The Fall of Mystery Babylon



And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (Revelation 14:8).

A second angel follows the first angel and proclaims the fall of Babylon. This great city is none other than Old Jerusalem. This fact is clearly established in the Scriptures.

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them [two witnesses]. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the *Great City*, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, *where also our Lord was crucified* (Revelation 11:7,8),

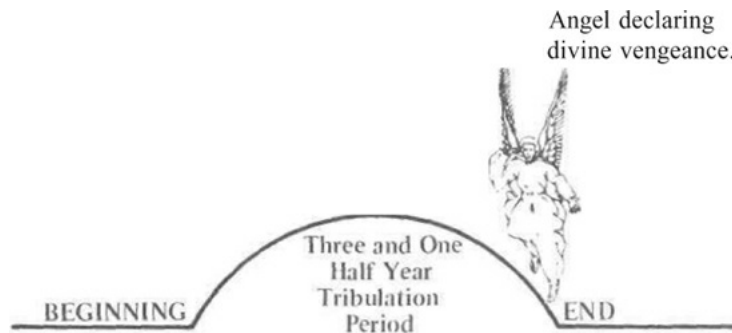
What God has foreordained and foretold is certain to come to pass. It is as if it were already done. The greatness of Babylon, or Old Jerusalem, will not prevent her fall. On the contrary, her greatness will make her fall more dreadful and remarkable. The wicked acts of Old Jerusalem of corrupting, debauching, and intoxicating the nations round about her with the falsehood that the Antichrist is the true Christ will justify her ruination, and her downfall will declare the righteousness of God. Her crime is recited as the just cause of her destruction. Her crime was her spiritual fornication, or idolatry, in receiving the Antichrist and his image and in causing the other nations to drink of this fornication or idolatry. It was Old Jerusalem who gave birth to the rebellion against Jesus Christ when the Jews rejected Him as their promised Messiah. It was Old Jerusalem that finally crucified our precious Lord, and it is in the street of this great city that the dead bodies of the Two Witnesses shall lie (Revelation 11:8).



ANGEL PROCLAIMS THE FALL OF MYSTERY BABYLON

“...She made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (Revelation 14:8). This alludes to a custom used by impure women who would serve love potions to those whom they wished to seduce. These potions were of an intoxicating nature and were intended to inflame the blood and disturb the intellect. This is the effect that Old Jerusalem will have on other nations when she receives the Antichrist. But God will take the fruit of her doings, mix it with His wrath, and pour it out upon her. Thus, she will reap what she has sown, plus it will be mixed with the wrath of God.

III. THE THIRD ANGEL - Divine Vengeance





ANGEL DECLARING DIVINE VENGEANCE

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (Revelation 14:9-11).

Finally a third angel appears and warns the earth's inhabitants of the impending divine vengeance which will overtake all those who have obstinately adhered to the worship of the Antichrist and his image, and who have received his mark in their forehead or hand. The third angel strongly affirms that those who have persisted in their idolatrous worship of the Antichrist and have been subject to him and promoted his cause, must expect to drink deeply of the wine of God's wrath. Those who refuse to come out of Babylon, Old Jerusalem, those who determinedly persist in partaking of her sins, must also receive her plagues. Spiritual fornication, or idolatry, is a damning sin. It will prove fatal to those who persist in it.

The time of torment, which the angel describes, refers to the time of universal rule and reign of God in the Perfect Age. Those who have rejected the Lord, and those who have received the mark of the Beast in the tribulation period are cast into the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented day and night, or forever and ever, in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. The torment of these wicked ones will be increased when they took upon the glory of the New City. With agonizing regret, they will realize what they could have had, but have no chance to ever

gain. At the same time, those in the New City can see the smoke and torment of the Lake of Fire. The smoke will serve as a constant reminder to the Bride, that had it not been for her beloved Bridegroom, she could have gone to the same place. This sight will provoke the praise and adoration of the Bride for the Lamb.

The people who are cast into the Lake of Fire will have their hideous, wicked, vile leaders as companions for all eternity. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:14). And in chapter twenty-one we have a further description: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Revelation 21:8).

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, [bottomless pit] and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever (Revelation 5:13).

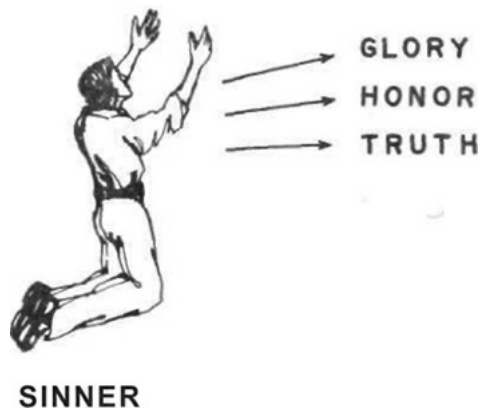
Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me: (John 12:32). All men will be resurrected by virtue of the Blood of Jesus. Some will be raised to the blessedness of eternal life, while those who are raised on the judgment side will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

The source of the torment found in the Lake of Fire is the fire and brimstone. The fire in Hell and the fire in the Lake of Fire is the fire of God's jealousy. The word *brimstone* in the Greek comes from the primary root word which means supreme divinity. Within the supreme divinity of God is His cold breath and His hot breath. Therefore, the brimstone in the Lake of Fire contains God's humility breath, His cold breath. Man cannot escape the administering of the hot and cold governmental breath of God. It is better, wiser and more blessed to voluntarily come under subjection to His Word while we can grow in humility (cold breath) and exaltation (hot breath) and have the joy of being made one with Him, than to wait and be forced to come under subjection to His Word in the Lake of Fire.

The hot flames of God's resurrection power and the icy cold breath of the brimstone will be in their veins, tormenting their wills. The agony of these people will be an inward torment of their minds and hearts as the fire of God's truth burns and twists through their beings. They will be forced to admit the truth that God is sovereign, that He is ruler over all. Man's mind will not rationalize, compromise, deny or change the truth, but every atom in a man's body will, in spite of man's desire to do otherwise, acknowledge the Creator.

The word *torment* in the Greek means to toil, to vex, to give pain, to toss; it comes from another word which means a touch stone, which projects the idea of going to the bottom. In other words, God will force those in the Lake of Fire, through torment or suffering, to sink down, as it were, to the very bottom of their wills and acknowledge the truth, that God is their sovereign Creator. Therefore, He is worthy to be honored and praised by His creation.

The torment and agonies of those condemned to the Lake of Fire, which is the second death, exceeds our human ability to describe. There are classes of torment and degrees of suffering, but without a doubt, the greatest torment of all will be when all the inhabitants of the Lake of Fire are compelled to acknowledge the truth.



These admissions will be literally wrung out of them. The fire and brimstone will act as a clamping vise to force

them to give worship and praise to God.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11).

We have the opportunity, now, to bow our knees before God in surrender, worship, and homage. By recognizing who Jesus Christ is, we can be blessed, exalted, purified, directed, and can even win the prize of the high calling of God. Or we can resist and reject Him, as the majority of mankind is doing; but sooner or later EVERY TONGUE is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Every knee in Heaven, in earth and in the Lake of Fire is going to bow in adoration and worship before Him.

The ultimate judgment and punishment of these rebellers and incorrigible idolaters will serve to set forth the excellency of the patience and obedience of the saints. The saints of God have always had to exercise their patience, while they have waited for God to visit justice and judgment upon their enemies. They have had to bear suffering, provocation, delay, and tediousness with calmness and self-control. The righteous have endured without complaint as they have persevered in the service of God, staying obedient to the Word of God and the faith of Jesus. True saints of God have submitted sweetly to the authority and dominion of the Word of God; therefore, their faith in Jesus is steadfast, immovable and unshakable.

The angel closes his message in Revelation 14:12 by speaking of the patience and the faith of the saints. Now in verse thirteen, a voice from Heaven states how they will be rewarded. Although they die for their testimony of Jesus Christ, they shall be wonderfully blessed. The message concerning their blessing is of such importance that it is solemnly communicated by this voice from Heaven, which further confirms the great authority and certain truth of the message. This truth is of such consequence that God commands John to write it down, that it might be preserved and published, and that it might be kept as an infallible record. This record is a comfort and support for God's people in times of severe testings and trials. Knowing that if we suffer to keep the faith of Jesus we shall be rewarded, is a precious promise.

The voice from Heaven that speaks to John says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord..." (Revelation 14:13). Blessed means happy-happy are they that die in the Lord. This means that they die in vital union with Christ. What a glorious privilege it is to be found in the Lord when death comes. The Spirit agrees with the Word from Heaven and confirms that happy state of those who die in the Lord by saying that they will have rest from their labors. They will have peace, ease, and refreshment after their work of exertion. Mental and emotional calm will follow their labors on this earth. No more will they have to toil through physical or mental exertion for the cause of the Lord. Instead of tribulation and distress, they will have rest from all sorrow, temptation, sin, and persecution. When the saints enter into this blessedness, the wicked cannot trouble them anymore.

Their blessedness is further increased by their works, which follow them as the witness that they have lived and died in the Lord. Their good works of suffering, enduring persecution, faithfulness in temptations, for example, accompany them to Heaven as evidence of how they have lived in this present evil world. Our works will be faithful witnesses either for or against us in that day.

The Spirit and the Word agree to the blessed, or happy state, of those who die in the Lord. This is the reward of the patience and obedience of the saints.

Thus, we have seen the remarkable extent of the ministry of the Lamb which is the second great picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation. This study extends from chapter five in Revelation to chapter fourteen, verse thirteen. We have seen that there are two great sides to the Lamb of God: His blessing side and His judgment side.

LAMB OF GOD -John 1:29

Blessing Side
Forgiveness **and**
Peace



Judgment Side
Wrath
Condemnation

Beloved, the revelation of the Lamb should stir our hearts with reverential fear and respect when we realize what great prevailing power He has over sin. But more than this, our hearts should melt in adoration and worship before the One who loves us with such a strong love that He is willing to open the seals on our old carnal hearts and judge our wicked flesh, while there is still time for us to be conformed into His image. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is going to have a wife who is like Him in stature and in nature.

We each have a choice to make. We can either let the Lamb judge us while there is time for us to receive forgiveness and peace, while we still have an opportunity to be in the Bride; or we can wait until He pours out His wrath on those who reject His mercy. Either way, every human being *will* confess that He is KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. God grant us the grace to humble our hearts so that we might stand on His blessing side and not have to come under the wrath and condemnation side of the Lamb of God.