



Watchers of the Morning

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth."—John 17:17.

AUGUST — SEPTEMBER, 1945

THE APOCALYPSE AND THE CHURCH
OF THE LAST DAYS

PHOTOGRAPHS OF PAGAN AND PAPAL
ROME—THE FOUR HORSEMEN

WAR BETWEEN MICHAEL AND THE
DRAGON—THE FALSE KINGDOM FALLEN

THE LEOPARD-BEAST AND HIS IMAGE

REVIEWS OF APOCALYPTIC PICTURES
OF CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

VOICES OF COMFORT

Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning"

I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

For we are members of His body.

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.—
2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:30-32



Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne. . . .

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Church

—Rev. 3:20-22.

“Looking for that Blessed Hope.”

Watchers of the Morning

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This Journal is regarded as a Stewardship to be used only in the Divine service. Hence a responsibility to the Master is recognized for the conduct of this ministry, which cannot and will not be cast aside. Our decisions as to what shall or shall not be published in these columns, must be according to our judgment of the Lord's good pleasure, the teachings of His Word for the uplifting of His people in grace and knowledge in this day of His Presence. However, helpful suggestions and constructive criticism will be warmly welcomed. The reader is urged to prove all utterances by the infallible Word of God.

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THIS ISSUE A SPECIAL DOUBLE NUMBER

This issue of WATCHERS OF THE MORNING, a double number of thirty-two pages, is for the months of August and September. During the past two years in particular, there have been published in the pages of this Journal a number of expositions of the Apocalypse which have proven of unusual interest to our readers generally. It has been most encouraging to be assured by so many, that these discussions have been unto the edification and spiritual uplift of the Brethren. A considerable number have ordered extra copies to pass on to other friends and Brethren whom they hoped to interest in these things. In this, we desire to say that the results have been very gratifying, as much new interest has been aroused in this most sanctifying portion of the Divine Word.

However, our stock of the special issues containing the Revelation discussions, has run quite low, and this has led to the suggestion that as many as possible of these studies of St. John's Visions be assembled and published in a thirty-two page WATCHERS so that our subscribers need not cease distributing them. Furthermore, we are assured that it will be of special advantage and convenience to have these Apocalyptic expositions all together under one cover. Hence, it is our hope that this issue will fulfil this purpose and that the blessing of God may richly accompany our mutual efforts to comfort one another with these messages of Faith and Hope. Some slight revisions and alterations of phraseology are made in a few instances. Our subscribers therefore may, without charge, order extra copies to pass on (with careful discretion), to others whom they believe may be interested in and assisted by the contents of this issue.



"GOD SHALL HELP HER IN THE DAWNING OF HER MORNING"

The Apocalypse and the Church of the Last Days

Rev. 22:10, 16: And He saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this Book: for the time is at hand. I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches.

IN THE sacred annals of the New Testament—the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles addressed to local bodies of Christians, there is what would appear to be adequate support and foundation for the faith and ministry of the Church of Christ to rest upon throughout the entire Age. Especially does this appear to be true as the things done, spoken, and recorded, were accompanied by supernatural power in the form of the Spirit of God;—first, on our blessed Lord at the beginning of His ministry; and second, in the special benediction bestowed upon the Church at Pentecost.

Nevertheless, divine foreknowledge foreseeing that the course of the Church was to be one of many hazards, that **her pathway was to lie through many dangers, afflictive sorrows and persecutions**, there was provided by a most considerate and kindly Providence, an additional aid and powerful support for the Church—a special luminary revealing the future still further and **disclosing things to come**. Hence some sixty years after the risen Lord had, for forty days given those indisputable proofs of His Resurrection, He gave one more—a **final manifestation**.

QUESTIONS ON THE MINDS OF SOME

There is cause for the profoundest thanksgiving that the Father of mercies designed that the final Epistle to the Church should be this powerful symbolic Prophecy known as the Apocalypse, or "Unveiling." Of the deepest significance are the opening words of the marvelous Disclosure: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants **things which must shortly be done**." Further, the Savior's own words are of no less solemn significance: "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things **in the Churches**." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith **unto the Churches**."—Rev. 1:1; 22:16; 2:7.

Realizing now, our place in the last Era of the Church's sojourn on earth, when numerous prophecies are being fulfilled, it is interesting to observe that there are questions concerning **the purpose and application** of the Apocalypse on the minds of many, somewhat as follows: Was not the **fulfilment** of the prophetic symbols of the Revelation to be **exclusively** in the last days of this Age, and therefore were not its illuminating messages intended especially for the **present time**? Further: Should we not look for complete illumination of the **entire** Apocalypse for the benefit of the Church **now**? Still another question: Since it is evident that there has gathered about the book of Revelation a vast number of confusing and conflicting ideas, applications and interpretations, should we not at this juncture, expect the Lord to use some one person or agency to supply a complete exposition of the Apocalypse?

Since there are important issues involved in these questions, it cannot fail to be to our spiritual edification and profit to humbly and soberly review them. But let it be with special care and in a **prayerful** spirit that we consider these inquiries. Before going directly into these questions, we believe it will be to our advantage to recall, and have before the mind some general items that will assist in the examination, and enable us the better to determine **the real purpose and mission** of the Apocalypse.

"IF HE TARRY TILL I COME, WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?"

It was upon "that disciple whom Jesus loved," that there was bestowed the singular distinction of hearing the familiar voice of the living Redeemer, "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." The Apostle John had spent long years in faithful ministry; his race-course was nearly run. He was, at the time of receiving the Revelation, an exile on the barren Isle of Patmos, "For [because of faithfulness to] the Word of God and

for the testimony of Jesus Christ." More than sixty eventful years had elapsed since the ascension of his blessed Lord. During that long period he had looked back to that sublime and glorious event, as the closing incident in his Master's earthly history, and often had retraced in thought every step of his last walk with the risen Savior over the Mount of Olives, to the sloping fields above the little village of Bethany with the deep Jordan Valley and the blue far-off hills of Moab full in view. On countless occasions he had recalled **his Lord's last charge, and parting blessing**, and gazed in thought on His ascending form, and on the white-robed angels whose words directed the minds of the bereaved disciples from the sorrowing contemplation of their Lord's departure, to the glad anticipation of His return, saying, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

But when was it to be—that promised return? Was it to take place in the lifetime of the disciple whom Jesus loved? Had not the Master said concerning that disciple when speaking to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me"? Peter had died, following his Lord to the cross. Was he, John, to escape death and remain to the Second Advent? Yet he remembered that Jesus had not promised he should not die, but had only said, "If I will that he tarry till I come." **What could that mean?** The strange mysterious sentence lived and lingered in his thoughts; he ends his Gospel narrative with it. Was he to behold before his departure, some glorious prefiguration of his Lord's return, like the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration; **some vision, unveiling the secrets of the future** more fully than they had been foreshadowed by that memorable event?

JOHN HAD WITNESSED MANY CHANGES IN THE CHURCH

No such revelation had been given, and he was now grown old; a venerable, patriarchal man, gentle and gracious of mien; the last survivor of the Apostles. He had shared the promised baptism of Pentecost; had witnessed the marvelous growth of the Christian Church; had seen the fall of Jerusalem; the destruction of its glorious temple, of which now not one stone was left standing upon another; had witnessed the accomplishment of those dreadful judgments on the Jewish nation in anticipation of which his Master's tears had fallen on the Mount of Olives, bedewing the palm branches spread by the multitudes beneath His feet. He had seen, too, the preliminary fulfilment of what seemed to be the signs of the approach of

the Second Advent which his Master had predicted; the earthquakes, famines, pestilences, wars, and persecutions, the appearance of false prophets, and false Christs, of fearful signs and wonders in heaven. The idolatrous ensigns of the desolating Roman power had been planted within the precincts of the Holy City. The triumphal arch of Titus had been reared in Rome, the mighty metropolis of the world, to commemorate Jerusalem's fall; that arch on which were represented in striking sculpture the sacred vessels of the sanctuary carried in triumph by heathen hands; the seven-branched golden candlestick, the table of the shewbread, and the book of the law. Jerusalem, **as it had been**, was no more. The Jewish dispensation founded ages before by those supernatural revelations granted to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai, had come to an end. The announcement of the Kingdom of heaven had taken its place—growing up silently as a grain of mustard seed, from small and despised beginnings to **far-reaching development** including both true and nominal Christians. From the upper chamber of Jerusalem it had spread through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and across the Roman Empire, in which there was scarce a city of importance which had not a Christian Church. It had reached Antioch and Alexandria, Crete and Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica, Ephesus and Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, Athena and Rome; it had spread throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Egypt, and even as far as the western confines of Spain, and the distant isles of Britain; and this **in spite of the most violent opposition and persecution** from Jews and Gentiles.

And with the lapse of time **changes for the worse** had taken place in many Christian Churches; gross corruptions of the pure doctrines of the Gospel had appeared. Self-righteous legalism and Judaic ritualism on the one hand, and false philosophy, the boasted wisdom of the Gnostics on the other, had perverted the minds of many, corrupting them from the simplicity which is in Christ. Sects had arisen in the Church which denied the divine origin of Christ, and the atoning character of His death. **Tares had been sown by the enemy among the wheat**, and were already flourishing on every side. It appeared as though the Antichrist so long before foretold by Daniel, and so emphatically predicted by Paul, might speedily come; springing up as a horn or ruler among the kings of the divided Roman Empire, and exalting himself as an overseer in the Christian Church, in whose symbolical temple it was foretold he would sit supreme, clothed with divine honors and prerogatives, and deceiving many.

AT LAST THE BELOVED JOHN WITNESSED WHAT MAY
HAVE BEEN HIS LIFE-LONG DESIRE

These things were to be, and the times must have seemed dark enough to John to indicate that they might even then be at hand. Daniel had revealed in mystical language the time of the manifestation of this antichristian power, and the period of its continuance. **But what was the exact meaning of those several "Times" of Daniel?** Were they literal days which were meant, or were the days he spoke of, symbolical of larger periods? Were these revelations in Daniel the last to be granted on the subject, or was more light to shine forth through communications of the truth yet to be given to the Church? Thoughts and questions such as these may well have occupied the mind of the aged John in the lonely hours of his banishment.

We can conceive him standing on the rocky height of some Patmos headland watching the western sun descending over the blue waters of the Aegean Sea, making a broad pathway of golden light on the waves, till they shone like "a sea of glass mingled with fire;" or, beholding the sunrise in the glowing East over the Asiatic shores, transporting his thoughts to the Advent of the "morning without clouds," yet to shine upon the world. Or when he watched the host of heaven come forth by night, and fill the glittering canopy above the lonely Isle, while the "many mansions" of which his Master had spoken, came to his mind and the angel hosts who do His bidding, can we not conceive him longing that one of these glorious beings might be sent to him, as of old, one had been sent to Daniel, the man "greatly beloved" to impart some of that knowledge of the future, enjoyed in higher and holier realms? We know not what he thought or desired, but we know what God granted to the aged and privileged Apostle.

It was on one Lord's day of his sojourn in Patmos, the day commemorating Christ's triumphant resurrection, that, being alone, and "in the Spirit," or wrapt in ecstasy from the outward world, and oblivious of its presence, he suddenly heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet, speaking to him such words as mortal ear had never heard before:

"I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE FIRST AND THE LAST; AND WHAT THOU SEEST, WRITE IN A BOOK, AND SEND IT UNTO THE SEVEN CHURCHES WHICH ARE IN ASIA; UNTO EPHEBUS, AND UNTO SMYRNA, AND UNTO PERGAMOS, AND UNTO THYATIRA, AND UNTO SARDIS, AND UNTO PHILADELPHIA, AND UNTO LAODICEA."

And turning in the direction of the Voice, he saw seven golden candlesticks; and standing in their midst, One whom he recognized as "like

unto the Son of Man;" but **oh how changed from the Christ on whom he had so often looked in Galilee**, and on whose bosom he had leaned in the upper chamber at Jerusalem! For every trace of humiliation was gone. No tears upon the cheek, no thorns upon the brow, He stood there transfigured and glorified; His face as the noonday sun shining in its strength; His garments white and glittering, and girt at the waist with a golden girdle; the hair of His head white with the snows of dateless years, as the "Ancient of days" beheld by Daniel; His eyes like a flame of fire; needing no exterior light to aid their vision, but penetrating the secrets of the soul with holy searching gaze; His feet as burning brass, strong as the pillars of heaven, and glowing as though they burned in a furnace; His voice as the mighty and majestic sound of many waters; seven stars glittered in His right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword, the evident symbol of the Word of God, living and powerful, and piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, proceeded from His lips.

CHRIST'S MESSAGES TO THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

At this sudden and marvelous appearance of the glorified Redeemer, all strength forsook the aged Apostle. Falling at the feet of the Son of God he lay there as one dead. Then touching his prostrate form with His right hand, the Lord strengthened him, saying in His own well-remembered voice,

"FEAR NOT; I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST; I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD, AND BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE, AMEN; AND HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH AND OF HADES."

And now aroused to wondering attention, the aged Apostle received from the lips of Christ the divine commission to communicate to the seven Churches of Asia, representing symbolically the entire Christian Church throughout the world, a faithful record of all that he had seen, and was yet to behold:

"WRITE THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN, AND THE THINGS WHICH ARE, AND THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER."

And first to the seven Churches of Asia Minor, John is directed to write brief letters, charged with lofty meaning; letters appreciating, judging, encouraging, rebuking, and counseling these representative Churches; and conveying through them, messages from the glorified Redeemer to the whole Christian Church throughout the world. In these letters, bearing on their forefront descriptive titles of Christ referring to attributes suited to the character and condition of the Churches addressed, our

Lord speaks in the tone of sovereign authority, perfect knowledge, burning holiness, and tender love. His eyes as a flame of fire search the secrets of hearts, yet beam with infinite compassion. His lips are full of promises, his hands of gifts and grace. Every sentence in these celestial communications bears the impress of His personality. In listening to their words we hear the very voice of the Son of God **speaking to our individual souls**, out of the world of glory: "I know thy works." "I have somewhat against thee." "I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts." "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." "I have set before thee an open door." "I have loved thee." "I will keep thee." "I would thou wert cold or hot." "I will spew thee out of My mouth." "I counsel thee." "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open to Me, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." Each letter closes with a special promise of glorious and eternal reward "to him that overcometh"; and with the **solemn appeal to the individual Christian conscience**, "he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Here we pause, and ask, must not such a glorious Wonder, such a celestial Presence, from whom issued such heart-searching messages, be intended for sublime and far-reaching import **in behalf of the entire Church**, reaching even unto the end of the Age!

VISIONS GRADUALLY UNFOLD AND PASS INTO HISTORY

With the foregoing reflections in mind, let us return to the questions mentioned earlier in this discussion. (1) Was not the **fulfilment** of the prophetic symbols of the Revelation to be **exclusively** in the last days of this Age, and therefore were not its illuminating messages intended especially for the **present time**? Answer: The fulfilment could not be **exclusively** in the end of this Age inasmuch as the messages were sent to **all of the seven churches**. As we have just noted, the venerable John was instructed to send the Apocalyptic letters **not merely** to Laodicea, the last of the seven Churches, but **to each of the preceding six Churches** also;—thus signifying that the symbolic descriptions were **for the entire Church**, and would be gradually unfolded during the seven Eras; which meant that **Time alone** would be the great **revealer** of the sacred mysteries—each Era would witness a **measure** of the fulfilment. What is this, then, but **history itself** interpreting the mysterious Apocalypse? Indeed, the Savior gives us the key-suggestion in the principle He announced when, in His last hours, He said to His disciples, "Behold, I have told you

these things before, that when they come to pass, ye might believe."—John 14:29.

(2) Should we not look for a **complete** illumination of the Apocalypse for the benefit of the Church **now**? Answer: Considering that the Revelation is substantially a symbolic panorama of the Church's history and experience in **advance**, it becomes evident, that with the march of Time, the visions of this Prophecy have gradually unfolded as they have passed into history. Therefore, there need be no question at all, that, living as we are in the last of the seven, the Laodicean Era, the entire volume of this blessed Prophecy has become more illuminated than in any previous time—seeing that its fulfilment has been **accumulative** with the passing of each of the seven Eras. More than this, it becomes evident, that to this **last Era** of the Church, there belong events and transactions vastly more important and of sublimer character than to any previous period. It is **the Era of our Lord's Second Presence**. To Laodicea, Christ says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock,"—meaning, "I am present!" Accordingly, this Era marks the gathering and glorification of the faithful Church, as well as denotes the time of the overthrow of Satan's empire and the establishment of the sovereignty of Christ throughout the earth, 'midst a time of unprecedented trouble—the darkest hour in all the annals of Man. Hence, logically, there is the greater light reflected on the Revelation **as a whole, at this time**. But it would be a mistake to assume that there must **now** be a **complete** unfolding of the **entire** Apocalypse in detail, seeing that the symbolic visions carry us on through the close of the Church's earthly career and including the entire Millennial reign of the Kingdom of God—to the completion of the great redemptive purpose. Unquestionably, there are details of some of the visions **yet to be fulfilled** which cannot be fully understood until we approach nearer to them, or until they pass into history.

CONCERNING A SO-CALLED "SEVENTH VOLUME"

(3) Since it is evident, that there has gathered about the Book of Revelation a vast number of confusing and conflicting ideas, applications and interpretations, should we not at this juncture, expect the Lord to use some person or agency to supply a complete exposition of the Apocalypse? Answer: That there has gathered about the Revelation a vast number of confusing and conflicting ideas, many wild and uncertain interpretations, there can be no question; and this has accordingly, brought the closing Book of the Bible into much disrepute; for many have become discouraged and **have laid aside this grand Oracle**, supposing its mysteries

beyond comprehension. But even this has been permitted by a wise Providence as a **test of the faith of the true Saints** with regard to this very sanctifying portion of God's Word. However, there appears to be no real logic or reason for the tradition that seems to have gained credence amongst some of the brethren, namely, that the Lord will yet single out the Book of Revelation for a complete illumination and choose some particular agency to unfold all its mysteries while the Church is still in the flesh.

As bearing upon this idea of a special exposition of the Apocalypse, it is generally known that Pastor Russell, early in his ministry, in looking forward to publishing a thorough exposition of spiritual truth for the last days, logically arranged the entire subject-matter in seven divisions and indicated that the seventh would be an exposition of Revelation. He was enabled in the Lord's Providence to cover expositions of the first six divisions, which were published in the form of the Six Volumes of Scripture Studies. His earthly pilgrimage, however, ended without seeing the original idea completed—**no volume on the Apocalypse having appeared** nor any manuscript left by him in preparation for such a volume.

MANY CONFUSING EXPOSITIONS OF LAST DAYS

What now must be the reasonable reaction with regard to this situation? Shall we insist that a particular and special exposition of the Apocalypse must **still** be looked for? Ah, it is of such situations as this, that the Adversary so often steps in and takes advantage; and this is what has evidently happened in this case. During the years since Pastor Russell finished his earthly course, a multiplicity of so-called expositions of the Apocalypse, contradictory and in conflict with each other, have appeared on the scene, coming from many quarters—expositions that, instead of clarifying the issue and really expounding the Revelation, have **left the entire subject still more confused**. For indeed, if any section of the divine Oracles has been more grievously assaulted than another, it is that of the Apocalypse; and **that**, by many of its professed friends whose vain attempts to expound its mysteries have resulted in confusion, worse confounded. No wonder the Spirit of God in dictating the mysterious Prophecy, forseeing this evil, issued this solemn warning,

"FOR I TESTIFY UNTO EVERY MAN THAT HEARETH THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK, IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD UNTO THESE THINGS, GOD SHALL ADD UNTO HIM THE PLAGUES THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: AND IF ANY MAN SHALL TAKE AWAY FROM THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE."—REV. 22:18, 19.

What, then, is the reasonable conclusion of this whole matter? Shall we say it is a sealed Book, that it has not been expounded, and that nothing can be known of its mysteries? Ah, no! Rather will we hearken to its opening benediction pronounced on those who search out its treasures:

"BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH AND THEY THAT HEAR THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY, AND KEEP THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN THEREIN: FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND."

Thus with humbleness of mind, and with singleness of purpose **the true disciple** today may derive rich spiritual profit from the study of the Apocalypse, especially as its closing warning is, "**Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this Book.**" As the introductory portion of the Book so clearly shows, its **mission** was intended to be that of comforting, sustaining and illuminating the pathway of the Church from the beginning of the Age.

APOCALYPSE, PROPHETIC STORY OF TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE CHURCH

It was evident beyond question that the Apocalypse as a whole, was **sent to Christian Churches**; that it was prefaced by letters addressed to these Churches; that its leading prophetic features had their parallels in these prefatory letters; that the warnings and promises in the letters related to things set forth more fully in the succeeding visions of the prophecy; that the Saints of the **prophetic** portion of the book were those who kept "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12), and that its martyrs were "the martyrs of Jesus." (Rev. 17:6.) Hence a **Christian** meaning was attached by the early Church to the entire Book. It was regarded as the prophetic story of the trials and triumphs in the Church of Christ in each of the seven successive stages or epochs.

To those who constituted Christ's Church in the first three centuries, the fulfilment of these mysterious visions **had already begun**, for they immediately saw on opening the Book that it was not to some distant period in the Church's history **merely**, that the Prophecy related, but it included also those occurrences and transactions **that were even then, nineteen centuries ago, "at hand"**—in the sense of marking the **early stages** of the fulfilment. The inspired asseverations contained in the introductory words, as we have seen, **determine** this primitive interpretation—"Things which must shortly be done;" "**For the time is at hand.**"

This symbolic Prophecy given to the aged Apostle (as indeed all prophecies), is but the recorded course of events and the behavior of men **in advance, and history is the revealer, the**

interpreter of what has been foretold in those prophetic announcements. Seeing this to be the divine rule of interpreting prophecy, one cannot but be weary with the speculations of some, as to **imaginary future fulfilment of prophecies which have been plainly accomplished before our eyes in the past**; prophecies under whose accomplishments of the events of history, the structure of the great Reformation of the 16th Century was built; on the fact of whose accomplishment in **their days** the confessors of Christ stood, and the martyrs suffered.

History has ever been the interpreter of prophecy. It was so notably in New Testament times, for the sufferings and glories of our Lord, foretold in the Old Testament, remained uncomprehended until their meaning was revealed by the **events of history**. Similarly the predictions concerning the great Apostasy, or "falling away" from the faith and practice of Apostolic times which has taken place in the Christian Church, resulting in the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, were not comprehended till **explained by historical events**. And thus has it been all along. From the beginning of the world to the present day, Time has ever been the chief interpreter of prophecy. **For prophecy is history written in advance**. As the ages roll by, history practically takes the place of prophecy, the foretold becoming the fulfilled.

PASTOR RUSSELL OF THE HISTORICAL EXPOSITORS OF THE
APOCALYPSE

Now while it is true as all know, that Pastor Russell did not write an exposition of the Revelation in the sense of a "Seventh Volume," yet it would be far from the truth to say that because he did not publish such a volume, therefore he did not understand the Apocalypse and did not expound its mysterious symbols. For it is evident beyond question that in his voluminous writings presenting the harvest message, he made a very exhaustive study of the Revelation **as a whole**. Indeed in carrying out his original design to the extent of publishing the truth in several sections, the six divisions or volumes of the Scripture Studies and many Watch Tower expositions, he gave to the Church a vast amount of exposition of various portions of the Apocalypse; by the aid of which **one can readily trace throughout the Book, the golden thread of prophetic truth**, and therefore is enabled to grasp very largely the import of the Revelation in its entirety.

Moreover, it is of no little moment and satisfaction in this connection, to observe that our beloved Pastor Russell **saw in the history** of the past nineteen centuries **the fulfilment** of a large portion of the Revelation, and recognized the Apocalypse as **the story told in advance** in sym-

bolic language, of the events of these centuries. Thus our dear Brother was treading in the steps of the greater part of expositors of the Revelation, from the earliest times of this Age to our day: for they were of that noble army of confessors and martyrs who suffered under both Pagan and Papal Rome—men of profound piety and spirituality. Note for instance, Brother Russell's statement indicating his attitude towards the Apocalypse:

"During the Christian Age, some of the Saints sought to understand the Church's future by examining this symbolic Book [the Revelation], and doubtless **all who read** and understood even a part of its teachings **were blessed** as promised. (Rev. 1:3.) The Book kept opening up to such, and in the days of the Reformation, was an important aid to Luther in deciding that the Papacy, of which he was a conscientious minister, **was indeed the 'Antichrist'** mentioned by the Apostle, the history of which we now see fills so large a part of that Prophecy—[the Apocalypse]."

In view of these facts and deductions, there appears to be no support whatever for the idea vigorously maintained in certain quarters, that some one is going to present us with an exposition that will explain the whole of the Apocalypse in detail. Several of such explanations have already appeared during the past twenty-five years which for the most part are entirely out of harmony with and in contradiction of the true historical view steadfastly maintained by Pastor Russell as also by a large number of devout Christian teachers of deeply spiritual insight, who preceded him. It therefore remains for the brethren of the present hour to be faithful Watchers and to **heed the Savior's words concerning this time**, "Take heed that no man deceive you"; but at the same time to consider that the Book of Revelation is a most valuable section of the Divine Oracles—our heritage of spiritual light, to which we do well to take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn.

Mine eyes can see the glory of the presence of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage, where the grapes of
wrath are stored;

I can see the flaming tempest of His swift descending
sword:

Our King is marching on.

I can see His coming judgments, as they circle all the
earth,

The signs and groanings promised, to precede a second
birth;

I read His righteous sentence in the crumbling thrones
of earth;

Our King is marching on.

Symbolic Photographs of Pagan and Papal Rome—Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Dan. 7:23: Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.



TRULY WE live and move in days of vast and far-reaching importance—days indeed freighted with revelations and unfoldings of prophetic scenery which have been more or less shrouded in mystery for long ages. But now, having reached by far the most important turn of dispensations in the history of our race when scenes of great significance are passing before our gaze, we observe **this era** as the due time for marvelous disclosures to **the people of God**.

As the days pass, earnest students of the Word are more and more profoundly impressed that **history** is the true **interpreter** of prophecy; in that the historian is the recorder of events that long beforehand were predicted in prophecy. Instead then, of speculating wildly or even uncertainly, on **what** is to be, far better is it that we shall turn our attention to what **has** been and what **is**. Let us soberly compare **the indisputable facts of history** with the mysterious predictions in God's holy Word, for in **such** a comparison, if anywhere, the truth on the subject is to be found.

To the noble Daniel the Angel said, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are **closed up and sealed** till the time of the end." To the venerable John six hundred years later, subsequent to Christ's First Advent and at the close of the first century A. D., the angel said, "Seal **not** the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand!" Thus we have the definite indication that **time would be the interpreter**, and history would **then** commence and continue all through this Age, the unfolding of the things contained in the mysterious visions of both Daniel and Revelation.

Never in all history has the word of prophecy meant so much to God's people as at this critical and solemn hour. Figuratively speaking, the foundations of the earth are fast being removed. Hitherto unheard of forces and potentialities are unleashed; which are none other than those of Armageddon itself. The reign of death and destruction is fast devouring what men have achieved of treasure and civilization in all past ages. Ah yes, the word of prophecy affords **the surest and best of consolation** because it contains the Word of God spoken long ago telling us of these days and their strange consequences. Of no little significance is it, that vast destructive forces have, of recent date, gathered in deadly battle in a great historic centre, embracing the entire area of what

was once the Imperial Roman Empire. It is **this theatre** of the present vast world-conflict that is of the most compelling interest to devout prophetic students. It is on this **Roman stage** that was so recently a dark and bloody battlefield, that we find enacted those startling symbolic and dramatic scenes contained in the prophecies of Daniel and John.

Well-known to earnest students is the prophetic outline—the long stretch of 2520 years of history peculiarly designated by Jesus as "The times of the Gentiles"; as He said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." These "times" are the **same** "seven times" predicted as a punishment on Israel in those far-off days when they were so often disobedient to the commandments of God. It has been abundantly proved by various godly and learned writers that in symbolic prophecy a "day" is the symbol of a year, and a "time," of 360 years. Thus in certain prophecies where we have the statement, "a time, times, and a half a time," a period of 1260 years is embraced; while seven "times" would be 2520 years.

FOUR UNIVERSAL MONARCHIES FOLLOW FALL OF JEWISH KINGDOM

Familiar to all students of sacred history is the fact that the Jewish Monarchy which God established in the days of David and Solomon, was, on account of the gross sins of the idolatrous Jews, repudiated by God some 500 years later, approximately 606 B. C. And **there**, a great change in God's providential government took place—as the Jewish nation was sent into Babylonian captivity. God at that time declared that the government of the world was to be left in Gentile hands until the time should come that the divine Kingdom under the whole heavens should be established. Thus the long period of Gentile history which started with the beginning of the succession of the four great universal Gentile monarchies revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, **ends with the close of these four empires**. The period of 2520 years was intended to be the **lifetime** of the fourfold metallic image of Gentile monarchy shown to the king of Babylon (Dan. 2), as well as the period of the four wild beasts shown subsequently to the Prophet. (Dan. 7.) In other words, it is the **joint duration** of the rule of **Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome**.

It is the period during which supreme power on earth is by God Himself committed to Gentiles rather than to Jews, as it is written of Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell . . . He hath made thee ruler over them all." It is the period which elapses between the fall of the crown of Judah in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and the restoration of that throne by the establishment of it forever in the person of Christ the Son and Lord of David. It is the period of the government of earth's peoples including Israel, by rulers who are like wild beasts in their cruelty and ferocity, as well as in their ignorance of God, who exist only by preying on others, who are evermore warring and slaughtering, and who oppose and persecute the Saints of God.

THERE IS TO BE NO FIFTH GENTILE MONARCHY

It is then a strange but intensely interesting fact that more than 25 centuries ago, our Father in heaven unveiled in symbolic vision to His servant Daniel in Babylon, the political future of this evil world. And it is really true that so far, the events of all subsequent ages have slowly and perfectly fulfilled the predictions up to this hour when we find ourselves in the midst of the most colossal and stirring scenes of history, which obviously mark the close of this long period of Gentile supremacy. All this is unquestionable fact that candor and common sense themselves are compelled to admit. This established truth carries with it, conclusions most momentous! It is indeed a fact so wonderful, that a little incredulity is excusable, yet when one returns involuntarily to re-examine the evidence by which it is established and proved, the most careful scrutiny reveals no flaw. Four great successive world-ruling Gentile empires were, according to the divine program, to intervene between Judah's fall and Judah's restoration. Babylon, brief and single; Medo-Persia, double in origin and longer in duration; Greece, one notable king and then four kingdoms; Rome, one vast, terrible, all-subduing empire, and then ten separate kingdoms. Roman rule was to endure to the end of Gentile dominion, but, was to undergo a strange transformation. No other world-wide Gentile power was to replace Rome. No fifth gentile monarchy was to succeed it, but rather that blessed state of things for which the Church has prayed for the last nineteen centuries, "Thy Kingdom come!"

Of special concern is it that in the midst of the "ten" separate kingdoms into which Rome

was divided, a strange, new kind of dominion sprang up, a wicked, blaspheming, idolatrous, persecuting power, and lasted for 1,260 years—from 539 A. D. to 1799 A.D. This was represented by the "little horn" that arose in the midst of the ten (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24-26), and is unquestionably a true prophetic photograph of the Roman Papal dynasty. This strange politico-religious power, after a long career of iniquity and cruelty, was to be first, gradually consumed towards the end, and then suddenly destroyed by the "bright shining" of Christ's Second Presence, and succeeded by the everlasting Kingdom of the Son of Man and the Saints. Such was the sketch presented in the far-away days of ancient Babylon. Events of history definitely show that it has been all but fulfilled, and that now, living as we are in the Second Presence of Christ the elements and agencies of destruction are definitely mobilized for the great slaughter.

HISTORY OF CHURCH INTERWOVEN WITH FOURTH GREAT BEAST-POWER

Now it is readily seen that the chief concern of the prophetic student, gathers about the last of these universal monarchies, the Roman; the first three—Babylon, Persia and Greece, covering a space of less than six centuries beginning 606 B. C. and terminating 51 B. C. Counting the fourth, the Roman Monarchy as starting 51 B. C., it is seen to cover a period of nearly 2000 years, at the end of which the "times of the Gentiles" run out. No wonder our highest interest in all this symbolic drama of empires is centralized in the fourth great beast-power revealed to Daniel and John; seeing the First Advent of our blessed Lord, the institution of the Christian Church and her entire dark and stormy career, find their place within the nearly two millenniums occupied by this universal monarchy.

And no marvel either, that when early in this Age the time came to give the Church Apocalyptic foreviews of her sad and stormy history, the revealing angel made no reference to, nor gave any symbolic description of the first three Gentile world-powers—Babylon, Persia and Greece, inasmuch as these had all then gone from the stage of action and passed into history. Thus their history had no particular illumination to lighten the pathway of the Church. But with the fourth great world-power, the Roman, the true people of God have been very much concerned from its beginning to its end. Accordingly, it may be truthfully said that the greater portion of the Apocalypse given to the Seer of Patmos for the special benefit of the Church, is devoted to varied

descriptions and aspects of the Roman beast. Hence the history of the fourth universal monarchy—the Roman, answers so perfectly to certain of the Apocalyptic visions, namely, the great red dragon of Revelation 12, the Leopard-like beast of Chapter 13, and the scarlet-colored beast of Chapter 17. These represent different aspects or pictures of the same ruling power. Each is said to have “7 heads and 10 horns”; these being mentioned to indicate that all three pictures refer to one and the same beast-power, though in three distinctly different forms or manifestations.

It is generally conceded by accredited devout students and expositors of this sacred prophecy, that the history of the experiences of the Christian Church, both true and nominal, are definitely interwoven with the history of the Roman power, both in its pagan and papal aspects. Well-known it is from his voluminous writings that our well-esteemed Brother Russell, in harmony with the deductions of a number of godly expositors who preceded him, had precisely the view presented above, of the Revelation symbols in their application to Rome, the fourth great universal monarchy.

It was no doubt a special provision of divine Providence that the vicious pagan Rome had just gotten established in supreme control of the then known world when the Savior's First Advent occurred. Under this cruel power Christ's crucifixion took place. As the new Gospel spread, following His Resurrection, many of the primitive Church, including some of the Apostles, likewise suffered martyrdom under the bitter and savage influences of Pagan Rome. Thus the stage was set for dark and sorrowful experiences for the entire Church of Christ; experiences that were to continue on through long centuries.

Of what signal interest in this connection then, are the Revelation unfoldings! The angel announced to John from the first, that the symbolic imagery he was to look upon was significant of things shortly to come to pass. Ah yes, some of them had already appeared in the first century as Paul had, perhaps 25 or 30 years prior thereto, announced that the beginnings of the great iniquitous “Man of Sin,” the Antichrist, were already putting in their appearances.—2 Thess. 2:7, 8.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE

Further, how pointedly the disclosures of the Church's career were indicated in connection with Roman history, in the breaking one after another of the seals of the seven-sealed “scroll,” significant of the great Redemptive Purpose as a whole! The opening of the first four seals discloses four mysterious horsemen,

differing in appearance and purpose. Various are the weird and strange applications that men have given to these symbolisms! Obviously these horsemen are intended to picture general movements and developments that stand closely related to the entire career of the Church—the second, third and fourth, particularly, portraying three marked stages in the development of the Antichrist early in the Age.

Thus on opening the first seal, we have the appearance on the Apocalyptic stage of the victorious warrior seated upon the white horse going forth to conquer. It is a symbolism taken from the military field, and obviously is intended to portray the conquering forces of pure Christianity on their mission of world conquest. Logically the early victories of the Gospel, the rapid spread of Christian teaching and extension of the Christian Church throughout the Roman Empire in the face of tremendous opposition from Jew and Gentile, explains the meaning of the first seal, the going forth of the rider upon the white horse, “Conquering and to conquer.” Not that these Christian forces were intended to be victorious in this Age which had been set for the calling out of the elect Church, but rather that the final conquest of the world was the ultimate objective. This application is confirmed by the somewhat analogous vision in the 19th Chapter, of the going forth of the rider on the white horse of victory, and the name of the rider bears, “The Word of God”, “The King of kings and Lord of lords.” This, however, represents another stage and refers to Christ and His conquering forces at His Second Advent as He then establishes His Kingdom and brings all things into subordination to the divine Will.

With the opening of the second seal, “There came out another, a red horse; and to the one sitting on him was it given to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill each other; and there was given him a great sword.” The great sword indicates that this rider is also a warrior. The symbolism is from the natural world of war and political strife, the annals of which make up such a large portion of Roman history, during the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Jealousies, conspiracies and political intrigue led to civil wars by which the Roman Empire was distracted. Briefly, this was the symbolic picture in the Roman world. In the religious realm, the counterpart of this Roman picture is that in the early centuries of the Church's history, the forces and influences of apostasy operating through ambitious and unspiritual leaders, brought forth perverted teachings and false doctrines destructive of the pure message as well as of faith itself; leaving the

church barren of spiritual power; and thus "took peace from the earth" the true spiritual peace that should prevail among Christ's followers, replacing it with unrest and a state of carnal strife.

The opening of the third seal revealed a "**Black** horse, and he who sat on him having a **balance** in his hand." Again we glance at the symbol in the natural world: "Black," in the Scriptures, is the image of fear, famine, disease, etc. The "balance" was commonly the emblem of justice and equity and so suggests the idea of something being weighed. But the "balance" was also sometimes the symbol of **exaction and oppression**. (Hosea 12:7.) The mysterious remark "a chenix of wheat for a denarius, and three chenixes of barley for a denarius," thus expressing the fact of abnormal and disturbed values of certain of life's commodities, indicates a distressed economic state. Thus the picture in the natural Roman world **confirmed by history**, is that of tyrannical and oppressive rulers who by unjust and oppressive legislation and taxation plunged the population into economic distress, poverty and starvation. Answering to this picture the rider on the black horse in the **religious sphere** is descriptive of a definite advanced stage in the work of apostasy **in the professing church**. Men of influence, power and rank entered the church. Many ambitious and designing leaders were allowed to fill responsible places, who instead of feeding the church, robbed her of the true spiritual food which alone can nourish the spiritual life. Thus entrance was made for a further flood of false and God-dishonoring doctrines to be taught, including numberless meaningless forms and ceremonies which resulted in the church's sad spiritual impoverishment and decay, fulfilling the symbol of the **black horse**—fear, famine and disease.

THE FULL BLOOM OF ROMAN PAPACY

Next we have the appearance of the **pale** horse, "and one was sitting on him whose name was death," etc. The pale horse obviously denotes **an era of the prevalence of death**. Looking again to the Roman symbol, the historian has given overwhelming testimony as he traces the cause of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Unjust and iniquitous rule by corrupt emperors, and the carrying on of many wars of aggression and conquest meant the death of untold multitudes and led further in the direction of the overthrow of the Empire. In the religious or spiritual realm, the rider on the pale horse then pictures **that stage of decline** in the church when the great Roman anti-Christian apostasy was fully developed and seated in power. False teaching and blas-

phemous man-made doctrines replaced the pure Gospel truth originally given; and men were exalted to **take the place of Christ** as head of the church. Thus the "pale" horse of the Man of Sin meant death to all spirituality, in those coming under its power; but physical death also to those who faithfully met its cruel persecuting power.

After noting the ravages of these riders on the red, black and livid horses, we are prepared to understand the meaning of the opening of the 5th seal which announces the persecuted martyr-souls under the altar saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Unquestionably this is a portrayal of the bitter persecutions of the Saints **by both pagan and papal Rome** reaching unto the latter days.

Behold then what advantage is that of devout students of prophecy today in occupying a high eminence of observation from which to view the past, present and future! Beholding as we may, so much of the fulfilment of the sublime imagery shown to Daniel and John portraying the outworking and final overthrow of the **fourth** great universal dominion, with what thrilling interest do we now review the recent world-conflict that has converted practically the entire theatre of the Imperial Roman Empire into a heap of ruins, leaving in its wake, the horrible spectres of starvation, anarchy and chaos. Truly to trace the hand of God in history, to note how all the ages of His providential government have moved according to a foreseen and foretold order, to watch the last stages of the divine program of universal history fulfilling themselves in our very sight in these last days, is to find hope merging into **definite expectation**, and in patient waiting for Christ's **full Revelation**; it is to lift up our heads, convinced that our redemption, **our full deliverance**, the redemption of Christ's mystical Body, and of the world itself, is nigh.

And now at last, the Seventh Trump is blown;—
From year to year it swells with louder tone;
From year to year the signs of wrath
Are gathering round the Judge's path;
Strange words fulfilled, and mighty works achieved,
And truth in all the world hath hated and believed.

But what are heaven's alarms to hearts that cower
In wilful slumber, deepening every hour—
That draw their curtains closer round
The nearer swells the trumpet's sound?
Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel Thee
nigh!
—Selected

The War Between Michael and the Dragon--the False Kingdom Fallen

Rev. 12:1-5; 7, 9: 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. . . . 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. . . . And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. . . . And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil. . . . he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.



HOUGH WE are confident that the startling prophetic imagery before us—the woman clothed with the sun, the birth of the man-child, the war between Michael and the Dragon, have all passed into history long centuries ago, yet considering that their fulfilment stands closely related to the present closing scenes of the great world-destruction and overthrow that has been occupying the stage of the ancient Roman Empire, we cannot but be edified by a careful and reverent review of this symbolic picture.

As in other portions of the Revelation, so with the passage before us, we encounter a strange and wide-ranging amount of conjecture and confusion amongst those who have stated their opinions. These various uncertain and unsupported conjectures we cannot undertake to discuss in this connection. Suffice it to say that from one quarter or another of the brethren professing Present Truth, there emanates the teaching that the war between Michael and the Dragon relates to the final great struggle of the last days of this Age which is to result in Satan's fall and the overthrow of his empire. Thus the meaning of the passage is construed to be practically synonymous with Rev. 20:2, 3, which is unquestionably a portrayal of the binding of Satan and his imprisonment throughout the Millennium. However as we look more carefully 'neath the surface it will be seen that the two passages of chapters 12 and 20 refer to entirely different periods in history, and to transactions and events far removed from each other.

Again it is claimed by some, that because prior to reaching chapter 12, we have a rehearsal of the opening of the seven seals of the "scroll," and the sounding of the seven trumpets under the last seal, the seventh, therefore the visions recorded from chapter 11 onward must find their fulfilment subsequent thereto. But we think this conclusion cannot be sustained. Careful observation shows that the events and transactions indicated in the opening of the seven seals are not always presented in the Apocalypse in the consecutive chronological order in which they actually occur in history. As an example of this, we find that Rev. 11:15-18 announces the

sounding of the seventh trumpet followed by a rehearsal of the great disasters with which this Age closes, the establishing of the Kingdom and its work of restoring all things, reaching to the end of the Millennium. Now if we follow the rule of looking to the fulfilment of the visions in history, according to the chronological order in which they come to us in the Revelation, then we would be compelled to look beyond the reign of Christ for the fulfilment of all that is contained in the Apocalypse from Chapter 11 to the end of the Book. And this were a monstrous absurdity. Unquestionably the Spirit of God has so directed the recording of these visions that the predictions are not always presented in the order of their appearing in history; purposely so, to conceal their meaning until the due time for their unfolding. Experience and reason therefore urge that we shall observe the rule of "history fulfilling prophecy," and thus with the aid of the historian, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture, determine the order of the fulfilment of these sublime visions. By so doing we shall reach sound conclusions because based upon unquestioned facts, of what has already come to pass. Thus we will not be depending on anyone's fancy or speculative ideas with regard to the fulfilment of these symbolic prophecies.

THE SUN-CLAD WOMAN—CHURCH OF THE EARLY TIMES

First, in the passage before us we have the strange symbol of a marvelous woman, clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars, and she herself agitated, and agonizing with the anxieties of parturition. We may safely conclude that whatever else is literal in this Book, the case of this woman is not to be so construed; for the Apostle says, it is a "wonder", meaning literally a "sign"—a picture, a symbol of something else which is the true subject of contemplation. And when it is yet added, that the sign is a "great one", that to which it refers, must be of the utmost consequence and consideration, and no trifling object or ordinary event can be admitted as fulfilling the majesty of such a picture.

It need hardly be said that in the New Testament the woman is the familiar symbol of the Church the Body of Christ. (Eph. 5:25-32.)

There is no room for doubt that it is the **collective body of the Church** that we are to see in this picture, and particularly that stage of her existence embraced in the **early part of this Christian Age**. The following concise statement by Pastor Russell well sums up this picture of the woman:

"The woman clothed with the sun represents the Gospel Church covered with the precious promises of God and the **glorious light of truth**. 'The moon under her feet,' is the reflection of the sun's brightness; so the law was a **shadow** of the reflection of the Gospel light. It was light, but not the real—only the reflected light. The woman was 'not under the law (moon), but under grace,' (sunlight); yet she was supported by the teachings of the law and rested on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. The diadem of twelve stars represents the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.*

The particular feature of commanding interest about this symbolic woman is her travelling in pain to be delivered which suggests at once that there has been some development within the body of the Church itself which was to result in the **coming forth of a new power** destined to arise to great prominence throughout the world; and that in fact, is what was about to happen at that stage of the Church's career.

Before us are the accounts of Church history showing that from the earliest times of her career there were malignant **perversions of the truth** concerning the present mission of the Church. These were in the nature of teachings, interpretations, and agitations to the effect that the Church was to grow and prosper in influence, power and prestige in the world, and finally establish the Kingdom and wield the sceptre of civil and military power among the nations **without waiting** for the return of the Lord to exalt her to that authority. This definite positive departing from the faith is a **well established fact of history** and much space has been devoted to it. It covered a "period of centuries and was so gradual as to be much less noticeable to those who then lived in its midst, than to us who see it as a whole; and the more deceiving was it because every step of organ-

*It seems strange indeed that some who admit that the woman, sun, moon and stars are all definite symbols, and not to be understood literally, yet insist that the male-child and the Dragon must be construed literally. The incongruity and absurdity of such "interpretation" seem so obvious as to need no comment.

Again the travail of the woman is claimed by some "interpreters" to be symbolic of the trials, sorrows and sacrificial sufferings of the true Church throughout the entire Age. However, definite facts show this application to be entirely groundless: following the birth of the male-child, the woman's travelling ceases, and she thereafter flees to a place specially prepared of God where she spends forty-two months—in symbolic time, a period of 1260 years. This, then, does not constitute a true picture, in any sense, of the sufferings of the true Church.

ization, and every advance toward influence and authority in the Church and over the world, was taken in the **name of Christ**, and **professedly** to glorify Him and fulfil His plans recorded in Scripture."

GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANTICHRIST

The historian has outlined for us the several stages of the Church's decline and apostasy in the early part of the Age, generally familiar to students; but to refresh the memory, we submit a few synoptical statements as follows:

"In the **First Century** not many wise or noble were called. No great names have been handed down to us; no philosophers, or statesmen, or nobles, or generals, or governors, or judges, or magistrates. In the first century the Christians were not of sufficient importance to be generally persecuted by the government. They had not even arrested public attention. Yet in this century converts were multiplied in every city, and traditions point to the martyrdoms of those who were prominent, including nearly all of the Apostles.

"In the **Second Century** there were no greater names than Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Clement, Melito and Apollonius, quiet bishops or intrepid martyrs, who addressed their flocks in upper chambers and who held no worldly rank, famous only for their sanctity or simplicity of character, and only mentioned for their sufferings and faith. It was a small body of pure and blameless men, who did not aspire to **control society**. In this century [however] the polity of the Church was **quietly organized**. There was an organized fellowship amongst the members; bishops had become influential, not in society, but among the Christians; dioceses and parishes were established; there was a distinction between city and rural bishops; delegates of churches assembled to discuss points of faith or **suppress nascent heresies**; the diocesan system was **developed**, and ecclesiastical centralization commenced; deacons began to be reckoned among the higher clergy; the weapons of **ex-communication** were forged; missionary efforts were carried on; the festivals of the Church were created; the Church was thus **laying the foundation of its future polity and power**.

"The **Third Century** saw the Church more powerful as an **institution**. Regular synods had assembled in the great cities of the Empire; the metropolitan system was matured; the canons of the Church were definitely enumerated, great schools of theology attracted inquiring minds; the doctrines were systematized [that is, **defined**, limited and formulated into creeds and confessions of faith]. Christianity had spread so extensively that it must needs be either persecuted or legalized; **great bishops** ruled the growing Church. The Church was

rapidly advancing to a position which extorted the attention of mankind.

"It was not till the Fourth Century—when imperial persecution had stopped; when [the Roman Emperor] Constantine was converted; **when the Church was allied with the State;** when the **early faith was itself corrupted;** when superstition and vain philosophy had entered the ranks of the faithful; when the bishops became courtiers; when churches became both rich and splendid; when synods were brought under political influence; when politics and dogmatics went hand in hand, and emperors enforced the decrees of [church] councils—that **men of rank** entered the Church. When Christianity became the religion of the court and of the fashionable classes, it was used to **support the very evils** against which it originally **protested!** The clergy, ambitious and worldly, sought rank and distinction. They even thronged the courts of princes and aspired to temporal honors. The bishop became a grand personage who **controlled and appointed** the clergy. **The Church was allied with the State** and religious dogmas were enforced by the sword of the magistrate. **An imposing hierarchy was established of various grades, which culminated in the bishop of Rome. The mission of the Church was lost sight of in a degrading alliance with the State.** Christianity was a pageant, a ritualism, an arm of the State, a vain philosophy, a superstition, a formula."—Lord's **"Old Roman World."**

THE DRAGON AND THE MAN-CHILD

Thus slowly but surely the great apostasy came about, within four centuries; and how truly the developments of these first four centuries of the Age corresponds and answers to the symbolic description of the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," as already pointed out in an earlier discussion in this issue!—the first rider of the **white** horse representing the original purity of Christianity on its world-mission during the first century; followed by three other riders on **red, black** and **pale** horses, significant of three special stages of apostasy during the **second, third** and **fourth** centuries.

This was then the situation in the Christian Church, the Woman **"in pain to be delivered"** of a **new power and influence**, after about three centuries of the Age had passed; at which juncture there appears prominently before us **another** wonder, **"sign"**—that of the great red dragon standing before the woman to devour her child as soon as born; but the child was **"caught up unto God, and to His throne."** Some who forget that we are dealing with symbols think that because the term, **"that old serpent the devil,"** is assigned to the great red dragon, therefore the Adversary, Satan him-

self is personally referred to. In mentioning this John says he saw **another "sign"**. What he saw therefore was a **figure, a symbol of something else altogether in another sphere.** Besides, there is no Scriptural support for the thought that Satan, the fallen spirit being, has any such corporeal appearance or physiognomy as that of the dragon. Unquestionably this weird description is of a great vicious and wicked system amongst men.

It is the universal conviction of reliable expositors including our much esteemed Pastor Russell that the only character or object in history that fits this peculiar imagery is that of **the Imperial Pagan Roman Empire.** It is not a little remarkable that the figure of the **dragon** was used as an **ensign** by the armies of **Pagan Rome.** Ammianus Marcellinus thus describes this heathen Roman standard: "The dragon was covered with purple cloth, and fastened to the end of a pike, gilt and adorned with precious stones. It opened its wide throat, and the wind blew through it; and it hissed as if in a rage; with its tail floating in several folds through the air." It was first used as an ensign near the close of the second century of the Christian era. "In the third century it had become almost as notorious among Roman ensigns as the **eagle** itself."

PAGAN ROME, THE GREAT RED DRAGON

Pastor Russell has forcefully summed up the application of this symbolism in the following statement: "The great red Dragon represents the Pagan Roman Empire; the seven heads, representing Rome's successive and distinctive **forms** of government, and the ten horns the divisions of power—these being mentioned to identify it (Rome) as the **same** beast, or government described by Daniel, and elsewhere in Revelation. 'In heaven,' symbolizes **the place of control** or rulership. Both woman and dragon are said to be in heaven; the woman, or Church, in spiritual **control**; the Dragon, or empire in political **control** of the world."

Whatever mystery there has been about the identity of this "male-child" which was developed **within the professing Church,** seems completely dissolved in the light of the historical facts. Lack of space forbids our reviewing the great mass of historic testimony. But it is recalled that Brother Russell has so ably covered the ground in his exhaustive exposition of the "Man of Sin," the "Antichrist," that all are urged to read liberally of chapter nine of his Studies, volume 2. St. Paul's prophetic Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2:1-8), is here shown to be fulfilled in the birth of the man-child—the coming forth of an ecclesiastical system that became united to the world civil power and pro-

fessed to be God's kingdom ruling the world. A careful review of the historic facts should leave no doubt that the "Man of Sin" is in very truth this "male-child caught up to heaven", figuratively—highly exalted. He assumed **all the prerogatives of God** on earth as shown by the many blasphemous assumptions of power and titles, on the part of the Roman Papacy. Briefly summing up the important facts with reference to the significance of the symbolic woman, the man-child and the dragon, Brother Russell gives us the following interesting statement:

THE MAN-CHILD CAUGHT UP TO HEAVEN

"If we locate it aright, the woman is seen in this vision about 308 A. D., and **has been** in the 'Smyrna' stage as described in Rev. 2:8-10. It has just been passing through a long series of persecutions from the 'Dragon' (Roman Empire). The continued persecutions caused some to relax their vigilance for the truth; and a spirit or desire to please and get into favor with the persecuting 'dragon,' came over some of the **bright ones** in the Church. So we read, the tail of the dragon **drew** the third of the 'stars' [leaders, teachers in the Church]; they became his followers or servants which of course tended to degrade them. The long desired favor of Rome came at last by the conversion of Constantine, A. D. 313, and there we believe the **labor pangs of tribulation** ceased and Papacy was born; that is, **there, the blending of Church and state commenced**. It was **not yet** the 'Man of Sin,' in the same sense that a child is not a man; but it was the beginning [in embryo] of what **resulted** in Papacy—"The man of Sin," the man-child was born.

"Roman favor was so sweet to the Church after so many years of persecution, that they were ready to make religion any and everything to suit the views of their new **half-pagan** friend Constantine. With his favor, the **open** opposition of others measurably ceased. Thousands, yes millions, were brought into the Church from Paganism. But the change was mostly **in name**, for the pagan priests became Christian (!) priests and the pagan holidays came to be called by Christian names—Christmas being one of these holidays kept sacred to the memory of a great goddess—since **called** the celebration of Jesus' birth though actually nearly three months astray.

"The Church knew that the promise of her Lord was, that He would end her persecutions **by delivering her** and that she should be exalted to the control of all the kingdoms of the world. And some were so rejoiced at the favors of Rome, that no doubt they fancied that in this way God would give them the kingdoms of the world promised.

"Persecuted and reviled, she was 'pained to be delivered,' and longed for the completion of

the promised 'Seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent's head.' Her anxiety and desire in this direction produced a **premature** birth—"The Man of Sin" (the papal hierarchy) being the offspring. This 'male child,' at first [in its infancy], a **weak one** (A. D. 314), was gradually 'caught up unto God, and to His throne,' or **exalted to the position, and titles, homage and praise** of the true 'seed,' so that 'He as God sat in the temple (Church) of God, **showing himself that he is God.**' And within three hundred years he did 'Rule the nations with a rod of iron.'"

THE GREAT WAR—FALL OF THE DRAGON-POWER

"**And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, . . . and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, and his angels were cast out with him.**" The force of this strange imagery is appreciated only as we keep in mind that it is **strictly and highly symbolical**; and neither Jesus nor Satan **personally**, is meant by the terms, **Michael** and the **Dragon**. Thus was the conflict and issue as between the forces of **Antichrist** (apostate Christianity—its rulers, priests and bishops), and the forces of **Paganism** (its rulers, pagan priests, etc.), **symbolically portrayed in this picture**,—a conflict that lasted for some centuries, as we read, "This conflict and casting down of the dragon, or [paganized] civil power continued for several hundred years, or until about A. D. 752, when 'in the Pontificate of Zachary, the German court decided that no metropolitan could enter upon his function without the approval of the Pontiff.' In the same year, Pepin asked the **sanction** of the Pope to ascend the Throne of France."

Nor need it seem strange that Michael, a term applied to Christ, is here used to denote the Papacy and its supporters during the time of this controversy. Let it be seen that "the woman, dragon, tail, stars, horns, etc., **are all symbols**, and it would be out of order to have a **real Michael** fight a **symbolic** dragon. However, it seemed puzzling at first to know **why this name** should be given to Antichrist, but on turning to a dictionary we find that the meaning of the word, 'Michael' is—"Who as God." It is quite remarkable that the meaning should be in such close accord with Paul's description—"He as God sitteth in the temple of God." (2 Thess. 2:4.) When the Dragon was cast out of heaven (out of the ruling position), it left this one ('Who as God,') in control, or, **in the heavens**, and from him issues the 'loud voice' (great proclamation), of verses 10 to 12. That is, Papacy **claimed** that when it assumed control—"The Kingdom of God and the power of

His anointed, had come to the world. They claimed that they had overcome the Dragon by the blood of the Lamb, thus, assuming falsely that their victory was the result of the firm stand of the ('Smyrna') Church, which just previously had suffered so much persecution. 'Therefore, rejoice ye heavens.' [Let Papacy and all connected therewith rejoice.] 'Woe to the inhabitants of the earth,' etc. As the Church had once been persecuted when Paganism reigned, so now when she reigns she makes the Pagans and heretics suffer! This, Papacy claims as the Millennial reign, during which it broke in pieces the kingdoms with the rod of iron."

CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS 1260 YEARS

"To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly to the wilderness [literally, the place deserted], into her place where she is nourished for a time, and times and a half time, from the face of the serpent." Thus the true Church because of her faithfulness, is pictured as going into solitude, from public view, an outcast because of her fidelity to the truth and to the true Lord and Head of the Church. "When the apostasy got under way some of the Church realized it was but a Babylon condition and to such, the two wings were given to help them back to their proper wilderness condition separate from the world and from Babylon—'without the camp'. The two wings we understand to be the same as the two witnesses elsewhere mentioned, namely, the Word of God—Old and New Testament Scriptures. The Scriptures showed them that the present is the time to suffer with Him if we would (future) reign with Him—the real Bridegroom and King of nations."*

Here, for the second time in this most interesting description (verses 6 and 14), reference is made to the woman removed to the wilderness for her protection where she is nourished "a thousand two hundred and three score days," equivalent to "a time and times and a half a time", universally accepted as a period of twelve hundred and sixty years; thus covering the exact time of the supremacy of the Papal system from A. D. 539 when the Bishop of Rome was officially and formally recognized by the Emperors as head over all the churches, till A. D. 1799, when the power of the Papacy was broken, since which time its influence has been greatly on the wane.—See Studies, vol. 3, chap. 3.

Here then we have the most convincing proof possible, that the war between Michael

and the Dragon could have no reference to the great conflict, and fall of the empire of evil in the end of this Age, inasmuch as the true Church is seen in this vision, to go into the wilderness for a period of twelve hundred and sixty years subsequent to the war between Michael and the Dragon. All the facts of history as we have just seen, established the conclusion that the fulfilment was begun long in the past.*

But now we are far down the stream of time, and "the end of all things is at hand!" What is to be the consummation of all these matters? Ah, we find our answer in the Apostle Paul's forecast of the end of the "Man of Sin", the Papal system, which for long centuries claimed to be God's Kingdom reigning on earth. **Fallen, is this false kingdom today!**—having been shorn of its civil and military power for nearly a century and a half. It has been swiftly marching towards destruction. Says Paul, "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His Presence." Truly it is this solemn day of Christ's Parousia that is witnessing the "consuming" going on in our midst. The "bright shining" has indeed been doing its part; and together with the unnumbered agencies at the Lord's command, the divine purpose to sweep away the present symbolic heavens and earth shall be accomplished in preparation for the Kingdom of God.

Standing out in the limelight before the gaze of all earth's peoples on this vast world-stage of deadly conflict, is what is left of the old Roman "beast", with its ten "horns," powers, kingdoms (European governments), sadly torn and mutilated. With every appearance at this moment, that its "seventh head"—the "House of Savoy," the "King Emmanuel Dynasty," sadly fallen, apparently never to arise again, what is this present stage but one of completing the process of destruction of the "body" (the Empire itself), of the "beast"!

*As for verse 17, of chapter 12, which says that the "Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed", this cannot refer to the "woman" (the Church) giving birth to any others, following that of the male-child. "The remnant of her seed" refers, we believe, to the later generations of the Church continuing to suffer at the hands of the "Dragon" (worldly, civil and military power), even down to the latter times.

Through pastures fair,
And sea-girt paths all wild with rock and foam,
O'er velvet sward, and desert stern and bare,
The flock comes home.

O Shepherd King,
With loving hands, whose lightest touch is blest!
Thine is the Kingdom, Thine the power, to bring
Thy flock to rest!

*The various selections above from Brother Russell's pen, dealing directly with the symbols of Rev. 12, will be found in Reprints, pages 306-7.

The Leopard-Beast and His Image-- In the Latter Days

Rev. 13:11, 14: And I saw another wild beast ascending from the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by the signs which it was given him to do in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast, who has the wound of the sword and lived.—Diaglott.



N RESPONSE to a number of suggestions and inquiries, we place before our readers what seem to be reasonable deductions concerning the symbolic descriptions of chapter 13 of the Revelation, particularly with reference to the "Image of the Beast." It is well that we have freshly before us the thought that the true blessing promised in connection with the study of the Revelation prophecies, is realized only as we shall succeed in ascertaining the **mind of the Spirit**; our own speculative theories count for nothing. May we then earnestly and humbly seek guidance from above as we review this subject.

It is observed that this symbolism before us is amongst the Apocalyptic imagery that fills the stage of these last days with most interesting drama. Being as far along as we evidently are in the Day of the Lord—this time of the dissolution of the present world-order, it would seem that Revelation 13 should now be **largely a matter of history**. Indeed we believe that this is so. Even in this day of its fulfilment, similar to other portions of the Apocalypse, this mystical description is variously misconstrued and misapplied. Hence there are some at this time who are building startling expectations on this symbol, believing that there is yet to be an era in the midst of this "Day of Vengeance" during which the persecution of the Saints unto death such as was practiced in the dark ages, will be re-enacted by the "Image of the Beast." There is nothing to be gained then by a hasty, irreverent and reckless dealing with this holy prophecy, which can result only in more or less fabulous and fanatical impressions and conclusions.

In coming to this study we can consider ourselves greatly favored in having before us Brother Russell's examination and exposition of chapter 13, published more than sixty years ago. (Reprints, pp. 318-323.) Remarkable indeed is it that the progress of events, developments, etc., since that time have served **not to unsettle or change** our convictions as to our Brother's interpretation, but to **confirm** practically all that he then gave us. What we are therefore submitting below is in large part a rearrangement of our Brother's own thoughts and words in the light of **where we stand today**.

Though it is the "Image of the Beast" that occupies our special attention in this discussion (chap. 13, vss. 14-18), it will be of much advantage to briefly review the preceding verses

of this chapter which relate to the Leopard-like beast having seven heads and ten horns; and the Two-horned beast. With regard to the first of these, the description is familiar, being unquestionably another picture or aspect of the **same** beast shown in chapters 12 and 17, chapter 12 having been dealt with in another article in this issue.

First, in examining the significance of these symbols, it will be well to have in mind a simple rule which Brother Russell very wisely suggested long ago, namely, that the term, "**Dragon**" symbolizes the civil and military power of Pagan Rome; "**Heavens**," the higher or ruling powers; "**Earth**," the people under or obedient to the ruling powers (heavens); "**Sea**," the general masses of mankind, not under religious restraint.

The second verse of this chapter directs our attention to the Dragon which in the preceding article we found to symbolize the **Pagan Roman Empire**; the same which Daniel saw in vision called, the "fourth beast dreadful and terrible." (Dan. 7:7.) The Dragon passed its dominion over to a beast which arose out of the sea—a government which came up from among the irreligious masses; in other words **the Roman Empire** passed under a **new** rulership—the Leopard-beast—whose mouth was **lion-like**, its body **leopard-like** and its feet **bear-like**. This beast which came into possession of the Dragon's seat and power, we understand to be the Papal beast—meaning the **Papal ecclesiastical power** united with the Roman Empire; which corresponds to the "man child" of chapter 12. In other words it has certain qualities which **resemble the first three beasts** of Daniel 7, namely, the Lion, Bear and Leopard—described as representing Babylon, Persia and Greece. This new Beast, then, would combine certain leading characteristics of the preceding empires and unite them in the power of the **last**—the Roman.

SYMBOLIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPAL BEAST

Babylon was celebrated for its splendor and its pride—the **Lion** the king or ruler of all beasts—so Papacy had a mouth of this sort, that is, it **claimed to be the Kingdom over all kingdoms** by divine right—the Kingdom of God, which was to break in pieces and consume all others—a strong mouth.

The bear's feet suggest another of Papacy's

peculiarities as an empire namely, its persistency. Like the **Bear Empire** (Medo-Persia), which would besiege for years, and even turn a river aside from its channel to accomplish its ends; so Papacy moves cautiously and gets possession of kingdoms rather by strategy than by battle. This same quality is illustrated in the bear; it **hugs** its prey to death with its **paws**.

The body of the Papal beast was like a **Leopard**. The Leopard was the third beast seen by Daniel—namely, Grecia. Greece was noted as the center of learning, piety and wisdom. (Acts 17:1-23.) So Papacy's chief boast, to be the ruler of all kingdoms, is based on the claim that it is the **center of wisdom, learning and piety**. Other peculiarities of the Leopard are its activity, vigilance and secretiveness; so with Papacy. Again, a Leopard is spotted irregularly, so too, Papacy's policy differs in various parts of the earth: in **enlightened** liberal countries it is **liberal**, in other places it varies in its rulings to **suit the circumstances**. This beast (Ecclesiastical Empire), is given the power, seat, and great authority of the Dragon, Pagan Roman Empire, and for a time becomes the only representative of the dominion—the **ten horns** (kingdoms), rendering allegiance and support to it.

"And the whole earth wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the Dragon [civil power] because he gave support and authority to the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast, and who is able to make war with him? [Who is able to withstand the withering curse of Papacy, the spiritual Empire?]"

"And there was given him a mouth [lion-like—strong—terrible utterance] speaking great and blasphemous things [grossly false claims and false teachings]. And authority was given him to act forty-two months." This permission we understand to have been to execute and put to death Saints of God, whom it called "heretics." These 42 symbolic months or 1260 symbolic days are the same as mentioned in the preceding chapter and also foretold by Daniel (12:7) as 3½ times. With the end of those 1260 years, Papacy's power to act or to execute for heresy, **ended—1799**. There the delusion that none could successfully war or contend with Papacy was shown, when Napoleon in defiance of the curse, took Pope Pius VI a prisoner to Paris, where he died. The dread of this beast has not been so great since, and the ten horns (kingdoms), which once defended, have **made war with the woman**. The dominion was taken away.—Rev. 17:16.

Now we observe how this Beast succeeded during its career of power. We read: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle,

and those who tabernacle in heaven."

This Beast power was a slur—a smear and a travesty upon God and upon the true coming Kingdom. "And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them; and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation." [Papacy's authority as a spiritual empire or "kingdom of God," was generally acknowledged.] "And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him—every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life, of the Lamb that hath been slain."—Revised Version.

The deception of Papacy was so complete that the **World was deceived** and all the church, **except the overcomers**, whose names were "written in heaven" were deceived in the same way, and hasted to unite themselves with, and to worship the Beast, and have it enroll their names on its **books**. From this has sprung the delusion so common to all Protestants at this day—namely; that their names must be connected with **some such earthly church systems**, or they are not the Lord's Saints. But, the important item is, to have their names recorded in the **Lamb's book of life**—His is the only record of **any value**.

"If any man hath an ear, let him hear." Only those whose ears had been circumcised—those who had come to a considerable knowledge of God's Word and who had the hearing of faith—to respect Him and His Word, despite the magnificence, success and power of error, would be able to **receive** the foregoing statements concerning those who were **deceived** by Papacy; that such were of those **not written** in the **true Church**, of which that was the counterfeit.

"If any one is for captivity, into captivity he goes away; if any one will kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patient endurance and the faith of the Saints." The Papal system was one of **bondage**. All who acknowledged its claims must of necessity render implicit obedience, as unto God; for it claimed to be the Kingdom of heaven; and its head, the Pope, to be God's vicegerent; consequently those who were for, or in favor of such a captivity of individual thought, and who acknowledged the right of that Papal system to limit and define the faith of all, by consenting, **became captives**. Many protestant sects have gotten into the same snare of the adversary, and are vainly striving to make a dominion by **blending church and state**.

On the other hand, there were some who asserted that Papacy was a usurpation of the titles and power of the true Head and ruler of the Church, and claimed their right to the in-

dividual liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. Such used the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," in the defense of their liberty, and such were put to death by Papacy—it overcame the Saints during its 1260 years of power. This was a severe test of true **sainthood**—would they go into captivity and join in the usurper's ranks, or would they remain faithful to the true King and wait for the Kingdom which He promised to establish? Those whose names were written in heaven, stuck to the "sword" and sealed their testimonies by death.

It will be well to observe at this point that the reference made in verses 3 and 14 to the **wounding** of the Leopard-beast by the "sword," refers to the Reformation work, when Luther, Zwingli and other reformers, by advocating the teachings of the Word of God, as opposed to the teachings of Papacy, showed that it was the **false system referred to in Revelation**, and in Paul's writings, called the "Mystery of Iniquity"—"Antichrist"—"The Man of Sin." However, it is said that the wound was healed as a result of some of the horns (powers), showing their sympathies with the Papacy; though the beast was not restored to power again.

THE TWO-HORNED BEAST

"And I saw another wild beast ascending from the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb. And he spoke as a dragon." If the preceding wild beast represented an ecclesiastical power, as we have just seen, then this beast called, "another," should be understood to represent a **similar ecclesiastical or church power**—a **blending** or uniting with civil power. As the first beast had ten horns or powers which gave it their strength and protection, so this beast has "two horns", which indicate that two powers or governments support it.

Again, notice that this beast "ascended [came gradually] out of the earth," while the first one came out of the "sea." Now, if our definitions of these symbols be correct—as the coming of Papacy from among the irreligious of the Roman Empire, was shown by its coming out of the "sea," then the coming of this second beast out of the "earth" would signify that it sprang up out of a professedly religious people. Now it was at the **zenith** of the first or **Leopard-beast's** power, and just when the great Reformation was getting under way (1531 A.D.) that the Church of England threw off her allegiance to Rome and became a **separate ecclesiastical government**. It thus followed exactly the example of Papacy, in blending civil with ecclesiastical powers, and also made the same person, Henry VIII, and his successors, head of all power.

Now let it be borne in mind that following out the symbolic picture of the Two-horned beast, we must see that a church or ecclesiastical system becomes an element in or **part of the government**. There is but one church which this symbol fits perfectly and that is the established "Church of England and Ireland." This system, like the Papal, was therefore a blending of church and state, an ecclesiastical empire. England withdrew from the Papal rule in 1531 and became an entirely separate government. The convocation of the clergy called the same year, in its decrees declared King Henry VIII to be "the one protector of the English Church, its **only and supreme lord**; and as far as might be, by the law of Christ, its **supreme head**." Those are the exact words of the decree. The Reformation movement had not reached England at this time, and certainly it was much needed. The clerical convocation which could acknowledge such a head as Henry VIII was certainly not far from being as corrupt as the Papacy.

It is of no little significance that the same title given to Henry VIII, "supreme head of the church on earth," etc., **still applies to English sovereigns**. It is this uniting of the church in the government that constitutes it a "beast" in fulfilment of the Revelation symbol—exactly as was represented in the first or Leopard-beast. England was one of the "two horns," and the evidence is most convincing that Ireland was the other.* History tells us that in 1537 the Irish parliament in Dublin "passed the act of supremacy, declaring Henry VIII supreme head of the church, prohibiting intercourse with the court of Rome, and making it treason to refuse the oath of supremacy." Henry VIII also took the title of "King of Ireland." From 1538 to 1871—333 years—the title of the church was "The Church of England and Ireland," thus recognizing both "horns."

Though the horn represented in Ireland was cast off in 1871 (by action of parliament and the consent of the Queen, then the head of the church), this beast **still carries the title** of the "Two-horned beast." So too, although all the horns that once supported the Papal beast have broken off, it still is known as the "Ten-horned

*Some favoring a different interpretation of this passage concerning the two-horned beast, claim that the word "two" should be omitted from verse 11, because not contained in the Vatican MSS. In our judgment this is not sufficient reason for the word to be stricken out. Authorized and standard versions, such as the American Revised Version, retain the word "two," obviously for the reason that it is found in others of the oldest MSS., such as Sinaitic, etc. Even though the word "two" be omitted from the text, it would still read, "and he had horns like a lamb." There would be no point in such a rendering, since, as the lamb has two horns and no more, the "two" is logically a part of the original text, thus sustaining the interpretation we have herein presented.

beast."

The "two horns like a lamb," suggests that the beast was peaceably inclined—not disposed to be aggressive, but merely using the horns for defense. The text states that this beast spake like a dragon (not like the Dragon). This we would understand to mean simply that its utterances resembled those of a purely civil (dragon) power, and in its words there was little to denote that it is an **ecclesiastical** government. The description in verses 12 and 13 confirm the thought however, that this beast is **much like** the Papal beast. It does various performances in the "presence" of the **first** beast; meaning that it **does not take the place** of the first beast, but operates, reigns **contemporaneously with it**. The "Two-horned" beast does not act in opposition to the first beast but rather its policy is such as to encourage and further the cause and foster the interests of the Papal beast. This second beast also makes its boastful and blasphemous claims to be backed by heavenly powers and that its denunciations, judgments, etc., come from heaven.—Vss. 13, 14.

WHEN THEY MADE THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST

We now reach the point in the course of proceedings of this beast where an extraordinary thing occurs; it is in the **utterance** of this Two-horned beast; "**Saying** to them that dwell on the earth [independent companies of Christians] that they should make an **image** to the beast [Papacy] which had the wound by a sword and did live." It was by her **example** that she advised this. From the year 1800 to 1846 was a time in which great numbers of new sects arose; whereas before that, they were few and not prominent. This gave rise to uneasiness among the various older denominations who wondered whereunto this thing would lead. As the Bible came to be read more and more by the masses, occasional individuals would feel free to preach what they thought it taught, regardless of denominational creeds and the views of older sects. As a consequence Protestants were fast splitting up into fragments. They began to say, by what means shall we check and stop this disposition to individual thought and opinion relative to the teachings of Scripture? **They wanted to stop the very thing God desired**, namely that each individual should be free and independent of restraint, with his faith based, not on the views of others, not on the decisions of councils or presbyteries, nor on the decision of the Pope, nor on the things approved of the head of the English church, but on the Word of God.

The question came—how can we restrain these creatures? This was a quandary to all except the Roman and Episcopal churches,

since these both claimed the "Apostolic Succession," and that this **ordination** conferred upon their ministers special power and authority to preach and to administer "sacraments"; hence that no others had a right to do so, but were clerical pretenders.

But the **example** of the Church of England showed what a prestige she had **by reason of the voice of authority** with which she commanded a reverence for her clergy and her teachings. **This teaching by example was not lost**. The various denominations felt a **necessity** for some common standard of doctrine which would be supported and upheld by all of them, and thus give prestige to their teachings, and bring the **combined influence** of all against any further advance in knowledge or the development of any different phase of truth. Thus they would protect themselves by being enabled to say—**The combined opinion of all Protestants is against you**; therefore you are heretics, and therefore we will shun you and not call you brethren, but use all our influence against you.

This was done by the formation in 1846, of the "Evangelical Alliance." It was stated to be one of the objects of the Alliance (and we believe the **principal** one), to "promote between the different evangelical denominations an effective co-operation in the efforts to repel common enemies and dangers." Thus by their actions they were following Papacy's tactics, and **in that alliance they did make "The Image of the Beast."**

Now at this juncture let us have before us several important points: this "Image" was not another "**beast**". To be a "beast" in the sense of this symbol it would have to become an ecclesiastical power united **in and as a part of the civil government**; and such it has never been nor ever contemplated. Nor is there anything in the sacred description to indicate that it **developed** into a beast-government. It remained just as that term signified, an **image**—a thing that takes on an outward **form** and outline and presents an **appearance as a beast** exercising authority, but is **only an image**—not an ecclesiastical government. This Image answers completely to another familiar symbolism showing the relationship of Protestant systems to the ecclesiastical aspect associated with the beast. It is in the term, "mother of harlots"; the "mother" is the Roman church hierarchy, system, etc., while the Protestant "daughters" are called "harlots"—being the offspring of the mother, they too have curried favor with the world and various of the civil powers, though never becoming allied with or united to them as the "**mother**" has. Thus we have the **two symbolic pictures**, namely, the "mother" and "daughters," "harlots"; and, the Papal Beast

and the Image. So palpably evident is this Image a present realization, that it seems strange for anyone to be prophesying and warning concerning something that is **yet to develop** and appear on the scene—when the “Image” has been a matter of history for a century. In later times since the formation of the Evangelical Alliance, the forces of Protestantism have been further consolidated or solidified as represented in the term, “church federation”, or the “federation of churches”; the object of which has been to more effectually carry out the purposes of the Evangelical Alliance.

How **much** the Image resembles the Papal beast may be judged from the fact that Papacy acknowledged the Image—owned it as a creditable likeness—by the Pope’s sending “greetings” to the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance. Strange to say, the delegates to the Alliance had so far lost sight of the principles and doctrines which led to the **protests** against the Papal church (that it was the harlot church—Antichrist and Man of Sin, mentioned in Scripture), that they actually felt flattered by the Pontiff’s notice, instead of being alarmed, and examining **how** and **why** he who is “the [chief] Antichrist,” should feel **pleased** to greet them as fellows.

A prominent characteristic of the beast copied by the image is the honoring of the special class, the clergy, with special honors and titles. They are known as Revs., Divines, etc., but Jesus the Son of God said, “Ye call me Lord and Master, and ye say well, for so I am.” (John 13:13.) “Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren”. (Matt. 23:8.) These titles are **assumptions fashioned after those of Papacy**.

When the various denominations began their existence, more full of the Spirit of Christ, they claimed no such high sounding titles. The reformers were not known as Rev., D. D., etc., but as John Knox, Martin Luther, etc.; unpretentious, like Jesus and the Apostles, they were intent upon serving God and therefore became the servants (ministers), of the Church. **These had marks of God’s approval**, and as a result, their ministry was wonderfully blessed; but now the clergy are **far** from being servants, they are **lords**. They have itching ears, loving the approval of men. As pride and worldliness have come in, vital Godliness and power have gradually departed.

GIVING LIFE TO THE IMAGE

“And it was given him [the Two-horned beast] to give life to the Image of the beast.” It may not be known to many how much stress was laid upon the “Apostolic succession,” which was supposed to be a virtue transmitted

through hundreds of years of Papal corruption, by the laying on of hands of the bishops. This of course, was vested in the **Roman** church, and also in the **English** church, on account of its being at **first** rather a secession from Papacy than a reformation. To many minds, even among the clergy, there was a **veneration for that ceremony**, which neither Papacy nor the English church was averse to promoting.

In the introduction of Methodism into the United States much difficulty was experienced because of John Wesley’s superstition on this subject. He would not sanction the giving of the “Sacrament” to any except those **ordained** by the holy hands of an **Episcopal** Bishop. Thus up to 1784, Methodists could partake of the Sacraments, only from Episcopal ministers (ordained). The War of Independence tended to make the Methodist preachers independent, and the expedience of taking the authority was discussed. John Wesley heard of this, and applied to the English Church to have at least **one** Methodist minister ordained for the American church. Finally, in despair, he did the best he knew how to patch up an “Apostolic succession.” He, with two other ministers (none of them bishops), ordained Thomas Coke to the office of Bishop, and from this sprang the office of Bishop in the M. E. Church. This is merely mentioned to show the **superstition** on this subject, of even so great and good men as the Wesleys.

Now, none of these allied sects had the succession except the Episcopal, and **its recognition** of the Alliance (Image), gave it vitality—breath—authority, “that the Image of the beast should speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the Image of the beast, should be killed.”

HOW HAS THE IMAGE PERSECUTED THE SAINTS?

The worship and the killing are symbolic as well as the Image, and this signifies, that all who will not bow to the decrees of the Evangelical Alliance are esteemed as **heretics**, shunned and cast out by all who are orthodox. Thus in this Image of the beast or “federated churches,” the various sects have had a sort of backing, and each may act as the mouthpiece of the Image, in denouncing as heresy, all matter not included in this general creed, and in cutting off or ecclesiastically beheading those who differ.

The buying and selling are symbolic also, and unquestionably refer to **dealing in spiritual things**. The various Protestant churches constitute the marts of teaching, communion, exchanging views, etc. None may be recognized as having **any right to teach or preach** or baptize or administer the emblems of our Lord’s

death, except those licensed to do so by some orthodox member of the Image. And acts of such persons are not counted valid.

Now, living at this late hour of the Age and glancing back over the Harvest Era, we see distinctly the marks of this Beast-Image in connection with the Harvest work. When the due time came for the announcement of the Lord's Presence and related truths that make up the Harvest message, Brother Russell found all the doors of federated Christendom closed against him. The churches were logically the places where such important truths should find entrance and be given a hearing; but not so. The Image of the Beast, the alliance of churches, permitted no "buying or selling." Not only so, but the Image through the various agencies of the churches had power to "kill" (symbolically, the name, reputation), all true representatives of the truth. Thus the Lord's Servant and his associates who have given out the unadulterated message throughout the entire Harvest Era thus far have met with opposition, misrepresentation and vilification and had their names cast out as evil; thus fulfilling the symbolic description of **persecution by the Image**.

Though Brother Russell has thought there might be some more pronounced manifestation on the part of the Two-horned Beast imparting ordination to the clergy of Protestant orthodox churches, yet we see the prophetic description has really met fulfilment just as it stands. And in confirmation of this we quote Brother Russell's own statement published in the Watch Tower in June, 1908 under the caption,

"Giving Life to the Image"

"Many of our readers know that for years we have been waiting for a fulfilment of the symbolic statement about the Two-horned beast of Revelation 13:15. Our expectation has been that the Church of England, represented in the two-horned beast, would give life to the Protestant Image of the Papacy, namely the Protestant Evangelical Alliance. Just what we have been waiting for may yet occur—Episcopal ordination may be granted to the "clergy" of other denominations; but possibly the action of the Episcopal house of Bishops some months ago is all that we should expect. By opening Episcopal pulpits to other orthodox Protestant ministers it tacitly acknowledged their ordination and thus gave them sanction, acknowledgment, validity—"life." This at least is the view taken by some of their own "clergy," as the following will show:

"Four Episcopal Ministers Quit and Denounce the Open Pulpit."

"Dramatic scenes marked the departure of the Rev. William McGarvey and his three assistants from Saint Elizabeth's Episcopal

Church, Philadelphia. The four clergymen of the church decided they could no longer remain in the Episcopal Church when the 'open pulpit' canon was adopted."

In consideration of all the foregoing testimony, what room is there left to doubt that there has been a complete fulfilment of the Apocalyptic Image of the Papal beast; that the Two-horned English beast has, by its example, prestige, influence, and various manifestations, imparted "life" to the Protestant Orthodox Image—and the entire symbolic description substantially passed into history?

"LET HIM THAT HATH UNDERSTANDING, COUNT"

Our discussion of this chapter presenting the symbolisms of the Leopard-beast and its Image, and including the two-horned beast, would scarcely be complete without a concluding word on verse 18 which reads:

"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 three-score and six."

This verse has long held the very keen interest of expositors, and scarcely is there another utterance in the Apocalypse that has gathered about it more of the imaginative and speculative thought than this one. That it has in it the element of mystery is freely conceded by all, and such implication is obvious, in the words, "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast." "Wisdom" and "understanding" would be required in comprehending its meaning. Yet, as is often the case in discerning the significance of spiritual and symbolical terms, so in this instance men have failed to grasp the meaning purely because of its simplicity rather than because of its complexity.

Thus in the case before us, we have the seemingly mysterious statement, "It is the number of a man." Altogether in too much haste have students in general concluded that some individual man occupying an unusual eminence among men, must have been in the mind of the revealing angel in making such a statement. And since the Papal Beast is under discussion, many, in looking at this strange symbolism, have searched through various hieroglyphics and dead languages, hoping to locate the charming letters of some alphabet that would spell out the name of the Roman Pontiff or head of the Papal system. We do not believe that the solution to this mysterious text lies in that direction.

Early in his studies of the Apocalypse, Brother Russell was led to give this text careful and prayerful thought; however up to a certain time he said its meaning had not been

made clear to him, and his statement in that connection was as follows:

"Though I thought I had given a correct analysis of the symbols of the chapter [13], yet I could not claim it to be **wisdom**, since I could not interpret the number. I suggested, however, that if **ours** be the correct understanding of the **time** in which we are living—the "**Harvest**" of the Age—and if our general application of these symbols be correct, **the number should soon be understood**. I urged examination on the subject by all, for the Lord is sometimes pleased to give wisdom through the weakest of His children, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained praise.'"

Our brother then explains how, in conference with other earnest and devout Brethren, the significance of this mysterious symbolism was opened up to him; and we submit below, in substance, the exposition our dear Brother has left us:

Jesus, who gave this Revelation to us (Rev. 1:1), well knew that this symbol could not be understood **until about the present time**, for the reason that the **Image** was only made in 1846. Jesus also knew, of course, that **English** would be the language used by probably four-fifths of His earnest truth-seeking children, in the "time of the end." He knew, also, that not many **wise**, not many **great**, not many learned in all languages, would be of the chosen "little flock." Moreover, it was His custom to adapt His teachings to the "common people," and of this sort, His Jewels have been, from the twelve Apostles and since.

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

However, this statement under consideration seems to indicate that this "name" and "number" of the Beast are, in some sense, a **secret**, and that it will indicate **wisdom**, or a correct knowledge of the foregoing symbols, if we are able to solve the mystery of the name which is symbolically given as 666. "Here is wisdom. Let him who hath understanding [of the foregoing symbols, **prove it by a proper application of the following number**] compute the number of the Beast, for it is a man's number [or **reckoned after a human manner**]; and this number is 666."

Therefore it would appear that the number 666, should be open to the comprehension of all the earnest and **spiritually discerning** ones—**these** being the ones told to **count**—as much so as were the other symbolic numbers of Daniel and Revelation. Let us try, then to apply these figures in **English**. (This is the **first** application in English, known to the writer, but the reasonableness of it is obvious.)

First, then, the number is that of the (first) Leopard-Beast. Let us see whether it will apply to **some** of its names: That **system** which Paul calls the man of sin is the

Roman Catholic power = 666
123456 123456 123456

He is in Revelation called a Beast,
Roman Catholic "Beast" = 666

The system is also called the "woman" (Rev. 17:18),

Roman Catholic "woman" = 666

She calls herself the

"Holy Catholic Church" = 666

She is really and truly (Rev. 17:5),

"The Mother of Harlots" = 666

Thus we see that the number fits the Beast well.

The second (two-horned) Beast was anxious to have exactly the **same** name, and in fact it claimed to have the pre-eminent **right** to the name—

"Holy Catholic church," = 666

Other names by which it is often known, are,

"English State Church," = 666

"The Episcopal Church," = 666

"Episcopalian Church," = 666

"The Church of England," = 666

This application of the number, will doubtless appear to some, too **simple** to be accepted, but thus God ever deals with us—hiding truth under the veil of its own simplicity, so that it may appear to the Greek (worldly wise) foolishness, but unto them which **believe** (not to those who believe without evidence, but who believe on the strongest kind of evidence—the harmony of His Word), the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. 1:24.

The **Image** causes all who claim relationship, or whom it recognizes as having a **right** to buy or sell—teach—to have as a creed, that which shall **mark** them as having either "**the name**" of the Beast, or the "**number**" of his name—666. Many take the name and in their creeds recite, "I believe in the

Holy Catholic Church" = 666.

Among those who thus openly mark themselves in their forehead (**by their creeds**) are Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians and others. But others give a seeming support ("**mark**" in their "**hand**"), to the general principle by organizing under various sectarian names. After these are blended in the **Image** (and no one would be admitted to membership in the Evangelical Alliance, unless he be a member of some such **sect**), they all are collectively known as the

"Protestant Churches," = 666,
which we see contain the Beast's number.

Reviews of Apocalyptic Pictures of Revelation

Seventeen

IS THERE TO BE ANOTHER ERA OF PERSECUTION OF THE SAINTS?

Rev. 17:3, 8; 20:4: So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. . . . The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition. . . . And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.



HIS SECTION of the Apocalyptic imagery in which the words of our text are found, has ever commanded the keenest interest and most careful investigation on the part of devout prophetic students; particularly as it brings to view the development and progress during this Age, of certain world-powers that stand related to the career of the Christian Church down to the time of her glorification.

The "scarlet colored beast" of our text is virtually another phase or view of that which is presented in the vision recorded in chapter 13, as the beast that was seen to "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." Again, it is well to be reminded of the uniform view of reliable and accredited expositors that the "Dragon" of chapter 12, the "Leopard-beast" of chapter 13, and the "scarlet colored beast" of chapter 17, refer to different stages, phases, or pictures of the Roman government that bears rule until the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Though we do not have complete and connected expositions from Brother Russell's pen of this section of the Apocalypse, there are fragments scattered here and there through his writings by which we are able to gather the substance and thread of his understanding, which in the light of these latter-day developments seems well sustained. One of his statements quite in support of what we have said above reads as follows:

"The great red dragon represents the Pagan Roman Empire; the seven heads represent Rome's successive and distinctive forms of government, and the ten horns, the divisions of power; these being mentioned to identify it (Rome) as the same beast or government described by Daniel and elsewhere in Revelation [chaps. 13 and 17]."—Reprints p. 306.

That Brother Russell regarded the fourth beast of Daniel 7:7, as identical with those portrayed in Revelation 12, 13 and 17, there can be no doubt; for his express statement is that:

ANTICHRIST PICTURED IN THE SYMBOL

"Here, the Roman empire is shown; and the divisions of its power are shown in the ten horns, a horn being a symbol of power. The 'little horn' which arose among these, and which appropriated the power of three of them

[of the ten], to itself, and ruled among the others [the other seven], represents the small beginning and gradual rise to power of the Church of Rome, the Papal power or horn. As it rose in influence, three of the divisions [of the ten], horns or powers of the Roman Empire (the Heruli, the Eastern Exarchate and the Ostrogoths), were plucked out of the way to make room for its establishment as a civil power or horn. This last specially notable horn, Papacy, is remarkable for its eyes, representing intelligence, and for its mouth—its utterances, its claims, etc.

"After giving some details regarding this last or Roman beast, and especially of its peculiar or Papal horn, the Prophet states that judgment against this horn would be rendered, and it would begin to lose its dominion, which would be consumed by gradual process until the beast should be destroyed."—S. S. Vol. I, pp. 258, 259.

In this connection it will be of advantage to have in mind the further fact maintained by Brother Russell, namely, that St. Paul's portrayal of the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, the Mystery of Iniquity, etc. (2 Thess. 2:3-8), is definitely identified with the "beast" (and its "little horn" amongst the ten), of Daniel 7, and the beast of Revelation 13, as we read:

"The student of prophecy will find that the Man of Sin is distinctly noted throughout the sacred writings, not only by giving a clear description of his character, but also by showing the times and places of his beginning, prosperity and decline. This character is very forcibly delineated even in the names applied to it by the inspired writers. Paul calls it 'That Wicked One,' 'The Man of Sin,' 'The Mystery of Iniquity,' 'The Antichrist,' and 'The Son of Perdition;' the prophet Daniel calls it, 'The Abomination that maketh desolate' (Dan. 11:31; 12:11); and our Lord refers to the same character as 'The Abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet' (Matt. 24:15, and again as a 'Beast'. (Rev. 13:1-8.) This same character was also prefigured by a little horn, or power, out of a terrible beast that Daniel saw in his prophetic vision, which had eyes, and a mouth that spoke great things, and which prospered and made war with the Saints, and prevailed against them. (Dan. 7:8, 21.) John also saw and warned the Church against this character, saying, 'Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come.' He then advises

how to escape Antichrist's influence. (1 John 2:18-27.) The book of Revelation, too, is in **large part** a detailed symbolic prophecy concerning this same Antichrist."—S. S. Vol. 2, pp. 271, 272.

TEN HORNS—DIVISIONS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

On what general principle or basis, now we ask, have our convictions been founded concerning this "beast," which in the three distinctly different views or pictures (Rev. chapters 12, 13 and 17), is shown to have exactly seven heads (**and no more**), and ten horns? Answer: On **the facts of history themselves**, than which there can be no sounder or more reliable foundation for one's belief. **History alone must be the interpreter** of this mystical prophecy before us; fulfilments recorded in history do indeed supply the **key** or interpretation.

It must be acknowledged by all, that the chief concern about this entire symbolic picture centers in the "seven heads" and "ten horns" on the beast. We will give consideration first, to the horns: the various descriptions of the beast invariably present it with "**ten**" horns, which, while explained by the revealing messenger to be "ten kings," must be understood to signify "powers" or kingdoms, as already expressed in the quotations above from Brother Russell's pen: "**The ten horns, the divisions of power**; these being mentioned to identify it [Rome] as the **same** beast or government described by Daniel and elsewhere in Revelation." "The divisions of its [Rome's] power are shown in the **ten horns, the horn being a symbol of power.**"

If it be insisted that it cannot be clearly shown that **just so many as ten** divisions of the Roman dominion have occurred, either contemporaneously or successively in the past, we urge that the historian alone is the one to settle this question. It is a matter of common knowledge that when the empire known as Western Rome fell at the overthrow of Romulus Augustulus, the last of the Emperors, 476 A. D., it was "broken up into many independent sovereignties bound together into the one family of Latin Christendom by common submission to the Popes of Rome. The number of distinct kingdoms **has always been about ten**—at times exactly ten, sinking at intervals to eight or nine, rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but **averaging** on the whole, ten."

The differences in reckoning on the part of scholars, in naming these ten kingdoms, is the result of their calculations being made at different periods in history. The lists would of necessity have to be altered from time to time

on account of the short periods during which some of the kingdoms held sway. The Roman Catholic historian, Machiavel, shows a list of the kingdoms which occupied the territory of Western Rome when Romulus Augustulus was overthrown. His calculations are impressive inasmuch as being a Catholic writer, he was not influenced to **make up** the number ten, with the thought of meeting the requirements of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. The kingdoms listed by him are as follows: The Lombards, The Franks, The Burgundians, The Ostrogoths, The Visigoths, The Vandals, The Heruli, The Sueves, The Huns, and The Saxons—ten in all. Very logically has another suggested that, "Whatever was their number afterward, as some of those kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose, **they are still (in the prophecy), called the ten kings, from their first number.**"

THE VISION HAS BEEN FULFILLED AS FORETOLD

Now we look carefully into the statement of the revealing messenger as expressed in the Apocalypse 17:12, 13: "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. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast". Finding this passage located amongst others that bear upon the **closing** stages of the beast-power, there are those who understand this statement regarding these ten kings (as having received no power as yet), **as still to be fulfilled in the near future.** And some even claim that the ten kings are to be understood **as ten individual men, dictators** who appear on the European stage and rule a brief space with the beast and give it their support; and then later, hate the "harlot," and "burn her with fire". It would seem sufficient to say on this, that if we are to witness a fulfilment in the future, it would be unquestionably a **repetition.** The fact that these statements in verses twelve and thirteen are found along with others that pertain to **these last days**, argues nothing, inasmuch as it not infrequently occurs in the Apocalypse that a certain important description is found altogether **out of its chronological order**; and this evidently **intended** by the Spirit, to hide the real meaning until the due time.

In reading the word of the angel, that the ten horns or kings had not received any kingdom **as yet**, we are to bear in mind that (as another has expressed), "the text demands, that the **seeing** (by the Apostle), is **down the stream of time** to where the judgment is executed on the Papacy. [approximately, the close of the

eighteenth century], while the **explanation [by the messenger] is back at the date of the prophecy [near 96 A. D.]** Thus from this standpoint, all is harmony. In other words, **at the time** the angel was showing these things to John, those ten kings that he was permitted to see, **in symbolic vision** had really **not yet received** their kingdoms; and the angel is merely stating this fact, that this part of the vision had not yet **(in John's day)** met fulfilment.

Brother Russell not only did not support the idea of ten individual European dictators fulfilling this symbolic picture, but **he clearly taught to the contrary**, that it had **already passed** into history; as witness his words: "As, prior to the year 800, Papacy was rising supported by the Roman 'beast' (people) and by its 'horns' (powers), [the ten kingdoms] so since 1800 it has been cast off from temporal authority over kings and peoples, and has been torn and pillaged by those who formerly gave it support. (Rev. 17:16, 17.) Today, though still the recipient of honors, and still possessed of a wide influence over the consciences of the people, Papacy bemoans its **loss of everything** resembling temporal dominion."—S. S. Vol. II, pp. 354, 355.

THERE REMAINS BUT THE PREDICTED OVERTHROW

What Brother Russell has expressed we have indeed witnessed: These ten kingdoms **did receive power** through the Papal beast, and in an important sense **reigned** with her. It was following Papacy's exaltation in the sixth century, as the historians confirm, that these ten kingdoms became uniform in temper and purpose, accepting the Catholic faith; and by so doing gave their power and strength, **the support of their kingdoms**, to the Papacy for centuries.

As for the words, "One hour with the beast," this cannot be understood to be a chronological prediction, and is not intended to indicate a **specific period** of time, either long or short. We believe there is a more reliable rendering of this verse. The eminent Mr. Elliott, an accredited Greek scholar, also of the historical expositors, has thrown much light upon this passage, rendering it thus: "**The ten horns are ten kings which receive power at one and the same time with the beast.**" Quoting in part, Mr. Elliot's comment, it reads:

"As the point is one of considerable importance let me give a few examples from both the Old and New Testament (O. T. Septuagint): 'We dreamed both of us **in one and the same night**, he and I' (Gen. 41:11); 'We are all the sons of **one and the same man**' (Gen. 42:11); in the New Testament Phil. 2:2, 'of **one mind**,

or more literally, 'thinking the **one and same thing**'; Eph. 4:4, 5, where the sense is evidently, not that the Christians had each but one Lord, numerically, instead of the many lords of the heathen; or but one baptism, numerically, in contrast with the various baptisms of the Jews; but that they were united by the bond of **one and the same Lord, one and the same baptism, and one and the same hope**. And so, indeed, as the very next verse to the passage under consideration (Rev. 17:13), "These have **one mind**"; that is, **one and the same.**"

Thus we believe it will be seen in the light of the foregoing construction of the text, that there is perfect harmony with the **requirement** of the vision, that the "beast" under its Papal "head" and the "ten horns" (kingdoms), **reign contemporaneously**.

As for the words, "The ten horns [kingdoms] which thou sawest upon the beast shall hate the harlot and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire," the foregoing observations clearly indicate that this prediction has **already been largely fulfilled**. The facts of history well support this view, as we realize that these kingdoms that once gave their support to the Papal power have one after another "snapped their concordats and alliances till the woman's bit and bridle are utterly broken; those kingdoms turning upon her and stripping her of endowments, rejecting her authority and tearing away her territory." Very near the close of the eighteenth century, 1797, the French Ambassador wrote to Napoleon, "Discontent is at its height in the Papal States; the government will fall to pieces of itself. We are making it **consume by slow fire**. It will soon crumble into the dust." And we, in these later times have **witnessed much more** of this "eating her flesh and burning her with fire," significant of the repudiation of the rule of the Papal church hierarchy.

THE SEVEN "HEADS" OR FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

We consider now the "seven heads of the beast": As Brother Russell steadfastly maintained, in common with a long line of expositors, the "seven heads" seen on the beast in its several descriptions refer to **seven distinct** and successive **forms** of government ruling from the *City of Rome*; and they are **counted** as starting at the time when the Roman beast as a universal power, came into existence. Some say the date was about 31 B. C.; others claim near 51 B. C. It is of special importance to observe that at the time of Papacy's rise in the 6th Century A. D., four of the "heads" or forms of government had already appeared and passed into

history. Further, that the **Papacy**, during its long centuries of political rule in the City of Rome, constituted the **fifth** "head". This was that era explained in the quotation above when the "little horn," the Papacy, absorbed the power of the three horns that were plucked up, and held that power till 1799. Unquestionably, about that date, 1799, marked the **end** of the rule of the **fifth** head—the complete end of Papal civil and military control over the nations.

We glance for a moment at the situation surrounding Rome following 1799; history reveals that though at various intervals following that date, the country of Italy itself was in turmoil and a state of siege, and torn by warring states and provinces seeking ascendancy, the Papacy has held control of the Seven Hilled City, and **from the City of Rome it has ruled** what was known as the Papal States from 1799 to 1870. This we believe fulfils the picture of the sixth head of the beast.* This latter date, however, 1870, marked a definite change in the status of the Papacy, for at that time Rome was by force of arms, brought under the Kingdom of Italy and the **Papal states were seized**. King Victor Emmanuel made Rome his capital, thus leaving the Papacy entirely shorn of all civil power. Pope Pius shut himself in the Vatican, a self-proclaimed prisoner. The Popes remained in that status until 1929, when the Vatican treaty with Mussolini was signed.

THE FORETOLD HAS BEEN FULFILLED

Thus with the fall of the **sixth** head, there began the **seventh** head or form of government which has continued to rule from 1870 until late in the year 1943, when the United Nations invaded Italy and Victor Emmanuel fled from Rome and has remained away ever since, with no prospect of his return to power. Thus with the "seventh head" that had been ruling in the city of Rome, apparently fallen, the Roman beast is at the present time **"the beast without a head;"** which signifies it is in the process of death itself.

*Some "interpretations" hold that the British Empire is the sixth head of the beast. This claim, we think, is without real support, either from history or from any Apocalyptic statement. Let it be noted that it is a matter of common historic knowledge that Britain proved to be **one of the ten horns** or divisions of the Roman Empire following the fall of Imperial Rome in 476 A. D. It would be entirely inconsistent to think that the divine Spirit dictating the Apocalypse, would represent Britain as both a "horn" and also a "head" in this symbolic imagery. Besides, the symbolic picture of the City of Rome being the original capital of the great beast-empire, requires that all the **"heads" of the beast representing seven different forms of government, shall rule from the City of Rome**. Thus it would be incongruous to name Britain as one of the seven ruling heads of the Roman beast, while its location geographically, is in another section of the ancient Roman Empire.

Now we ask the reader to carefully consider the reading of verse 10, as follows: "And there are seven kings [forms of dominions]: five are fallen [up to the time to which the angel was referring, **at the end of the Papal political and military dominion** of 1260 years which was 1799], and one is [in power, the Papal power again ruling from Rome], and one is yet to come [the King Emmanuel Dynasty]; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."*

Thus we come to what is of absorbing interest to prophetic Watchers, particularly from the standpoint of the last or seventh head of the Roman beast having apparently fallen. It is in the observation which Brother Russell makes when he points out that, as Victor Emmanuel took possession of Rome in 1870, making it his capital, there commenced the **"seventh head" or form of government**. Brother Russell's words follow:

"To our understanding the present Italian government is the **seventh** head of the 'beast' (Rev. 17:9-11), which has continued a 'short space,' represented in the present monarch and his father Victor Emmanuel. According to this prophecy **Rome will never have another head—the eighth condition will be the beast without a head**—either a republic or anarchy. If a republic, we shall shortly expect anarchy, 'perdition.' All the signs of our time corroborate prophecy, and bid us lift up our heads and rejoice that our redemption is nigh."—Reprints p. 2062.

We here consider verse 8 of chapter 17, particularly the words which are offered by some, as proof that the Roman Papacy will rise to power again, which reads: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition."

We do not believe that these words at all support the idea of the return of the Papal beast to power. Rather, something is being **read into the text** that is not there. In view of what has been offered foregoing in this discussion, we do not think the words of verse 8, "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit", can have any such meaning as that of another exaltation to power. It has been conceded by expositors generally, that this verse and two or three others in chapter 17 closely related, have around them an air of mystery, placing them amongst the most difficult passages in the

*The reign of the King Emmanuel dynasty covering a period of some seventy years, while from one standpoint might not seem to be a "short space", yet from the standpoint of the long history of many centuries of the reign of the preceding six heads or forms of government, the revealing angel was quite consistent in speaking of it as a "short space" for the remaining seventh head.

Apocalypse; and this is indicated in the words, "Here is the mind that hath wisdom!"

IN WHAT SENSE HAS THE "BEAST" BEEN IN THE
BOTTOMLESS PIT?

It is not at all sufficient nor satisfactory to say that when the Papacy lost its ruling power over the Nations in 1799, or when it lost its hold upon all temporal power in 1870, that there, the Papal "Beast" went into the "Abyss", or "bottomless pit" condition. It was indeed shorn of its civil and military power; but viewing it as we must, from the standpoint of the movements of its "heads" and "horns," it has continued to be a mighty and influential ecclesiastical system, and very effectively but subtly reaching out its tendrils through many agencies and instrumentalities into the affairs of all the civilized nations. Again we emphasize the fact that all this aspect of the beast, presents the standpoint of the activities and movements of its heads and horns, etc.

We are better enabled to grasp the situation if we, in thought and imagination, take our position with John as he stands there observing this huge and most cruel-looking monster. Presumably there was a vast body that constituted an important feature of this beast on which were located the heads and horns. The entire animal commanded the most absorbing interest, wonder and amazement on the part of John. Naturally as he hears the angel's strange explanation, his mental eyes are glancing first at one section of the beast and then another. As his attention is held on the body of the beast, apart from the "heads" and "horns," it seems to move and struggle as if restrained, bound, imprisoned. A strange anomaly is this, causing John to say, "I wondered with great amazement." Hence, we are not surprised to find that in its various descriptions, sometimes what is said of the beast relates to the activities or doings of the horns and heads, and at other times the "body" of the beast is exclusively meant. What is the symbolic meaning of this vast huge body that stood before John's gaze? Obviously, the Empire itself, composed of nations and peoples, is inferred or represented in the "body" that supported those seven heads and ten horns. Plainly, it was the beast from the standpoint of the "body," that is meant in the statement, "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit."

Here again we rely upon the facts of history, which reveal that the beast, meaning the "body", nations and peoples making up the Empire, had for long centuries been in the "abyss" state, held in slavery, ignorance and superstition and downtrodden by priestcraft

and kingcraft (as represented in the aspect of the movements and behavior of the "heads" and "horns.") Thus the angel in his explanation to John is portraying how a time comes approximately at the close of the beast's career when the beast, meaning the Empire, the nations and peoples, arises and ascends out of the "abyss"—throws off the yoke of this long enslavement and oppression of centuries.

ASCENDS OUT OF BOTTOMLESS PIT AND GOETH
INTO PERDITION

For the best part of two centuries now, this has been going on, as the peoples who have supported the Beast-government have become enlightened, and as a result, have "ascended" out of this state of imprisonment, ignorance and superstition. This fact cannot be disputed, for the results are manifest to every intelligent reader in these days as he looks over the European countries and sees how one after another of the nations and peoples supporting the cruel "heads" and "horns" have broken the spell and come out of this bondage. This, then, is what we believe is the meaning of the mysterious statement in verse 8. Let us now read it from the standpoint of the above explanation:

"The beast [Papal System] that thou sawest was [in power through its various heads] and is not [now in power, the ruling heads having fallen]; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit [that is, the beast as represented in the "body," the peoples, nations and kingdoms supporting the heads, shall rise up out of the imprisoned state] and go into perdition [as a result of this enlightenment of the supporting peoples and nations, the beast as an empire and governing system, goes into complete destruction at the hands of the lawless and anarchistic elements; probably as a closing feature of this Day of vengeance]. And they that dwell on the earth [the unrenewed earthly minded of the professing church not understanding spiritual things] shall wonder [be amazed, confounded] whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world [who failed to gain membership in the elect Church] when they behold [see, observe] the beast that was [once in power] and is not [now in power] and yet is [still exists as an empire in the sense of nations and peoples, but powerless, as its heads and horns are fallen]".

As verse 11 is closely related to the foregoing, we submit the following:

"And the beast that was [once reigning] and is not [now in power] even he is the eighth [the "eighth" condition or state of the beast; all seven of the heads having fallen—the beast

without a head, ready for the last act] and is of the seven [it is still the same beast, empire, nations, peoples, etc., which once was "of" or once possessed the seven heads, that one after another had been in power and reigned] and goeth into perdition [complete destruction, as noted in verse 8]."*

We ask the reader to carefully consider that the facts and circumstances surrounding this mysterious "eighth," mentioned in verse 11, do not permit of the construction, "the eighth head," as claimed by some. Let it be borne in mind that in all the various descriptions of this beast and in all the explanations made by the revealing messenger, we discover no reference whatever to the beast having "eight heads." Seven is **invariably** the number recorded. Now if there were actually to come another head in **addition** to the seven that had appeared before, then unquestionably **eight** heads would have been **seen through all the symbolic descriptions** of the beast, and the sacred narrative would read, "The beast **having eight heads and ten horns.**" But the mysterious "eighth" is **conspicuous by its absence** in the various descriptions. Therefore the advocates of "clearer light" on this text, are without any real support in calling it the "eighth head". It seems then, a matter beyond question that the divine Spirit purposely made use of the term "eighth", in this connection to further conceal the real meaning until the due time. Now that the **foretold** is largely the **fulfilled**, the seven "heads" of the beast are seen to have appeared; and **history** claims them all, hence the designation, "the eighth", can mean nothing less than the **eighth condition or state**—the beast without a head, as expressed by Brother Russell. Whatever there may be in the near future, of a restoration of some kind of order or government in Italy, it would seem from all the signals about us, that it can be **of but temporary duration**, and apparently has no place in this symbolic description.

"SOULS THAT WERE BEHEADED"—THE ENTIRE CHURCH

A further word of explanation is here appended bearing upon the claims of some, that there is **still** an era of special persecution of the Saints, of the near future; the principal "proof" offered in support of this claim, is that of Revelation 20:4, which reads: "And I saw

*To the objection made by some that it were entirely unreasonable to think of this beast still existing on and moving about "without a head," our reply is, the facts show that the history of the beast is substantially **at an end**, and its movements and operations are **completed when this "eighth condition" is reached**; and therefore the obvious conclusion is that this "eighth" is the beast in its **dying** process.

the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." We are asked to believe that as John represented the Church of the last days, beholding the meaning of these visions, therefore it must be understood that these persons mentioned in verse 4 of chapter 20, as being "beheaded," etc., are exclusively the Saints of the Laodicean period and that the meaning is that the last remnant of these will suffer death by violence as a result of their faithfulness in giving their "final witness." We can only say in reply to this that such a construction of the text is **not in harmony with the context nor the facts** in this era of Laodicea. **None** of the Saints in the Laodicean period thus far have been persecuted unto **death** by any beast-power; and we cannot for one instant think that the few Saints who, according to this theory are to suffer violence in the future, can be the sum total of the class mentioned as "beheaded."

A brief but careful glance at this passage, we believe, reveals that this is another view of Christ's Second Presence and the assembling of all those who are to compose the Kingdom with Him; just as chapter 14 mentions the 144,000, the **complete** Church with Christ on Mount Zion. Thus the venerable John is telling us that he saw the Church of the entire Age exalted with Christ; all who had, in their consecration and **uncompromising devotion** to Christ, proved that they were **at heart, of the martyr spirit**—that they would gladly suffer violent death for Him if need be. The fact then, that the exact number of 144,000 is not mentioned here in chapter 20:4, is **no proof** that the Church **complete** is not comprehended in this description.

THE "SECOND PROPHESYING" ALSO PASSED INTO HISTORY

As for this final "witness" that the last members are supposed to give in the future, according to the "interpretation" of some, we are asked to accept as proof, the statement in Revelation 10:11, which reads, "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings." Our reply is that here we are confronted again with what we believe is a misapplication and misconstruction. And once more we rest upon the records of the historian, which show that this prediction about a "second prophesying" has also gone into history. In the first place, a careful examination of this vision recorded in chapter 10, shows that it is a portrayal of events and occurrences that came to pass **before** the Second Presence of Christ took place, inasmuch as it all happened **prior to the sound-**

ing of the seventh trumpet. Therefore as previously explained,* it is our conviction that chapter 10 is a portrayal of events beginning with the sixteenth century reformation and reaching down to the last days in which we live.

Let the reader note particularly what is said in verses 9 and 10 of this chapter, about the eating of the little book and the results of sweetness and bitterness that followed. Again we have Brother Russell's very illuminating statement with regard to this era, during which, as a result of the reformation and the letting in of wonderful light, there was the grand portion of truth given to the holy people and accepted by them with the results that are recorded. And thus out of this era of special enlightenment there has come the "second prophesying" as represented in the wide dissemination of the truth for the past century and a half in particular, which most certainly fulfils all the requirements of these verses in chapter 10. Brother Russell's words follow:

"This message concerning Michael's Kingdom, gradually opening from 1829 onward, is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation (chap. 10:2, 8-10), as a 'little book,' which the 'wise' of the 'holy people,' represented by John, are instructed to eat. And John's experience, as expressed in verse 10, is the experience of all who receive these truths. They bring wondrous sweetness: Oh, the blessedness! But the after effects are always more or less a blending of the bitterness of persecution with the sweetness. And the effect upon those who patiently endure to the end, is to purge, purify and refine, and thus to make the Bride of Christ ready for the marriage and exaltation, due toward the close of the Day of Preparation."—S. S. Vol. 3, p. 89.

THE "SECOND FLIGHT"—"COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE"

The "interpretation" we are examining, offers a further line of testimony concerning the second witnessing or "prophesying" which is supposed to be yet future. It is in the picture of the "second flight" of Elijah from Jezebel. (1 Kings 19:3.) This is construed to mean that as a result of the future second "prophesying" there will be another era of persecution and another "flight" of the Church, etc. Again it is sufficient to say that the historical facts of the last days confirm the conviction that the "second flight" has already taken place, just as the "second prophesying" is practically finished. As the daughter systems, together with the great "mother of harlots," constitute great Babylon, so the second prophesying has been more in connection with the "Protestant"

daughter systems; and the second persecution, in the main, has come from this section of Babylon. The Light for the last days, culminating in the opening up of the truth constituting the Harvest Message, has aroused again the persecuting spirit. True enough, no one has been literally put to death, but there has been the symbolic killing of the name, vilifying, misrepresentation, and "casting out of the synagogue," from all of which the true Saints have had to "flee" in obedience to Christ's command, "Come out of her, My people."

And now in this late hour, where is the real Elijah class on earth that has fled Babylon and its persecuting spirit? Answer: The antitypical Elijah has evidently gone from public view again, into the wilderness—the unknown, isolated condition. No one can locate the true Saints today as a body, in any concrete form, operating under any particular title or designation. The true Elijah class, the real Saints of this time, are generally unknown except as the ones, the twos and the threes isolated and scattered here and there amongst multitudes of professing "truth people," composed of many groups and factions. Ah yes, have we not indeed witnessed the second flight of the Elijah class!

"PROPHETIC" CRIES OF "PERSECUTIONS" TO COME, WITHOUT FOUNDATION

But a closing word regarding persecution: during the past several decades and at various intervals, the cry has gone forth from one leader, group, or another, concerning "dreadful persecutions" that were awaiting the faithful, to come from the civil powers dominated by some ecclesiastical system. Such "prophetic cries" have generally sprung from someone's personal idea or "interpretation" of some type, parable or symbolic description which, when sifted out, amounts to merely a guess. The years have sped onward and many changes have been ushered in, but still the "predicted" persecutions tarry. A considerable number have been "persecuted" not for "righteousness sake," but because of gross misconception of Christian duty and on account of fanatical application of the Word. How evident it is that our wily Adversary has so often used this cry of persecution as a means of diverting the attention of the Christian disciple from those great spiritual issues of holy behavior and walk with Christ, on the proper disposition of which hang all our blessed hopes of the Kingdom and the heavenly home!

We are making no predictions that there will or will not be further persecutions. We are not saying that some of the Lord's Saints may not suffer violent death at the hands of angry

*A postcard request will bring you a copy of WATCHERS explaining this chapter.

and lawless mobs in the future; even as it is doubtless true that some faithful brethren have suffered death from the terrible violence of war that has spread over the European and other countries in these last years. But we know of no specific prophecy **now** pointing to another era of **particular and special persecution** of the remnant Church on earth. However, the Apostle's words apply: "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

Having briefly but surely traced the fulfillment of these strange symbolic prophecies

through the centuries and to our day, we believe there is every reason for the conviction that we are brought close to the margin of the long predicted overthrow, and the "going into perdition" of the great antichristian system. It is not the province of any, at this time to prophesy, nor to be wise above what is written, but it is the blessed privilege of the "wise virgins" to be awake and to keep their lamps trimmed and burning **brightly** at this solemn hour when they are "going out to meet the Bridegroom".

Voices of Comfort

Dear Brother Hoskins:

After five years of forced interruption of our communion, we write to you at once after that our country has been liberated from the oppression of a cruel enemy. We let you know that both Sister and myself have come through this hard time and are happy in the Lord. Our lives have been saved by the goodness of our God and His Fatherly help, for which we are greatly thankful. We have had many tokens of His goodness, though we were hard put to it as seen from physical standpoint. We have not heard of you since that dreadful happening of the domination of the European peoples by Fascism. We are so glad that we are liberated by the mighty and courageous allied forces and that we now may rejoice in our liberty again. The soldiers are welcomed here with great enthusiasm.

We hope that you are quite well and in health, for which confirmation we look forward in eagerness. How are matters going on over there and what about WATCHERS OF THE MORNING? Has your Periodical continued all the time, and what are you thinking of the prospects? These are all questions we are anxious to learn more about. We hope soon to receive a writing from you with the news. Our longing is to be anew amongst the readers and students of WATCHERS again. Your answer, or that of one of the brethren with whom you are connected to further the work, is looked for with great desire.

In the meantime we are, with hearty Christian greetings to yourself and the other brethren of the household of faith,

Your Brother and Sister in the Lord,
G. Van Halewijn—Holland.

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Greetings!

For weeks, I've been going to write again to you, Brother dear, to thank you for the rich food being served by WATCHERS. Not only do I so enjoy the food, but it nourishes my soul against the strain I've been having for so long, and I do thank God that, even up to this late hour, He has raised up under-shepherds to look to our souls and "travail" till Christ be formed in us. At times, I've felt very bowed down with sorrow, strain, anxiety and trial; and on my way in the train to my work in the city, I take a WATCHERS to read, and invariably—yes, directed by the Spirit, I am sure I find

the comfort and counsel I so need. You so impress us with the value of the heavenly prize that we can't help but feel the same as Paul expresses, in that all we suffer here is "not worthy to be compared to the glory" awaiting us. You remember, Brother dear, when at first you got the WATCHERS out, I wrote and even suggested that there were quite enough publications without yours, and I did not welcome yours, but, Brother, I think you know how sorry I was later, for having hurt your feelings on this score; further, "I thank my God upon every remembrance" of your faithfulness, and your ministry has been to my heavenly benefit indeed.

I read a portion of one of your articles the other day and lifted up my heart in prayer to God as I said to the Father, that article was written specially for me. Your articles make things so real that we visualize the company with the Master. I know, Brother dear, in your own loneliness, you have been drawn even closer to the God of all comfort and seek to comfort us with the love wherewith you have been comforted. There's no such thing as "milk and water" in your articles, but the "pure milk and strong meat of the Word." You have been through sorrow and trial, and remind me so of those early fathers who stood to comfort and lead the tired, tender feet of others. I can't speak of any one article, but I'm sure as you realize your sacred ministry as you do, you give such survey of every article so that it edifies, illuminates, comforts and directs by the Spirit's co-operation.

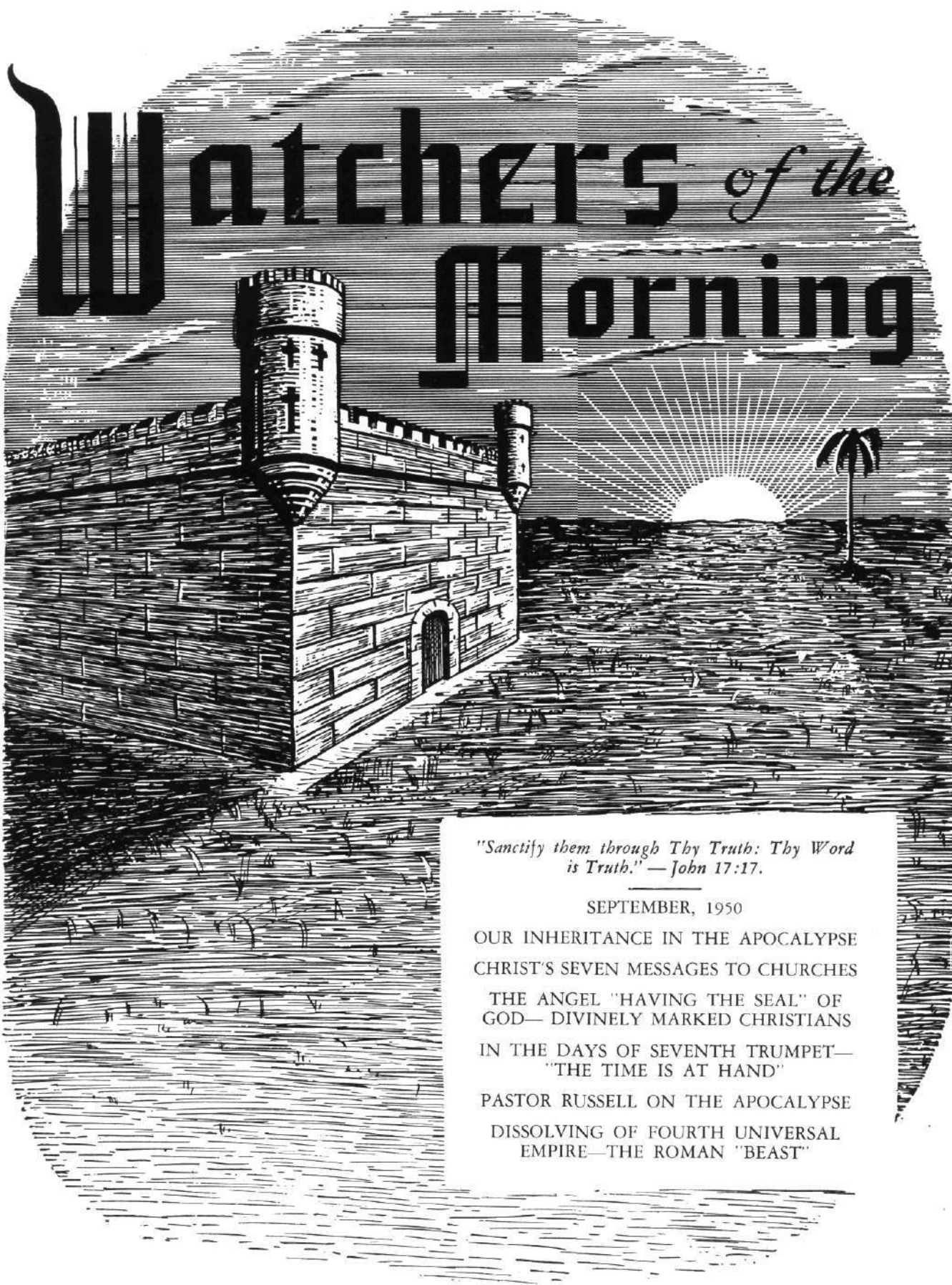
These are very severe times, but still wonderful it is, to be standing just *outside* the door that closes six thousand years of evil—doomed long ago to close and give place to the opening door of the long-dreamed-of Golden Age of prophecy, and the long-prayed-for, "Thy Kingdom Come" on earth.

Today, I visited an old Brother of 85 and later an aged Sister of 94. Yes, they both are earth-weary. Brother Goxe can never cease thanking God for deliverance from darkness (of Rome) into His marvelous light as he expresses himself.

May you continue to dwell in the shadow of the Most High, Brother dear, to the end of your ministry, and then receive the "Well done, good and faithful servant," is the sincere wish of,

Your Sister in Jesus,

N. O.—Australia.



Watchers of the Morning

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth." — John 17:17.

SEPTEMBER, 1950

OUR INHERITANCE IN THE APOCALYPSE
CHRIST'S SEVEN MESSAGES TO CHURCHES
THE ANGEL "HAVING THE SEAL" OF
GOD— DIVINELY MARKED CHRISTIANS
IN THE DAYS OF SEVENTH TRUMPET—
"THE TIME IS AT HAND"
PASTOR RUSSELL ON THE APOCALYPSE
DISSOLVING OF FOURTH UNIVERSAL
EMPIRE—THE ROMAN "BEAST"

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"

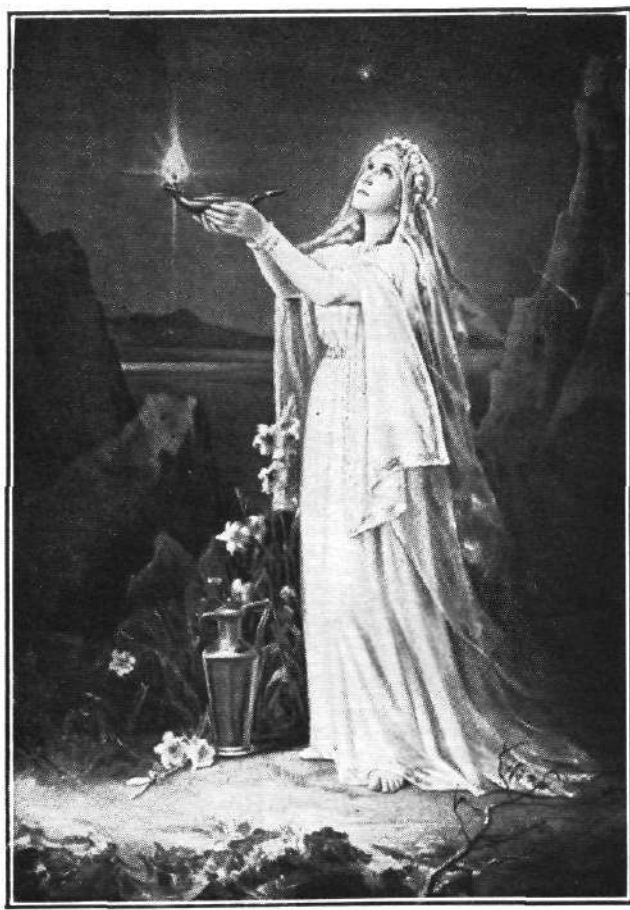
I have espoused you for one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

For we are members of His body.

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.—

2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:30-32



Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne. . . .

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

—Rev. 3:20-22.

“Looking for that Blessed Hope.”

Watchers of the Morning

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Under the Management and Editorship of

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This Journal is regarded as a Stewardship to be used only in the Divine service. Hence a responsibility to the Master is recognized for the conduct of this ministry, which cannot and will not be cast aside. Our decisions as to what shall or shall not be published in these columns must be according to our judgment of the Lord's good pleasure, the teachings of His Word for the upbuilding of His people in grace and knowledge in this day of His Presence. However, helpful suggestions and constructive criticism will be warmly welcomed. The reader is urged to prove all utterances by the infallible Word of God.

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THIS ISSUE IS A SPECIAL NUMBER TREATING PORTIONS OF THE APOCALYPSE

This issue of WATCHERS OF THE MORNING, a double number of thirty-two pages, is intended to cover the two months of September and October. Hence, the next regular issue of this Journal will be that of November. As previously stated in the August number of WATCHERS, this double number is devoted exclusively to the Revelation visions, believing that the devout and prayerful study of the Apocalyptic revealings cannot fail of yielding a rich blessing, Rev. 1:3—especially, as it is realized that these days in which we live are filled with signals and manifestations of vast importance to all faithful Watchers. Similar to the group of expositions published in the double number of five years ago, the themes dealt with in this issue have been presented in part, along through recent years; and judging from the encouraging response already received, we are assured that it will be of special advantage and convenience now to have these Apocalyptic expositions all together under one cover. Hence, it is our hope that this issue will fulfil the purpose desired at this time, and that the blessing of God may richly accompany our mutual efforts to comfort one another with these messages of faith and hope. Our subscribers may, without charge, order extra copies to pass on (with careful discretion) to others whom they believe may be interested, and helped by the contents of this issue.

We regret that we will have no space in this issue for the letters under the heading, “Voices of Comfort.”



"GOD SHALL HELP HER IN THE DAWNING OF HER MORNING"

Our Inheritance In The Apocalypse

Rev. 1:1-3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

IT WAS upon "that disciple whom Jesus loved," that there was bestowed the singular distinction of hearing the familiar voice of the living Redeemer, "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." The Apostle John had spent long years in faithful ministry; his race-course was nearly run. He was, at the time of receiving the Revelation, an exile on the barren Isle of Patmos, "For [because of faithfulness to] the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." More than sixty eventful years had elapsed since the ascension of his blessed Lord. During that long period he had looked back to that sublime and glorious event, as the closing incident in his Master's earthly history, and often had retraced in thought, every step of his last walk with the risen Savior over the Mount of Olives, to the sloping fields above the little village of Bethany with the deep Jordan Valley and the blue far-off hills of Moab full in view. On countless occasions he had recalled *his Lord's last charge, and parting blessing*, and gazed in thought on His ascending form, and on the white-robed angels whose words directed the minds of the bereaved disciples from the sorrowing contemplation of their Lord's departure, to the glad anticipation of His return, saying, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven."

"IF I WILL THAT HE TARRY TILL I COME"

But when was it to be—that promised return? Was it to take place in the lifetime of the disciple whom Jesus loved? Had not the Master said concerning that disciple when speaking to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."? Peter had died, following his Lord to the cross. Was he, John, to escape death

and remain to the Second Advent? Yet he remembered that Jesus had *not* promised he should not die, but had only said, "If I will that he tarry till I come." What could that mean? The strange mysterious sentence *lived and lingered* in his thoughts; he ends his Gospel narrative with it. Was he to behold before his departure, some glorious *prefiguration of his Lord's return*, like the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration; *some vision, unveiling the secrets of the future* more fully than they had been foreshadowed by that memorable event?

No such revelation had been given, and he was now grown old; a venerable, patriarchal man, gentle and gracious of mien; the last survivor of the Apostles. He had shared the promised baptism of Pentecost; had witnessed the marvelous growth of the Christian Church; had seen the fall of Jerusalem; the destruction of its glorious temple, of which *now* not one stone was left standing upon another; had witnessed the accomplishment of those dreadful judgments on the Jewish nation, in anticipation of which his Master's tears had fallen on the Mount of Olives, bedewing the palm branches spread by the multitudes beneath His feet. He had seen, too, the preliminary fulfilment of what *seemed to be* the signs of the approach of the Second Advent which his Master had predicted; the earthquakes, famines, pestilences, wars, and persecutions, the appearance of false prophets, and false Christs, of fearful signs and wonders in Heaven. The idolatrous ensigns of the desolating Roman power had been planted within the precincts of the Holy City. The triumphal arch of Titus had been reared in Rome, the mighty metropolis of the world, to commemorate Jerusalem's fall; that arch on which were represented in striking sculpture the sacred vessels of the sanctuary carried in triumph by heathen hands; the seven-branched golden candlestick, the table of the shewbread, and the book of the law.

Jerusalem, *as it had been*, was no more. The Jewish Dispensation, founded ages before by those supernatural revelations granted to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai had come to an end. The announcement of the Kingdom of Heaven had taken its place—growing up silently as a grain of mustard seed, from small and despised beginnings to *far-reaching development*, including both true and nominal Christians. From the upper chamber of Jerusalem it had spread through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and across the Roman Empire, in which there was scarce a city of importance which had not a Christian Church. It had reached Antioch and Alexandria, Crete and Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica, Ephesus and Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, Athena and Rome; it had spread throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Egypt, and even as far as the western confines of Spain, and the distant isles of Britain; and this *in spite of the most violent opposition* and persecution from Jews and Gentiles.

AT LAST JOHN WITNESSED WHAT MAY
HAVE BEEN HIS LIFE-LONG DESIRE

And with the lapse of time, *changes for the worse* had taken place in many Christian Churches; gross corruptions of the pure doctrines of the Gospel had appeared. Self-righteous legalism and Judaic ritualism on the one hand, and false philosophy, the boasted wisdom of the Gnostics on the other, had perverted the minds of many, corrupting them from the simplicity which is in Christ. Sects had arisen in the Church which denied the Divine origin of Christ, and the atoning character of His death. *Tares had been sown by the enemy among the wheat*, and were already flourishing on every side. It appeared as though the Antichrist so long before foretold by Daniel, and so emphatically predicted by Paul, might speedily come; springing up as a horn or ruler among the kings of the divided Roman Empire, and exalting himself as an overseer in the Christian Church, in whose symbolical temple it was foretold he would sit supreme, clothed with Divine honors and prerogatives, and deceiving many.

These things were to be, and the times must have seemed dark enough to John to indicate that they might even *then* be at hand. Daniel had revealed in mystical language the time of the manifestation of this antichristian power, and the period of its continuance. *But what was the exact meaning of those several "Times" of Daniel?* Were they literal days which were meant, or were the days he spoke of, symbolical of larger periods? Were these revelations in Daniel the *last* to be granted on the subject, or *was more light to shine forth*

through communications of the truth yet to be given to the Church? Thoughts and questions such as these may well have occupied the mind of the aged John in the lonely hours of his banishment.

We can conceive him standing on the rocky height of some Patmos headland watching the western sun descending over the blue waters of the Aegean Sea, making a broad pathway of golden light on the waves, till they shone like "a sea of glass mingled with fire"; or, beholding the sunrise in the glowing East over the Asiatic shores, transporting his thoughts to the Advent of the "morning without clouds," yet to shine upon the world. Or, when he watched the host of Heaven come forth by night and fill the glittering canopy above the lonely isle, while the "many mansions" of which his Master had spoken came to his mind and the angel hosts who do His bidding, can we not conceive him longing *that one of these glorious beings might be sent to him, as of old, one had been sent to Daniel*, the man "greatly beloved," to impart some of that knowledge of the future, enjoyed in higher and holier realms? We know not what he thought or desired, *but we know what God granted* to the aged and privileged Apostle.

It was on one Lord's day of his sojourn in Patmos, the day commemorating Christ's triumphant resurrection, that, being alone, and "in the Spirit," or wrapt in ecstasy from the outward world, and oblivious of its presence, he suddenly heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet, speaking to him such words as mortal ear had never heard before:

"I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE FIRST AND THE LAST: AND WHAT THOU SEEST, WRITE IN A BOOK, AND SEND IT UNTO THE SEVEN CHURCHES WHICH ARE IN ASIA; UNTO EPHEBUS, AND UNTO SMYRNA, AND UNTO PERGAMOS, AND UNTO THYATIRA, AND UNTO SARDIS, AND UNTO PHILADELPHIA, AND UNTO LAODICEA."

And turning in the direction of the Voice, he saw seven golden candlesticks; and standing in their midst, One whom he recognized as "like unto the Son of Man"; *but oh how changed from the Christ on whom he had so often looked in Galilee*, and on whose bosom he had leaned that fateful night in the upper chamber at Jerusalem! For every trace of humiliation was gone. No tears upon the cheek, no thorns upon the brow, He stood there transfigured and glorified; His face as the noonday sun shining in its strength; His garments white and glittering, and girt at the waist with a golden girdle; the hair of His head white with the snows of dateless years, as the "Ancient of days" beheld by Daniel; His eyes like a flame of fire; needing no exterior light to aid their vision, but penetrat-

ing the secrets of the soul with holy searching gaze; His feet as burning brass, strong as the pillars of Heaven, and glowing as though they burned in a furnace; His voice as the mighty and majestic sound of waters; seven stars glittered in His right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword, the evident symbol of the Word of God, living and powerful, and piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, proceeded from His lips.*

At this sudden and marvelous appearance of the glorified Redeemer, all strength forsook the aged Apostle. Falling at the feet of the Son of God he lay there as one dead. Then touching his prostrate form with His right hand, the Lord strengthened him, saying in His own well-remembered voice,

"FEAR NOT; I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST; I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD, AND BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE, AMEN; AND HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH AND OF HADES."

And now aroused to wondering attention, the aged Apostle received from the lips of Christ the Divine commission to communicate to the seven Churches of Asia, representing symbolically the entire Christian Church throughout the Age, a faithful record of all that he had seen, and was yet to behold:

"WRITE THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN, AND THE THINGS WHICH ARE, AND THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER."

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

How obvious it is that Divine foreknowledge, foreseeing that the course of the Church was to be one of many hazards, that *her pathway was to lie through many dangers, afflictive sorrows and persecutions*, provided an additional aid and powerful support for the Church—a special luminary revealing the future still further and *disclosing things to come*. Hence some sixty years after the risen Lord had, for forty days given those indisputable proofs of His Resurrection, that same risen Christ gave one more—a *final manifestation*. There is cause indeed for the profoundest thanksgiving that the Father of mercies designed that the final Epistle to the Church should be this powerful symbolic Proph-

* We are not to regard John's description as a portrait of our Lord in glory. That description was primarily of symbolic and prophetic significance. The Savior will not look as here described when the Saints see Him *as He is*, and behold His glory. As noted above, this cryptical picture, has precious lessons for us, more useful than an attempt to describe to our minds the appearance of our Lord as a spirit being, "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto," and which none can appreciate until "changed" and made like Him, and "see Him as He is."

ecy known as the Apocalypse, or "Unveiling." Of the deepest significance are the opening words of the marvelous Disclosure: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants *things which must shortly be done*." Further, the Savior's own words are of no less solemn significance: "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things *in the Churches*." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith *unto the Churches*."—Rev. 1:1; 22:16; 2:7.

Realizing now, our place in the last Era of the Church's sojourn on earth, when numerous prophecies are being fulfilled, it is interesting to observe that there are questions on the minds of many concerning *the purpose and application* of the Apocalypse, somewhat as follows:

Question 1. Was not the *fulfilment* of the prophetic symbols of the Revelation to be *exclusively* in the last days of this Age, and therefore were not its illuminating messages intended especially for the *present time*?

Question 2. Should we not look for complete illumination of the *entire* Apocalypse for the benefit of the Church *now*?

Question 3. Since it is evident that there has gathered about the book of Revelation a vast number of confusing and conflicting ideas, applications and interpretations, should we not at this juncture, expect the Lord to use some one person or agency to supply a complete exposition of the Apocalypse?

Since there are important issues involved in these questions, it cannot fail to be to our spiritual edification and profit to humbly and soberly review them. But let it be with special care and in a *prayerful* spirit that we consider these inquiries. We submit our answers in the order that the questions are stated above:

Answer to Question 1. The fulfilment could not be *exclusively* in the *end* of this Age inasmuch as the messages were sent to *all of the seven churches*. As we have just noted, the venerable John was instructed to send the Apocalyptic letters not merely to Laodicea, the last of the seven Churches, but to *each of the preceding six Churches* also—thus signifying that the symbolic descriptions were *for the entire Church*, and would be gradually unfolded during the seven Eras; which meant that *Time alone* would be the great *revealer* of the sacred mysteries—each Era would witness a *measure* of the fulfilment.

Answer to Question 2. Considering that the Revelation is substantially a symbolic *panorama* of the Church's history and experience in *advance*, it becomes evident, that with the march of Time, the visions of this Prophecy have *gradually unfolded* as they have passed into history. Therefore, there need

be no question at all, that, living as we are in the last of the seven, the Laodicean Era, the entire volume of this blessed Prophecy has become more illuminated than in any previous time—seeing that its fulfilment has been *accumulative* with the passing of each of the seven Eras. More than this, it becomes evident, that to this *last* Era of the Church, there belong events and transactions vastly more important and of sublimer character than to any previous period. *It is the Era of our Lord's Second Presence.* To Laodicea, Christ says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock"—meaning, "I am present!" Accordingly, this Era marks the gathering and glorification of the faithful Church, as well as denotes the time of the overthrow of Satan's empire and the establishment of the sovereignty of Christ throughout the earth, 'midst a time of unprecedented trouble—the darkest hour in all the annals of Man. Hence, logically, there is the greater light reflected on the Revelation *as a whole, at this time.* But it would be a mistake to assume that there must *now* be a *complete* unfolding of the *entire* Apocalypse in detail, seeing that the symbolic visions carry us on through the close of the Church's earthly career and including the entire Millennial reign of the Kingdom of God—to the completion of the great redemptive purpose. Unquestionably, there are details of some of the visions *yet to be fulfilled* which cannot be fully understood until we approach nearer to them, or until they pass into history.

CONCERNING A SO-CALLED "SEVENTH VOLUME"

Answer to Question 3. That there has gathered about the Revelation a vast number of confusing and conflicting ideas, many wild and uncertain interpretations, there can be no question; and this has accordingly, brought the closing Book of the Bible into much disrepute; for many have become discouraged and *have laid aside this grand Oracle*, supposing its mysteries beyond comprehension. But even this has been permitted by a wise Providence *as a test of the faith of the true Saints* with regard to this very sanctifying portion of God's Word. However, there appears to be no real logic or reason for the tradition that seems to have gained credence amongst some of the brethren, namely, that the Lord will yet single out the Book of Revelation for a complete illumination, and choose some particular agency to unfold all its mysteries while the Church is still in the flesh.

As bearing upon this idea of a special exposition of the Apocalypse, it is generally known that our venerable Brother, Pastor Russell, early in his ministry, in looking forward to publishing a thor-

ough exposition of spiritual truth for the last days, logically arranged the entire subject-matter in seven divisions and indicated the seventh would be an exposition of Revelation. He was enabled in the Lord's Providence to cover expositions of the first six divisions, which were published in the form of the Six Volumes of Scripture Studies. His earthly pilgrimage, however, ended without seeing the original idea completed—*no volume on the Apocalypse having appeared* nor any manuscript left by him in preparation for such a volume.

MANY CONFUSING EXPOSITIONS OF LAST DAYS

What now must be the reasonable reaction with regard to this situation? Shall we insist that a particular and special exposition of the Apocalypse must *still* be looked for? Ah, it is of such situations as this, that the Adversary so often steps in and takes advantage; and this is what has evidently happened in this case.*

During the years since Pastor Russell finished his earthly course, a multiplicity of so-called expositions of the Apocalypse, contradictory and in conflict with each other, have appeared on the scene, coming from many quarters—expositions that, instead of clarifying the issue and really expounding the Revelation, have *left the entire subject still more confused.* For indeed, if any section of the Divine Oracles

* Concerning the volume that was widely circulated within a few months after Pastor Russell's death, entitled "Pastor Russell's Posthumous Seventh Volume," "The Finished Mystery," etc., we are asked: Is not this book a useful exposition in the study of the Apocalypse, considering that it contains a number of Brother Russell's interpretations? Our answer is, *Positively no!* The book was secretly issued, and *solely* on the word of the president of the Watch Tower Society *entirely apart from its managing board of trustees* as constituted by Pastor Russell, and contrary to their wishes and approval. The book sailed under false colors. It was not Pastor Russell's posthumous work in any sense. The "Finished Mystery" was primarily distributed by designing men who made it their business to corrupt the Word of God, commencing at Pastor Russell's death.

We regard this so-called "Finished Mystery" as emphatically a pseudo or false production. The fact that some of Pastor Russell's interpretations were given in the book, does not constitute it worthy of recognition, any more than a commentary on "Christian Science" or "Catholicism," which contain many Scripture references, are to be recommended as proper commentaries for use in the study of the Word of God. Satan's most masterly strategy is to *mix truth with error.* St. Paul tells us that Satan *appears as an angel of light.* (See 2 Cor. 11: 13-15.) Anything and everything that Pastor Russell wrote on Revelation may be located by consulting the helps contained in the Watch Tower Bible that Pastor Russell published, and in the index of the Reprints.

has been more grievously assaulted than another, it is that of the Apocalypse; and *that*, by many of its *professed* friends whose vain attempts to expound its mysteries have resulted in confusion, worse confounded. No wonder the Spirit of God in dictating the mysterious Prophecy, foreseeing this evil, issued this solemn warning,

"FOR I TESTIFY UNTO EVERY MAN THAT HEARETH THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK, IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD UNTO THESE THINGS, GOD SHALL ADD UNTO HIM THE PLAGUES THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: AND IF ANY MAN SHALL TAKE AWAY FROM THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE."—REV. 22:18, 19.

What, then, is the reasonable conclusion of this whole matter?—Shall we say it is a sealed Book, that it has not been expounded, and that nothing can be known of its mysteries? Ah, no! Rather will we hearken to its opening benediction pronounced on those who search out its treasures:

"BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH AND THEY THAT HEAR THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY, AND KEEP THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN THEREIN: FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND."

Thus with humbleness of mind, and with singleness of purpose *the true disciple* today may derive rich spiritual profit from the study of the Apocalypse, especially as its closing warning is, "*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this Book.*" As the introductory portion of the Book so clearly shows, its *mission* was intended to be that of comforting, sustaining and illuminating the pathway of the Church from the beginning of the Age.

APOCALYPSE, PROPHETIC STORY OF TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE CHURCH

It is evident beyond question that the Apocalypse as a whole, *was sent to Christian Churches*; that it was prefaced by letters addressed to these Churches; that its leading prophetic features had *their parallels* in these prefatory letters; that the warnings and promises in the letters related to things set forth more fully in the succeeding visions of the prophecy; that the Saints of the *prophetic* portion of the book were those who kept "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12), and that its martyrs were "the martyrs of Jesus." (Rev. 17:6.) Hence a *Christian* meaning was attached by the early Church to the entire Book. It was regarded as the prophetic story of the trials and triumphs in the Church of Christ in each of the seven successive stages or epochs.

To those who constituted Christ's Church in the first three centuries, the fulfilment of these mysterious visions *had already begun*, for they immediately saw on opening the Book that it was not to some distant period in the Church's history *merely*, that the Prophecy related, but it included also those occurrences and transactions *that were even then, nineteen centuries ago, "at hand"*—in the sense of marking the *early stages* of the fulfilment. The inspired asseverations contained in the introductory words, as we have seen, *determine* this primitive interpretation—"Things which must shortly be done;" "*For the time is at hand.*"

This symbolic Prophecy given to the aged Apostle (as indeed all prophecies), is but the recorded course of events and the behavior of men *in advance*, and *history is the revealer*, the interpreter of what has been foretold in those prophetic announcements. Seeing this to be the Divine rule of interpreting prophecy, one cannot but be weary with the speculations of some, as to *imaginary future* fulfilment of prophecies which *have been plainly accomplished before our eyes in the past*; prophecies under whose accomplishments of the events of history, the structure of the great Reformation of the 16th Century was built; on the fact of whose accomplishment in *their* days the confessors of Christ stood, and the martyrs suffered.

History has ever been the interpreter of prophecy. It was so notably in New Testament times, for the sufferings and glories of our Lord, foretold in the Old Testament, remained uncomprehended until their meaning was revealed by the *events of history*. Similarly the predictions concerning the great Apostasy, or "falling away" from the faith and practice of Apostolic times which has taken place in the Christian Church, resulting in the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, were not comprehended *till explained by historical events*. And thus has it been all along. From the beginning of the world to the present day, *Time* has ever been the *chief* interpreter of prophecy. *For prophecy is history written in advance*. As the ages roll by, history practically takes the place of prophecy, the foretold becoming the fulfilled.

Now while it is true as all know, that Pastor Russell did not write an exposition of the Revelation in the sense of a specific "Seventh Volume," yet it would be *far from the truth* to say that because he did not publish such a volume, therefore he did not understand the Apocalypse and did not expound its mysterious symbols. For it is evident beyond question that in his voluminous writings presenting the Harvest Message, he made a very exhaustive study of the Revelation *as a whole*. Indeed in carrying out his original design to the extent of publish-

ing the Truth in several sections, the six divisions or volumes of the Scripture Studies and many Watch Tower expositions, he gave to the Church a vast amount of exposition of various portions of the Apocalypse; by the aid of which *one can readily trace throughout the Book, the golden thread of prophetic truth*, and therefore is enabled to grasp very largely the import of the Revelation in its entirety.

PASTOR RUSSELL OF THE HISTORICAL EXPOSITORS
OF THE APOCALYPSE

Moreover, it is of no little moment and satisfaction in this connection, to observe that our beloved Pastor Russell *saw in the history* of the past nineteen centuries *the fulfilment* of a large portion of the Revelation, and recognized the Apocalypse as *the story told in advance* in symbolic language, of the events of these centuries. Thus our dear Brother was treading in the steps of the greater part of expositors of the Revelation, from the earliest times of this Age to our day: for they were of that noble army of confessors and martyrs who suffered under both Pagan and Papal Rome—men of profound piety and spirituality. Note for instance, Brother Russell's statement indicating his attitude towards the Apocalypse:


"During the Christian Age, some of the Saints sought to understand the Church's future by examining this symbolic Book, and doubtless *all who*

read and understood even a part of its teachings *were blessed* as promised. (Rev. 1:3.) The Book kept opening up to such, and in the days of the Reformation, was an important aid to Luther in deciding that the Papacy, of which he was a conscientious minister, *was indeed the 'Antichrist'* mentioned by the Apostle, the history of which we now see fills so large a part of that Prophecy—[the Apocalypse]."

In view of these facts and deductions, there appears to be no support whatever for the idea vigorously maintained in certain quarters, that some one is going to present us with an exposition that will explain the whole of the Apocalypse in detail. Several of *such* explanations have already appeared during the past thirty-three years which for the most part are entirely out of harmony with and in contradiction of the true historical view steadfastly maintained by Pastor Russell as also by a large number of devout Christian teachers of deeply spiritual insight, who preceded him. It therefore remains for the brethren of the present hour to be faithful Watchers and to *heed the Savior's words concerning this time*, "Take heed that no man deceive *you*"; but at the same time to consider that the Book of Revelation is a most valuable section of the Divine Oracles—our heritage of spiritual light, to which we do well to take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn.

Christ's Seven Messages To The Churches

Rev. 1:11, 20: What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia. . . . The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.

UR HOLY ORACLES, the inspired messages of Christ, the Apostles and Prophets, have made plain the entire career of the Church from the beginning of the Age unto the time of the glorification of the last member of this Mystical Body. But in no other section of the Divine Word has all this most interesting order and program of things been so clearly and so convincingly portrayed as in the Apocalyptic photographs given to the beloved Seer on Patmos. Christ's seven Epistles to the seven Churches *have summarized in advance* what was to be the character of the entire Church's sojourn on earth. Untold benefit and inspiration are derived from these mystical letters, especially in these colorful days when there are varied and complex problems confronting all the brethren.

The venerable Apostle was told by the revealing angel, to write seven letters to the Churches named—letters charged with lofty and sublime significance;

letters appreciating, judging, encouraging, rebuking, and counseling these *representative* Churches; and conveying *through them*, messages from the glorified Redeemer to the *whole Christian Church throughout the age*. In these letters, bearing on their forefront, descriptive titles of Christ referring to attributes suited to *the character and condition* of the Churches addressed, our Lord speaks in the tone of sovereign authority, perfect knowledge, burning holiness, and tender love. His eyes as a flame of fire search the secrets of hearts, yet beam with infinite compassion. His lips are full of promises, His hands, of gifts and grace. Every sentence in these celestial communications bears the impress of His personality. In listening to their words we hear the very voice of the Son of God *speaking to our individual souls* out of the world of glory: "I know thy works," "I have somewhat against thee." "I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts." "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." "I have set

before thee an open door." "I have loved thee." "I will keep thee." "I would thou wert cold or hot." "I will spew thee out of My mouth." "I counsel thee." "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open to Me, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." Each letter closes with a special promise of glorious and eternal reward "to him that overcometh"; and with the solemn appeal to the individual Christian conscience, "he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Must not such a glorious Wonder, such a celestial Presence, from whom issued such heart-searching messages, be intended for sublime and far-reaching import *in behalf of the entire Church*, reaching even unto the end of the Age!

CHRIST'S SEVEN PROPHETIC EPISTLES

There were obviously, then, seven messages addressed to *literal historical churches of John's day*; Epistles intended to deal with their several conditions, to stir them up to hold fast what was right, and to amend what was wrong, as also all other churches in like conditions. But as the seven churches were representative and inclusive of the entire Church, these Epistles give us *prophetically*, the mind or viewpoint and judgment of Christ concerning the entire Church of this Dispensation, and are necessarily anticipative of its entire history. In other words, *they are Christ's own history in advance*, of the professing Church.

The seven Epistles then are so many photographs of its dark and sad apostasies, as well as of its blessed examples of true piety and faithfulness—photographs taken at different periods of its history; from the beginning in the Ephesian era, when the first love had grown cold, and reaching even unto Laodicea when the Savior pronounces those solemn and fateful words, "Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth." That this is the true conception and interpretation, there is no valid reason to doubt; for the historian, as we have seen, has supplied the information—one continuous stream of facts, events and circumstances, covering the past nineteen centuries, in which we have observed, standing out in bold relief, seven vivid outlines and descriptions, definitely answering to those symbolic pictures contained in Christ's seven messages. By the light of the historian, we see that unquestionably, six of those prophetic letters have wholly passed into history, and a large part of the seventh; for all the earmarks and signals at the present moment declare that we are far along into Laodicea, the Era of lukewarmness, self-sufficiency, empty profession, false peace, worldliness, and of general decline and apostasy.

The outstanding fact in Christ's Epistles is, that throughout the entire Age, the course of *the Church at large* has always been in the line of deterioration; that mischiefs of different sorts have successfully assailed it, and made sad havoc of its faith and life; and that *from no one of them* has it ever recovered, or given signs of its ability or destiny to recover. Another giving evidence of much spiritual insight, has made the unqualified statement that "Ecclesiastical history is, to a large extent, a history of corruptions." That such is the truth, everyone may easily ascertain for himself.

Yet no child of grace possessed of the glorious illumination of these days, revealing the Divine plans and purposes, need feel disconsolate or disheartened. For if we have proper faith, that illumination realized from present dispensational Truth dispels the gloom and drives out all doubt and fear. And all questions as to *how* or *why* it is that the great Author of Christianity has permitted the history of its realization to include so much that is painful and revolting; how it is that He did not keep unpolluted His own sacred institutions—that He did not save the light from being dimmed—that He did not preserve the Church an unblighted garden, a home of unruffled love—all such questions we declare are forever silenced in the light of God's glorious Truth concerning the call, the development and preparation of an elect "little flock," the true Church, to be the Bride of His Son; and to reign with Him in that mighty Kingdom that is to bring in the great redemption of God—the restitution of all things.

NEVER WITHOUT HIS FAITHFUL WITNESSES

God's unerring wisdom has foreseen, that His purpose concerning the testing, polishing and transforming of the prospective joint-heirs of Christ, could best be served by the permission of multitudes of the unspiritual, the uncircumcised, and unregenerate and merely nominal Christians, to appear to answer the call and to profess His name, and thus to take their places in the popular or professing church. Thus a sad admixture is the result. Another influence, another spirit than that of the Holy Spirit has entered into the sanctuary of God, and the comparatively few Saints were left to struggle and battle with vast numbers who have not possessed spiritual sight and whose walk is not according to the children of God—the New Creation. So century after century has witnessed painful ordeals of those who have had their faith tested to the utmost; while ringing in their ears was the Apostle's faithful testimony. "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 honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:7.

Thus God has left His people with this most heart-cheering conviction that the predominance of gross evils in the Church, the allowance of wicked and apostate powers to seize control, the exaltation and crowning of Satan's emissaries in the sanctuary of the Saints during the time of the Church's selection, *has not in the slightest hindered or interrupted the Divine purpose* to find a people who shall be accounted worthy of the Kingdom and glory of Christ, and who shall shine with Him as the Firmament. More than this, God has never been without His faithful Witnesses in the earth since our Redeemer announced the Gospel Call. With all the waning love, and false apostles and Nicolaitane practices of Ephesus, there were *some who could not bear* those who were evil; and who endured, labored and suffered for the name of Jesus, and whose fidelity is to be rewarded with the joys of the Paradise of Immortals. With all the poverty and tribulation and reproach of the dwellers in Smyrna, and the false ones of Satan's synagogue by whom they were afflicted, there were *some rich in grace*, faithful to the last, and destined to wear the crown of life, unhurt of the second death. With the proximity of the Church of Pergamos to Satan's throne, and the presence in it, of the advocates of adulterous alliances, and systematizers of usurpation and evil, *it had members who held fast* to the Savior's name, and kept the faith steadfast unto death, who receive of the hidden Manna, and feast on heavenly bread, and wear the engraved gem of celestial privilege and honor. Even in Thyatira, where Jezebel, symbol of the Papal harlot-church, herself enacted her most defiling uncleannesses, *there was a remnant* who kept aloof from "Satan's depths," and wrought the deeds of faith and charity, and made good their title to share in the judgment of nations, and to receive the Morning Star. The deadness of Sardis was not so pervading, but that *a few names were left* which had not defiled their garments, which had received the Truth, and taught it, and lived it, and, ultimately exalted, they walk with Christ in white, and are confessed in the presence of the Father. The Philadelphians, though but *a handful in the midst of false ones*, and dwellers among those too much at ease in worldly comfort, are still acknowledged by Christ as earnest and faithful brethren on whom the "door" cannot be shut, at whose feet Satan's synagogue is humbled, and who are kept from the "hour of trial," transferred to the celestial temple, and adorned with the name of God, and the new Jerusalem, and the new name of Christ Himself. And in among the sickening lukewarmness, pride, boasting and emptiness of

the Laodiceans, *there are found some chastened ones—overcomers, whom Jesus loves*, and some who hear His voice when He announces His Presence, and "open" unto Him, and sup with Him, and whose destiny is to sit with Him on His everlasting throne. And if in these seven pictures, the whole length of the Church's history is embraced, the fact stands out, in noonday clearness, that God has had His Saints in every era of this Age.

CHURCH'S EARTHLY CAREER A LONELY WAY

Nor does it compromise the perfection, glory or Divinity of the purpose of God that so large a part of the Church's history, even to the end of its earthly career, is a history of corruption and apostasy. For most certainly does God *make the wrath of men and devils to serve His designs* in the development of the Bride for His Son. Now *if* it had been stated in the New Testament that the Gospel was never to be misapprehended or denied by its professors; that the heavenly gift could never be soiled by earthly touch; that the circle of the Church should be forever free from satanic invasion; that no heresies, schisms, inconsistencies, falsehoods, frauds, hypocrisies or crimes should ever be found in ecclesiastical annals; and that the career of the Church should be like a pure and peaceful river, unobstructed in its flow, unpolluted in its waters, and ever expanding through the centuries until the world should be covered with the ocean of its out-poured blessings—*if such, we say*, had been the picture presented to us on the pages of inspiration, *then* indeed, such obscurations as history shows, of the sunny outlook would necessitate the admission that the purposes of God had fallen through and our hopes crushed. *But no such things are written in the Word of God, to happen in this Age.* The very *reverse* is found in every allusion which it makes to the estate of the Church in this Age, or to the nature and object of this Dispensation. Christ's own miraculous ministry gathered around Him only a "little flock," and one of them was a devil. The highest expectation of St. Paul in his great labors, was that he might "save some." And alas, those faithful labors were in the midst of a great fight of afflictions, in the face of enemies on all sides and particularly *within the precincts of the Church*—perhaps his bitterest encounters were in "perils amongst the brethren"!

Then, dear brethren of our blessed hope and faith, shall any of us become disturbed or perplexed, or in any way unsettled at the prophetic portrait of the continuously corrupting elements, ever at work in the Church of Christ, down *even into these very critical hours*? Pondering this timely question, are we asking, What "critical hours" are these? Ah,

most eloquently do these hours declare that "The Time is at Hand" when the voice of Him "Who is the faithful and true Witness," rings out in unmistakable clearness: "Behold I stand at the door and knock!" Quickly following this solemn pronouncement, is another of equal importance, soon recognized by the Watchers, "For the great Day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand!" (Rev. 6:17.) It is then *Christ's prophetic portrait of the closing hours of Laodicea*, that is commanding our most devout and reverent attention. As solemn as are these times and the thrilling and heart-searching events and experiences into which we are marching, we shall continue to prayerfully ponder all these things in the light of our Master's cheerful and most comforting appeal, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28.

A PREFIGURATION OF THE REJECTED CHURCH

From the descriptions originally given in the message to that local church in Laodicea, all sorts and shades of intermingled or co-existent good and evil, were to be observed in the church of that day. Some had great zeal for a form of sound teaching, pure doctrine and godly discipline, whilst they failed in the important element of *love and Christliness*; and others with much show of faith, piety and beneficence, yet permitted the manlier things, of important *principles*, of *sound doctrinal truth*, and the ruling out of *impure* teaching, to be overlaid by *extravagant and undue* emphasis on *external* appearances of "love, peace and harmony." Some in their sufferings were faultless, but *feeble*; others in their prosperity were strong, but *dead* and corrupt *spiritually*. There was *true* faith and *false* faith, and sometimes *no* faith. There were *schisms* and *heresies*, and *sects*, as well as "devout" works, and instances of fidelity unto death. There were children of the Kingdom and children of the wicked one, wheat and tares, truths and errors, sins and sanctities, *then* as *now*. The leaven of evil was *even then* already working in the woman's meal, and the birds of impurity finding lodgment in the branches of the springing tree.

Such was that local church of Laodicea at the close of the first century. And when "He who hath eyes as a flame of fire," eyes of prophecy and *profound insight*, looks across the centuries to the culmination of the Age, with its dramatic and tragic scenes, He makes use of that picture found in the Laodiceans of John's day, to *prefigure and forecast* the sad spiritual state and apostate character of the *rejected church of the last days*. Can anyone ques-

tion that *we are already overtaken* by the conditions set forth in the message to Laodicea? Surely a mere glance at the Apocalyptic picture of Laodicea given above, is all that is necessary to bring the conviction that *it fits exactly the present state of affairs* in the professing church composed of many organizations and factions in our day.

Interesting indeed is it, to note that there is *not to be another stage* to succeed Laodicea, for in this *seventh Era*, the great clock of the Ages strikes the hour and unquestionably marks the time of the completion of the Church in sacrifice, and the time for the assembling of the faithful of the entire Age, and their glorification with the redeemer in His Kingdom. It is then a point of Divine economy that this state of spiritual poverty and apostasy characterizing the seventh period, and calling for utter rejection by the Lord, *synchronizes exactly* with the completion of the full number, destined in the counsels of God, to make up the Bride for His Son. Accordingly, we may be sure there has been a *definite providential oversight* throughout all of the seven stages of the Church's history, to the end that this spiritual decline and apostasy long predicted for Laodicea, should happen *simultaneously with the closing of the Gospel Call*, and the completing of the true Church. Therefore the gathering out and glorification of the true Church, during this seventh stage, and the casting off and rejection of the apostate Laodicean church at this time, is unquestionably according to an infallible foresight and economy; and all in preparation for the next great act in the Divine Drama, namely, the inauguration of the Kingdom of God and the great reconstruction Era of a thousand years.

Now, while to "Philadelphia" the message was, "Christ shall quickly come," to "Laodicea" comes that startling and thrilling word, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." What is this indeed but an announcement that *He is already present*, "knocking" at the door, prepared to bless *those ready to receive Him*, but about to eject with loathing, the lukewarm masses who fail in fervency and timely repentance! Surely Christ's Second Presence belongs just at this point; for the Laodicean period is none other than the time of the harvesting of the ripe fruitage of the Age, which *necessitates the presence of Christ*, the great chief Reaper. This is shown not only in other portions of the Apocalypse, but particularly in His great Prophecy, where the Master clearly indicated His secret Presence, unknown to the world, but revealed to the faithful Watchers.—Matt. 24:37-39.

As is freely conceded by those, *who in humbleness of heart and in the Spirit of Christ*, are keeping in mind the well known facts, there has been one

outstanding figure, one towering above all others in his time, ministering to the people of God during this Laodicean, Harvest Era—our greatly loved and highly esteemed Brother—Pastor Russell. And what was his reaction when he appeared upon the scene some seven and a half decades ago? Ah, he was not long hearing the "Knock," of the Presence of Christ; he very soon discerned that it was the Church of "the last times"—Laodicea; and at once recognized the voice of his invisible but present *Lord* behind the scenes, making His solemn and fateful pronouncement against the last church of the Age.—Rev. 3:15-18.

A vast "storehouse" of blessed truth was opened up and the patient eyes of our venerable Brother were rewarded by the glorious light of truth bursting in full splendor. He staggered not at the glory and beauty of it all, but recognized the tremendous responsibility it brought. Our Brother saw that while the church in general was rejected, *there was a faithful remnant, the wheat class, who needed this message of the last days.* To the task of dispensing this sublime message to the household of faith, he resolutely set himself. Well known is it that this message of dispensational truth was accepted by but few of the masses of Christendom. It was virtually rejected; and consequently much of the life story of our Brother is a record of bitter assaults of the Adversary to destroy his faith and that of his supporters; of schemes and plots to unsettle faith in his teachings; and of dastardly blows to *ruin his name* before men. All of these malevolent manifestations were met by heroic courage and faith, for he labored as one "who *endured as seeing Him* who is invisible."

THE PASSING OF THE LORD'S SERVANT— MORE HARVEST SIFTINGS

Now the impression was gained by many in the earlier days of this Harvest period that Brother Russell, having been the outstanding figure in dispensing this important ministry, would be spared to the Church this side of the veil, until practically all had finished their course. *But this was not in the program as designed by the Lord.* Someone has well observed that "God buries His workmen and carries on their work." But the question remained in the minds of many: since our Brother's ministry was evidently of God and of such importance to the brethren, why was not his sojourn with the Church this side prolonged, even unto the end of *this* season of sore trial and sifting? We have but to carefully look at the circumstances of these recent years to find our answer; for the passing of time since his departure, presents the solution and reveals the unerring wisdom of God: there was

another important phase of the Harvest that must find its place in the Laodicean Era—that of *determining which of all the multitudes* that composed the "truth movement" or Harvest gathering, were *disciples indeed* and wholly loyal to the Lord. Just as at the First Advent large numbers followed Jesus for a time; but the Master applied tests which proved that but *few* were really consecrated, and vast numbers went away and walked no more with Him.

During the past thirty-four years, the brethren throughout the world have been plunged into Harvest siftings of the most astounding character and of great severity—such subtle tests and distressing ordeals that could not possibly have come, *so long as Brother Russell was in our midst.* Ah yes, in the language of our blessed Lord, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight!" And to all of us it has meant, "Satan hath desired to have you that *he might sift you as wheat.*" Indeed what advantage of spiritual growth and character development it has meant to many, to have these additional testings, seeing they were leaning too much on the great personage of the Lord's servant.

Who of us cannot see that the Adversary, ever alert to find an opening to assail the Lord's people, was quick to see his opportunity with the passing of Brother Russell? Another spirit, another influence at once assumed control of all the forces and agencies of the Harvest work that had been directed by our Brother. Alterations and innovations followed in quick succession; *error was substituted for the truth, and soon all was changed.* As vast numbers yielded to the new regime, it was recognized that the inevitable apostasy had set in, fulfilling in a most remarkable manner, Brother Russell's faithful warnings and predictions concerning the severer trials of the *then* future. But true to our blessed Master's faithful saying concerning the true Shepherd, *the sheep "know His voice and a stranger they will not follow,"* there were those, prayerful and vigilant souls, throughout the ranks of the "Truth brethren," who at *once* sensed the meaning of what was taking place, and indicated their steadfastness and loyalty to the Lord and to the Truth in its purity, by "coming out" *immediately,* from this freshly created confusion and disorder. Hence shakings, testings, and separations rapidly ensued and have continued without cessation, through all these years down to the present moment.

Was it not then a master-stroke of infinitely wise Providence that took our dear Brother from the scene of his earthly labors to permit of this *seemingly* tragic Era of perilous siftings! Yea, verily. The movement and association that was left, was at once overtaken with spiritual disease and disin-

tegration which has gathered more and more momentum, extending into every branch and avenue of what has been known as the "Truth people," until the visible ranks of the movement, known as the "people of Present Truth," have yielded to one form or another of apostasy and the strong delusions of our time. And out of all this troubled period, this Era of commotion and testings, of conflicting voices and appeals, various leaderships, groups, factions, organizations, etc., have appeared upon the scene, each claiming the supervision of the sheep. And all these divisions, organizations and leaderships, with their diverse viewpoints, conflicting interpretations and a variety of conceptions of the Lord's Will, are regarded as the "wheat" destined for the Kingdom.

THERE IS THEN STILL THE FAITHFUL REMNANT

What indeed, must be the inevitable conclusion of all this, humanly speaking, sad picture? Does all this confused mass of these last days, represent truly the children of the Kingdom? Is that chaste Virgin, espoused unto Christ as the Bride of His love, to be composed of such as fill the picture of the present hour? Or rather, shall we not ask, Is it not true that Laodicea and the spirit of the Laodiceans *has overtaken the people professing "Present Truth"* in these last days?—and that, *to them, as a people*, may not the fateful pronouncement of "the faithful and true Witness" ("I will spew thee out of My mouth," Rev. 3:15-17) apply, as well as to *others earlier* in this *Harvest* time? Faithful brethren whose ears are attuned to the voice of the Good Shepherd—to "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," will, in the spirit of Christlike meekness and godly fear, ponder the above questions; and at the same time, permit the *Master's searching gaze into their own hearts* to see if they are prepared to meet those eyes, "as a flame of fire," and to successfully stand the tests of His judgment and decisions as they apply to the Laodiceans. Indeed we are left with no alternative conclusion as to the quality and character of those who shall be accounted worthy to share the glories of Christ and His Kingdom; for of these it is written that *they that are "with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."*—Rev. 17:14.

The conviction therefore is forced upon us that the real Harvest gatherings of wheat for the Kingdom, *are not represented in the multitudes* of those who have assembled, or are assembling under the title of "truth people"; rather, they are to be recognized as that comparatively *small, scattered, "remnant"* (unknown, *as a separate group*) but well known of the Lord, who have demonstrated and

shown the genuineness of their consecration by true spiritual vision and discernment of God's Will, by Christ-likeness and whole-hearted devotion to Him. *They are the faithful in Laodicea* who hear Christ's "knock," and "open the door"; with whom Christ "supps," and they with Him; whose eyes are *anointed with the "eyesalve" of truth*, and who "see"; and who possess the "gold tried in the fire." Because of these immense spiritual advantages, they shall be enabled to abide the fiercest storms, and to endure the bitterest of trials, even unto death. "Supping" with the Lord and "seeing," as a result of the "eyesalve" of the truth, can mean nothing less than that which is seen, received and enjoyed *of the dispensation of truth* by the faithful in these last years of the Gospel Age.

Dear brethren, sharers together of these blessed joys, let none of us feel discomfited by anything connected with this dark hour. For, continuing to *faithfully follow our Divine Guide*, the light of His Presence and the power of His voice will lead us to our Eternal Home. But on the other hand, how sad the thought that, having been constrained to follow Christ *up to the present* in all that His glorious Message implies, the vision once caught, should be distorted and lost by the subtleties and "wiles of the Devil," often presented in saintly mien and with much show of devoutness! (2 Cor. 11: 14, 15.) Let us remember that to be numbered with the *few* in such a cause, is truly a thing in which to rejoice. For it means, not that the cause has failed, but that the survivors of all the tests in the last few decades, *still possess the faith*, that *vital* real faith so pleasing to the Lord *because it begets spiritual power and understanding*, and incites to faithful walking with Christ.

Waiting and watching the livelong day,
Lifting the voice of her heart to pray;
She stands in her sorrow, the Bride and Queen,
Counting the hours that lie between.

Lone as a dove, on a storm-swept sea,
Teaching her heart hope's minstrelsy;
With a cheerful note, though a weary wing,
She learns o'er sorrow to soar and sing.

Abroad through the earth is the sound of war,
Distress among nations, wide and far;
And the failing of strong men's hearts for fear
Of the dreadful things that are drawing near.

Famine and pestilence stalk abroad;
Scoffers are slighting the Word of God;
And the love of many is waxing cold;
Dimmed is the sheen of the once fine gold.

But she stands in her safety, the Bride and Queen,
Leaning as only the loved can lean
On the Heart that broke in its love for her,
When bearing the burden *she* could not bear.

—Selected

The Angel "Having The Seal" Of The Living God-- Divinely Marked Christians

Rev. 7:2; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22: And I saw another angel ascending from the Sun-rising, having the seal of the living God. . . . Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.



IT IS of no little import that Christ's last message to His Church in the Apocalypse, sets forth a clear line of testimony concerning the high characteristics to be attained by His followers. Indeed, with what becoming grace was it that the Savior in giving utterance to His last message to His Church, should emphasize throughout, the necessity for a *special movement and operation of His Spirit*, producing an impression, an image, of transcendent importance in the lives of those who were destined to become New Creatures and were promised regal honors with their Master in His Kingdom. It is all forcibly summed up in the *constant reference* throughout the Revelation, to the fruits of character—the holiness, righteousness, undoubted purity and unswerving loyalty to the Will of God even unto death, required of all the faithful Church.

Certainly *no room is left for doubt as to the mind* of the revealing angel in making reference to a special marking, or sealing, that all footstep followers of Christ were to receive. In *advance* of the giving of the Apocalypse, the lesson of the Divine sealing had been imparted to the Church, particularly through the Apostolic letters, so that none who were *really* followers of Christ needed to be in doubt as to the *significance* of the sealing of the Spirit. Yet after all the luminous teaching and exposition of this important subject, the thoughtful Christian disciple today cannot but be amazed at the confusion of thought and general mixed opinions and theories held by the multitude of the professing brethren. But more concerning the significance of the Spirit's sealing further on in this discussion.

TILL THE SERVANTS OF GOD ARE SEALED

It will be recalled by the earnest student that this startling announcement concerning the angel "having the seal of the living God" and his instruction to the four angels holding the four winds, etc., *follows immediately* a general symbolic foreview in chapter 6, covering the entire history of the Church; and with the close of that chapter, we reach the end of this Dispensation and find ourselves in the midst of the Era known as the last days, the Harvest, the period designated the Parousia, or time of Christ's secret Presence; during which the faithful Church is completed and gathered to Himself; while the present system or order throughout the earth, is in process of being dissolved and passing away.

Since the most trying and tragic experiences of the Church, were clearly implied in the chain of events and circumstances set forth in chapter 6 of the Apocalypse, logically the question would be in the mind of the venerable John, How would it be possible for his Master's faithful followers to survive the ravages and unspeakable sufferings, through which the symbolic imagery of chapter 6 indicated they would pass during the long centuries of the age prior to the Second Advent? Hence, in the three opening verses of chapter 7, we have the answer: The angel ascending from the sun-rising, "having the seal of the living God," gave command to four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, to hold back the four winds of destruction till "we have *sealed the servants of our God* in their foreheads"—until the full number of those who should compose the entire Church, 144,000, should have opportunity to experience the necessary mystical sealing to *qualify them for acceptance* as members of the Bride of the Lamb.

We believe we may safely say that the deeply mystical character of this passage is not disputed by any accredited expositor: "ministering spirits," is *the divinely appointed office* of angels. Obviously "angels" in *this symbolic imagery* then, are significant of those *agencies or instrumentalities, animate or inanimate*, employed by Divine Providence in carrying out one or another of the features or sections of God's redemptive purpose. The four "angels" therefore, "standing on the four corners of the earth"—the four points of the compass, are highly suggestive of those *forces and agencies* in strategic positions *in complete command and control* of all earthly powers and bodies of warring humanity.

Evidently this symbolic picture was intended to be a description of not merely the closing Era of this Age when a great trouble sweeps away earth's governments, *but of this entire Dispensation* from the beginning to the end. In other words, from far back in the counsels of time, "before the foundation of the world," *God conceived the purpose to have a New Creation*. (Rev. 17:8) When the call of this distinguished Body was due to go forth at the First Advent of our Redeemer, it was of no little moment that the great Revealer of secrets should cause it to be shown in the Apocalypse that no strategy of the great Adversary (who has ever sought the destruction of the promised "Seed"), and *no agencies* in control of the warring governments of the earth *should be allowed to interfere* with the

one great design of this Age, namely, the completion and exaltation of the Church of the living God. However, it is clearly shown in this symbolic picture, that with the close of this Age, and even while some of the members of the New Creation still "remain" in these earthly tabernacles, the "four winds" of war, anarchy and chaos would be "let loose" for the destruction of the present world-order to make way for the new heavenly Kingdom which will be presided over by the glorified Christ, Head and Body.

THE ANGEL FROM THE SUN-RISING

Now we turn for the present to the matter of transcendent concern in this strange imagery—the "angel from the sun-rising, having the seal of the living God." Around this angel and his ministry and mission, there gathers the greatest possible interest, for therein we have the solution to the mysterious purpose of this entire Dispensation—the divine sealing of 144,000 Saints. In these words, the "angel from the sun-rising," there is a clear intimation of the *new Day for earth's groaning creation* that is variously referred to throughout the Bible. The reign of sin and death has constituted earth's dark night—"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psa. 30:5.) A new morning is to be ushered in—indeed a "morning without clouds." *It can come only with the sun-rising.* The angel of the sun-rising is therefore a messenger, an agency whose mission is inseparably connected with the introduction of the promised morning. His office, his acts, his proceedings, bear intensely upon, and are vitally related to the breaking of the new Day, *by way of sealing the Saints and preparing them for their exalted station and work as the long-promised Seed that is to bring in the great redemption and restoration of all things.*

Here then, is the "angel [a special providential ministry, an agency of supreme importance] having the seal [impress, inscription] of the living God [of divine authority]. 144,000 followers of Christ receive this Divine sealing—impression, inscription. This number was said to be made up of 12,000 of each tribe of Israel. Obviously this was a part of the symbolical picture—they are *spiritual Israelites*, made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The first *Christians* were chosen from the *natural* Israelites; and following the "breaking off of the natural branches" (see Rom. 11:11-25), the residue have been "grafted" in *from all nationalities of the Gentiles* to complete the 12,000 from each tribe, thus to make up the predestined number of 144,000 sealed ones; the entire Gospel Age having been required to accomplish this purpose.

THE SEAL OF THE LIVING GOD

But there remains yet the most important feature of this sublime symbolism for consideration: it is the *sealing itself*, and the *process* of its accomplishment. It is called "the seal of the living God" by way of distinguishing it from *those that be of men, or of human authorization*. Seals have been used by men all along down the stream of time as instruments for stamping important documents. They are used by governments or by states as *signets of their power and sovereignty*; or by organized bodies to give authority to documents. All of this is merely the conception of the *symbol*, and these are the sealings according to custom amongst men. But now we have under consideration another kind of sealing. It is the sealing with "*the seal of the living God*," and therefore it must needs be done by direction and ordination from Him who is above all, and has designed the New Creation.

Unquestionably, the consensus of thought throughout the "New Testament" is that the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of Divine Truth are the prime factors in the fulfilment of this most solemn symbolism—this sealing with the seal of the living God. We hear nothing of *such* sealing prior to the Advent of the Son of God. It must be seen to have its beginning at the time of the coming of the Redeemer; and to *end* with the calling out and development of the *last* member of the New Creation at the conclusion of this Age.

The Savior gave strong intimations concerning the sealing of the Spirit of God in various of His utterances in the days of His flesh, as for instance, He remarks, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63.) This statement can mean nothing less than that His words were *freighted with spiritual power and illumination* of Divine Truth. He also said, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed. And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." (John 8:31, 32.) Again in His last prayer, are the well-remembered words, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." —John 17:17.

The foregoing utterances of the Master leave no doubt that He was linking together the *application* of the truth with the *illumination* of the Holy Spirit, as the *source* of the sanctification and spiritual development of His followers. Especially is this seen to be the case as we ponder various of His sayings upon the last night of His sojourn upon the earth; for He took occasion to comfort His disciples in connection with His breaking the news to them of His departure when they should no more have His companionship in the *natural way*. Several times

during His farewell message to them on that fateful night, He made mention of *the coming of the Comforter*, the Spirit from above, which should enlighten them and open the eyes of their understanding, *guiding* them into all truth, and *show* them things to come.—John 14:16, 26; 15:26.

Though they comprehended at that time but little of what His words implied, the Master faithfully kept His promise, and in due course there was that amazing manifestation of all time, in the occurrences, revealings and communications of Pentecost. The Apostles and all true believers were marvelously enlightened far beyond their anticipations: That Divine Helper and Comforter was in them as an intelligent indwelling and almighty Spirit, establishing, confirming, instructing, and comforting them, as necessity might require, overcoming their doubts, strengthening their hands, prompting their utterances and acts, speaking through their lips and witnessing in and by them with an energy whose authority none might dispute. *Through the power of that Spirit* they were enabled to go forward with the great commission the Master had given them—a ministry that was destined to be an impregnable fortress and support to the entire Church, reaching down to the latter days in which we live.

THE SEALING AND BEGETTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

And this same Holy Spirit, in the *same offices* and after the same manner (if not exactly or in every instance to the same degree), has continued with the Christian disciple throughout the centuries of the Age since, and is still the legacy of Jesus to His people, and abides *with* them and *in* them, as the spirit of Truth and power to transform, comfort, enlighten, direct and embolden them, and *to make them joyous and triumphant* amid whatever outward trials they may be placed, or whatever burdens of earthly sorrow they may be called to bear.

But we have yet to note the most vital aspects of this Divine sealing under consideration. We realize our best illumination of this subject as we follow on and prayerfully pursue the study of the Apostolic letters, particularly *after* the Apostles *themselves* had realized the results of the *energy and power* of the Spirit in their own hearts, renewing and quickening them in "the inner man." Therefore in those after days, the ministry by the Apostles to the early Christians together with their Epistles, uncover for us the deeper secrets and unfoldings of the divine purpose in the sealing of the 144,000 Saints, so solemnly laid before us in this sublime Apocalyptic drama.

Hence the importance of "the seal of the living God" consists *not primarily*, in imparting great nat-

ural power nor in special manifestations of ability, knowledge, etc., *outwardly* in the Church (such as were the *first* manifestations to the Apostles), but rather the most *signal* and *vital objective* of the Christian's sealing was to effect his own *inward and spiritual status*. It is the sealing of the Spirit by way of imparting to the consecrated disciple that spiritual power, which, *through the Truth*, works in him *a begetting of the Spirit* (1 Pet. 1:3,4; 2 Pet. 1:3,4); and the result of which is, the commencement of a new life, the start of a hitherto unknown *spiritual* existence, the Spirit of God working in Him to will and to do of His good pleasure. Looking again at the seal used by men, the lesson is at once obvious: it contains a definite form, shape, imprint. Applying this seal and pressing it on any receptive substance or material, the result is *an impression, an inscription, indeed a sealing*. This is the picture: The Holy Spirit *through the Truth*, is the *instrument* of the sealing.

SEALED IN THE FOREHEAD

Looking at the circumstances and conditions amongst the early Christians after the Holy Spirit was given, we observe that this power, designated the "anointing from above," is explained and variously set forth by the Apostles as the *Divine power, influence, energy, disposition, etc., of the Father and the Son*. It was communicated to none except those who progress beyond the theoretical knowledge of the Truth and *solemnly consecrate themselves* to God; in response to the special High Calling of this Age to share in the sufferings of Christ, with the prospect of participating with Him as joint-heirs in the heavenly Kingdom. Truly a high and exalted calling was this! And no wonder all accepting this wondrous invitation must *share in the anointing of the great Head of the Church* and be stamped with the seal of the living God! Thus Paul wrote to the Ephesians (1:13): "After that ye believed, *ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit* of promise, which is the earnest [assurance of security] of our inheritance." And the Apostle besought them: "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, *whereby ye are sealed* unto the day of redemption."—Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22.

We are definitely informed in the Apocalyptic picture before us, that the Saints were "*sealed in their foreheads*." The forehead denotes *the seat of the intellect*; not that a *mental* knowledge of the Truth is sufficient, oh no! But logically, the knowledge of Truth reaches the heart, the soul, through the mind, intellect. Hence the Saints are sealed by having the knowledge, the light of Truth imparted to them *through* their mental faculties. Recalling

for the moment, the Pentecostal revelations, we have a vivid demonstration of *when and where* this sealing in the forehead *commenced*. How manifest it was at that time, that the unfoldings meant to the Apostles and the early Church what the "*opening of the heavens*" meant to Jesus, for He also was "sealed of God" (John 6:27), at the time of His baptism at Jordan in that, heavenly wisdom, spiritual knowledge and understanding were especially imparted in *both* cases. The blessings of Pentecost enabled those disciples *to see deeply into the meaning of many things* that Jesus had expressed while He was still with them; they now recognized why He did not attempt to establish an earthly Kingdom while in the flesh; they saw the necessity for His suffering and sacrifice, and they recognized now the *meaning of the call* to discipleship, to walk in the footsteps of Christ and to bear the cross after Him. In a word, they saw the great "Mystery" of this Age, the *selection of the Christ of many members*—they saw themselves as members of the sin-offering, sacrificial Christ. Thus the Spirit taught them that this was *God's way of preparing them to share with their Redeemer* in the coming spiritual Kingdom. Truly that portion of the New Testament recording matters and developments subsequent to the day of Pentecost, presents to us a *revelation of the work of the Spirit* and the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus, "Lo I am with you alway."

As it was in the *primitive Church* in the beginning of the Age, so it must be with all footstep followers of Christ unto this day; it is only as the Truth is *acted upon in a "good and honest heart"* and is definitely applied to the conduct and behavior of life, that the result is true sanctification, setting apart to a holy purpose; and this is most *closely associated with the seal* or impress of the Christ-life; as one Apostle expresses it, "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth."—2 Thess. 2:13.

Some may ask, Does not the development of love constitute the sealing of the Spirit? No, we answer, not as love is generally understood. Many professing Christians who have seemingly admirable qualities and possessing a large measure of love, are yet definitely lacking in the *essentials of the Divine sealing*—giving little or no evidence of having made a consecration or of ever having come *under the anointing* of the Spirit. Hence such are utterly deficient in spiritual comprehension and in discernment of Spiritual Truth, and important issues that bear upon their sanctification. However, love is indeed a most important essential and factor in the sealing of the Saints, and we may be very sure that all who compose the 144,000 sealed ones will have had *the love of Christ richly abounding in their hearts and lives*.

DIVINE SEALING PRODUCES LIKENESS OF CHRIST

We are repeatedly instructed in the Apostolic letters that all who would share as joint-heirs with Christ must be conformed to the image of God's dear Son—"copies of the likeness of His Son." (Rom. 8:29.—Diag.) Then says Paul, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory [image, likeness] of the Lord, are *changed into the same image* from glory to glory [step by step or measure by measure], even as by [through the working of] the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) Again Paul tells us that our regeneration (making alive), is through the "*renewing of the Holy Spirit*." (Titus 3:5.) To this agree the words of Paul again when he admonishes the Roman brethren to be "transformed by the *renewing* of your mind, that ye may prove [manifest and work out in your lives] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, Will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

There is no mistaking this matter: The combined inspired counsel of the Apostles makes manifest that the sum total of this sealing with "the seal of the living God" is, that it is *by the Spirit of God through the Truth*. It is seen to be all-comprehensive, and embraces the whole round of Christian life and experience, including many sorrows, heartaches and afflictive tribulations; the object of which is to produce the *impress, the inscription, the image and character-likeness of Christ*. Therefore, most certainly the love of Christ and all the glorious qualities exemplified by Him on earth, as well as all the fruits of the Spirit named in the New Testament, are represented in the Divine sealing for it is *comprehensive of the whole Will of God*, and loyalty to the same, even unto death.

At this point we cannot but submit a choice selection from Brother Russell's writings, which briefly sums up the essential thoughts of this most sanctifying subject under the following heading:

The Seal of the Spirit

"In whom [Christ] ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of Truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance."—Eph. 1:13, 14.

Seals in olden times were used for various purposes. (1) As a signet or signature, a mark of attestation or acknowledgment. (2) To make secret, to render secure against intrusion—as in Matt. 27:66; Rev. 10:4; 20:3.

It is in the first of these senses that the Lord's people are said to be "sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise." The Apostle does not say, as some seem to suppose, that we were sealed *by the Holy Spirit as a person*, the so-called third person of a trinity of co-equal Gods: he declares that we were sealed "*with the holy*

Spirit of *the promise*;" quite a different thought as all will perceive. The Holy Spirit is from the Father: He does the sealing through Christ *with* the holy Spirit, which itself is the *seal*. This is attested by the Apostle (Acts 2:33), and is in full accord with the record respecting our Lord Jesus, who was the first of the house of sons to be thus sealed. We read, "Him hath God the Father *sealed*"—*with* the Holy Spirit.—John 6:27.

The expression "Spirit of *the promise*," like other terms used in reference to the holy influence of God, as the "Spirit of holiness," "The Spirit of Truth," is descriptive: it shows that there is a connection between this sealing and the *promise* which God has given us. It is an advanced evidence or attestation of God's covenant with the "sealed" one, that "the exceeding great and precious promises" of the "things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him [supremely] are true; and that he shall inherit those promised blessings after he has endured faithfully the *tests* of his love and devotion which God will apply.

The Apostle refers to this same sealing later on in the same epistle, and there, identifies the "promise" with the "day of deliverance." (Eph. 4:30.) In other words then, the seal of the Spirit of promise unto the day of deliverance is but another form of expressing the thought—we (the Church), "have the *first-fruits* of the Spirit"—the hand-payment as it were, binding the contract or covenant between the Lord and us, and assuring us that if we faint not we shall inherit the promise to the full.

This seal of covenant relationship, of sonship and heirship, is not an outward sign upon our foreheads; nor is it a mark of manifestation of God's favor in earthly affairs, in worldly prosperity; nor is it now, nor was it ever, the "gifts" of healing, or of speaking with tongues, etc., for many who possessed those miraculous "gifts" lacked the seal and witness of the Spirit.—Acts 8:13-23; 1 Cor. 13:1-3.

The seal or pledge of the holy Spirit is in the heart of the sealed, and hence it is that no man knoweth it save he that receiveth it (Rev. 2:17), except as others may see the fruits of it in his daily life. "He who establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."—2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

This earnest or seal of sonship is the Spirit of love which is at-one with the Father and all His holy arrangements, crying out, Abba, Father: I delight to do Thy Will, O my God. He who has this seal or mark of sonship is He who not only seeks to do the Will of the Father, but doing it finds it "not grievous," but delightful.—1 John 5:3. . . .

As all believers should seek to come under the anointing and begetting influence of the holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Truth—so all who have been thus begotten of the Spirit to sonship should seek to attain that position of *fulness of harmony* with the Father that He can acknowledge and seal. And having attained this position, let all be careful not to mar or blur the seal—not to *quench* or *extinguish* this precious treasure; nor to *turn* this spirit of love and joy in the holy Spirit of fellowship and communion, into a spirit of heaviness, darkness, grief. *Not to spoil this seal*, but to keep it ever *bright and fresh*, should be the constant effort of all who receive it. S. S. Vol. 5, p. 246-248.

THE SEALED OF GOD SEEN ON MOUNT ZION

Finally, we meet again, in the Apocalypse, with this distinguished body of called-out ones in chapter 14, where we read:

"AND I SAW, AND BEHOLD, THE LAMB STANDING ON MOUNT ZION, AND WITH HIM AN 144,000 HAVING HIS NAME AND HIS FATHER'S NAME IN THEIR FOREHEADS."

None can fail to be impressed with the similarity of description in the two visions, and recognize they refer to the *one distinguished New Creation*, of whom those disciples who walked with Jesus on earth, were the nucleus. Similar to those described in chapter 7, these of chapter 14, are likewise prepared as a special select class of God's servants, chosen, marked, and set apart as none else, and have the mark, even the "Father's name written in their foreheads"; which description coincides fully with that of those sealed with the seal of the living God. The name "written in the *forehead*" similarly identifies them as partakers of the mind and character-qualities of the *sealed* ones. Surely there is no room for question that the 144,000 who stand with Christ on Mount Zion are *identical with the sealed ones of chapter 7*, with only this difference: that in the first instance, they are seen in their *earthly relations* undergoing the sealing process of the Spirit of God in connection with trial, affliction, etc. But here on Mount Zion, glorified, they become *associated with Christ in His assumption of Kingly power and authority* in the early stage of His Second Advent. In this latter description they are said to be the "first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb," which is *identical* with other New Testament affirmations that the Church is "a kind of first-fruits of His creatures."—James 1:8.

Dear Brethren, Beloved in the Lord, as we ponder the meaning of these symbolic outlines of great truths, so soul-stirring and solemn, and see from these mystical descriptions the pathway of the sealed of God of this Age, and then think of ourselves invited to be partakers of such an unspeakably exalted heritage, what sober and deep heart-searching should it cause all the faithful in these days to undergo! Indeed, what "persons ought we to be in all holy conduct and piety!" (2 Pet. 3:11, Diag.) Surely such sober longings, such holy yearnings to please God cannot but result from a prayerful contemplation of the truths involved in the study of this sealing which is "of the living God." Through this long and difficult training and discipline, He is drawing His children *nearer and nearer to Himself* and preparing them for their eternal home.

In Days Of The Sounding Of Seventh Trumpet-- "The Time Is At Hand"

Rev. 8:2; 11:15, 18; And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. . . . 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 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.

N TAKING up the study of any portion of the Apocalypse, it is well to be reminded afresh that we are dealing with a book of *prophetic symbols and hieroglyphics*. Though this point may be well established in our minds, it is important to *hold it prominently* before us. Further, that the *secret* of ascertaining the proper application of the Revelation symbols, is spread more or less through all the Holy Oracles that compose our blessed Volume of inspiration, the Bible. By this, we mean that the symbols of the Apocalypse are *drawn from the stage of natural life and action, of things here on earth*; and by carefully noting throughout the Scriptures the *natural* setting and operation of these symbols in the affairs of the earth, we are prepared to look for the *corresponding setting* and application of the symbol, in the *higher sphere* of the *spiritual* realm of things.

Let it be borne in mind too, that in the first verse of the Apocalypse, it is stated that the disclosures to be made in the symbolic panorama, were things *future* from the time the Revelation was given to the venerable Seer of Patmos—*things which must shortly come to pass*. We can be quite sure that the interests and destiny of both the Church and the human family at large, are definitely and closely connected with, and bound up in, the fulfilment of this symbolic picture of seven angels with trumpets, and the *sounding of the trumpets* in consecutive order. The *first* mention of them is found in chapter 8, in the description of the opening or breaking of the "Seventh Seal" of the mysterious Scroll that John had seen in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne. (Rev. 5:1.) We read: "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God and to them were given seven trumpets. . . . and the seven angels which had the seven trumpets *prepared* themselves to *sound*."—Chap. 8: 2, 6.

TRUMPETS ARE EXPRESSIVE INSTRUMENTS

It has been said that the voice of the trumpet is the most significant voice known to the Holy Scriptures; being used upon various occasions of great significance. God Himself gave His ancient people very special directions with regard to the *use* of the trumpet. The time for the blowing of trumpets was always a *time of moment*—a time of solemnity—a

time for men to bestir themselves greatly in one way or another. The following citations of Scripture may be very profitably reviewed: Num. 8; 10: 9, 10; Jer. 4: 19; Lev. 23:24; 25:9; 2 Chron. 29: 27; 1 Kings 1:34,39; 2 Kings 9:13; Ex. 19:16; Amos 3:6.

Thus it is evident that the use of the trumpet in those far-off days was in connection with the calling of holy convocations, and to herald great solemnities and blessed feasts and sacrifices. The trumpet was used to declare investiture with dominion, and the commencement of a new reign; also for the purpose of mustering legions to battle. One of the most significant uses of the trumpet in ancient Israel, was that of ushering in the jubilee year, which was a most solemn proclamation of liberty for all the people.

Here then, we have before us the lesson on which the symbol is based. The conclusion seems beyond dispute that in these seven Apocalyptic trumpets, we have pictured before us seven outstanding eras or periods of time, six of which we can be sure *have met fulfilment since the Apocalypse was given*; which fulfilment has been in connection with events and occurrences involving world-wide movements:—movements that represent *humanity's efforts and doings* in the direction of breaking the shackles of superstition propagated by false and barbarous religious systems.* This conception and application of the six trumpets, is in full accord with what is clearly *implied in the occurrences under the Seventh*.

While all of the first six trumpets unquestionably represent developments and transactions of much importance, yet it is obvious that the sounding of the Seventh *is vastly outstanding and of transcendent import* to the entire creation on this planet. Let the reader note the marked difference in the way the Seventh Trumpet is designated, being called, "*The Trump of God*," as distinguished from the *first six*, which were evidently *of men*. Hence, the text declares that the occurrences that *follow* the Seventh, or the Trump of God, will mean the complete overwhelming of the far-reaching Empire of evil, including the *abolition of sin and death*, and the bringing of the great Redemptive Purpose of God to its *final consummation*.

*At another time we may review more in detail what we believe is the significance of the first six trumpets, and where their place is located in history.

TRUMP OF GOD PROCLAIMS DIVINE INTERVENTION

Pastor Russell has given us a most satisfactory and harmonious conception of the matter in the following statement: "The seven trumpets of Revelation are all symbolic, and represent *seven great periods of time and their events.*"

Again in his exposition of St. Paul's words in 1 Thess. 4:16, we have the following luminous unfolding from Pastor Russell:

"Paul here refers to what the Revelator designates 'The Seventh Trumpet,' the 'Last Trump' in a series of symbolic trumpets. (Rev. 11:15; 1 Cor. 15:52.) The proof that these references are to the same trumpet, is found in the record of the events connected with each. Paul mentions the resurrection, and the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom, as connected with '*the Trump of God,*' and the Revelator mentions the same with even greater minuteness. The propriety of calling the 'Seventh' or 'Last Trump,' '*the Trump of God,*' is evident, too, when we remember that the events mentioned under the preceding six trumpets of Revelation, refer to *humanity's doings*, while the Seventh refers specially to the *Lord's work*, and covers the 'Day of the Lord.' Since the six preceding trumpets were symbols—and this is generally admitted by commentators and students who make any claim as expositors of Revelation—it would be a violation of reason and common sense to expect the Seventh, the last of the series, to be a *literal*, audible sound on the air. And not only so, but it would be out of harmony with the Lord's general *method*, as well as with those statements of Scripture indicating the *secrecy* of His Coming; for *a thief never sounds a trumpet to announce his arrival.*" Scripture Studies Vol. 2, p. 148.

Still another statement from the same pen is further enlightening:

"We, in common with almost all expositors, recognize that the seven trumpets of Revelation are symbolical and not literal—indeed that this entire book is a book of symbols, and that so far, it has been *symbolically* fulfilled. Christian people in general understand that five of these trumpets have already 'sounded' and are in the past—we would say, *six*. It is admitted that those that have already 'sounded' have not been literal blasts of a bugle on the air, but Divine Decrees and their fulfilments; and we esteem that it is reasonable to expect that the Seventh Trumpet will be *similar* in this respect to the preceding six. But literal things are so much more easily received by the *natural man* that, even though absurd, they commend themselves as instead of the truth—until our minds are guided of the Holy Spirit into the proper channel by 'comparing spirit-

ual things with spiritual'—by comparing the Seventh Trumpet with the preceding six trumpets, and not with a natural blast upon the air. . . . It is both proper and necessary that we exercise great patience with Christian brethren, who thus display their infantile development of knowledge in respect to spiritual things, while we point out to them that this Seventh Trumpet—"The Last Trumpet"—"The Trump of God," *is as much symbolic* as were its predecessors, and marks a much larger and more important fulfilment than any of them. Its fulfilment extends through *a period of One Thousand years*; its events mark and coincide with all the various features of the Millennial reign of Christ." Reprints, p. 2992.

In the light of what has been presented above, it is obvious beyond question, that in this sublime symbolism of the Seventh Trumpet, we approach the grand climacteric of the present evil World and the ushering in of the World to come wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is "*the Last Trump,*" so often referred to by the sacred writers and by the Savior Himself, as bringing with it the mightiest and most blessed scenes and changes in the whole history of earth and time, that here sounds. And if there is anything in all the round of human thought to absorb, fix, and intensify interest and attention in this day of the most stirring events, *we have it in this subject.*

The particular passage we have now to consider in chapter 11: 15-18, is apparently a synopsis of the matter—a *rehearsal in brief*, of what is *subsequently* presented in detail, particularly in the *closing chapters of the Apocalypse*. It is an important point to remark that the Seventh Trumpet *does not sound merely for an instant*. In that solemn oath of the cloud-robed Angel, which is presented in chapter 10, and in which it was said that the fulfilling of the mystery of God should be finished at the sounding of the Seventh Angel, it is distinctly implied, that the sounding is *continuous*, and extends through a period of time. It is there said, that "*in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall sound, the mystery of God, is [to be] fulfilled.*" "Days" are included. It is therefore, properly called the *Era* of the Seventh Trumpet.

From the plainly expressed character of the events that belong to the Seventh Trumpet, and from the oath of the angel, we are sufficiently assured that this Seventh Trumpet embraces *everything* involved in the completing of the whole mystery or Purpose of God, up to the consummation of the entire Redemptive Program. That fulfilment is certainly *not* accomplished *without being preceded* by "the seven vials of wrath" the Harvest and vintage of the

Church and the world, followed by the manifestation of the Great White Throne, and the establishment of the new heavens and new-earth order, throughout all this Orb. In the nature of the case, that fulfilment overspans everything *this side of the completed* redemption of the world; and yet that fulfilment is most specifically located "in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel when he shall sound."

LOUD VOICES ANNOUNCE KINGDOM AT HAND

With this general outline before the mind, devout Watchers of this hour have no difficulty in recognizing that they *have already entered* the "days" of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, inasmuch as the startling and unprecedented state of affairs throughout the world at this time so definitely answers, not only to the events under the Seventh Trumpet symbol, but also to *many other Bible prophecies*. The very first signal to be noted, as the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet arrives is, that the "great voices," or, a better rendering is, "*loud voices*," are heard to issue forth a most significant proclamation, namely, that the time has arrived for a *complete change in the sovereignty of the world*: "The Kingdom of the world is become our Lord's and His Christ, and He shall reign to the ages of the ages." (Revised text.) What is there now to be said on this feature of the symbol? Answer: since now we have a proper view of the Seventh Trumpet symbol, we cannot expect its fulfilment, as a blast upon the air, but in the glorious *events* of the Kingdom of God. And the "loud voices" which, at its very beginning, announce that the time has come for the establishment of the new sovereignty, are not angelic shoutings in the sky, nor rumblings of thunder, *but are symbolic* as well as the trumpet, and unquestionably relate to *human voices* amongst men bearing the message of truth throughout the ecclesiastical "heaven"—Christendom, and *declaring that the time is at hand* for the great change so long predicted.

We have only to remember what is clearly revealed, namely, that the present Age *ends with a Harvest Era*. This was taught not only by our Lord during His earthly ministry but is definitely set forth in the blessed Apocalypse, as we read, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, 'Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: *for the time is come for Thee to reap*; for the Harvest of the earth is ripe.' And He that sat on the cloud thrust

in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."—"In the time of the Harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather," etc.—Rev. 14:15-16; Matt. 13:30.

It is then *the Harvest ministries and teachings of the enlightened Saints* of this Era, that *has already substantially* fulfilled the symbol of the "Voices"—expositions of the Divine Word showing that we are living in the end not only of the Gospel Age, but of the present evil World. Yea, truly, for the past several decades or so, many "loud"—*definite, emphatic* messages of the truth have gone forth. These "*voices*," this wide dissemination of these dispensational Harvest truths has resulted in a general awakening and arousing of the devout and consecrated Watchers in all parts of Christendom, leading them to a realization of Christ's Presence, and of the urgent and solemn necessity of *watching, and of adjusting their garments* and giving earnest heed to all necessary preparation to meet the Bridegroom in this time when the faithful are being glorified together with Him.

In recalling this symbolic picture of the Harvest given in Revelation 14, of the reaping and gathering of the Saints, it is well to note also that in that same connection (verses 17-20) there is pictured another aspect—*another "sickle,"* and another command to "thrust" in the sickle to "gather *the clusters of the vine of the earth*"; for it is said, that, "*Her grapes are fully ripe.*" It is generally conceded that this symbolism is a portrayal of the destruction of the great system of evil supervised and controlled by the Adversary for long ages; which has its branches and tendrils *reaching out* and running through all the schemes, systems and institutions of men—politically, socially and ecclesiastically; the punishment and overthrow of which has seemed long deferred—*until now, the due time*. Lack of space forbids our noting further details of this feature, which we leave to a later time. However a brief reference to the matter by Pastor Russell is quite to the point here, as follows:

"Our Lord says, I am the *true* Vine, ye are the branches and My Father is the Husbandman. Later on He points out that there is a 'Vine of the Earth,' a nominal church, a false church, that was *not* of the *Father's* planting, and which shall be *rooted up*. The fruitage of the true Vine is Love, and is precious to the Father; but the fruitage of the 'Vine of the Earth' is selfishness in various forms, and will be ultimately gathered into the great winepress of the wrath of God in the great time of trouble with which this Age will close.—John 15: 1-6; Rev. 14:19." Scripture Studies, Vol. 6, p. 207.

THE GREAT DISTRESS SPREADS OVER ALL NATIONS

The Apocalyptic description continues: "And the nations were angry and Thy wrath is come." For three quarters of a century, the faithful Watchers of this Harvest Era *have had their attention called to many prophecies* portraying the "Day of the Lord," the "Day of vengeance of our God"—"the Day of His wrath" on the nations. Innumerable sermons and voluminous messages have been distributed pointing to the signals which prove that *the nations were swiftly marching to Armageddon*, the last great struggle under the Empire of evil. As the years wore on, great and dreadful world-conflagrations broke forth in all their fury; yes, *in our generation and Day*, striking consternation and terror to the hearts of all earths' peoples; and the results, in unprecedented distress and disorder *spread over all nations in this hour*, is regarded by many thoughtful persons in all sections of the earth, as ominous of some vast change and unparalleled revolution in the government of this terrestrial Orb. Ah yes, the time has come for the *long promised* change. How forceful the observations of Pastor Russell speaking of Christ's assumption of His great office in connection with this Seventh Trumpet symbol! He said,

"The results of this assumption of authority by Messiah follow in due course as narrated. (1) 'The nations were angry and Thy wrath is come.' The laying of judgment to the line and justice to the plummet, and the sweeping away of the refuge of lies, an early feature in our Lord's reign, as described in the prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 28:17), will necessarily result in great commotion in the affairs of the 'present evil world'; because its social, financial, political and religious conditions and arrangements *will not square with the Lord's line and plummet of righteousness*. And because He will not put a new patch upon an old garment, present institutions *in their entirety*, will be overthrown, as has been predicted, in the 'time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation'—no, nor ever shall be afterward. How graphically in a few words, is this trouble pointed out—"The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come.'"—Reprints pp. 2992-3.

It is said close in connection with the strife of the "angry nations," that "There were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." This symbolic description fits in well here with the picture of the angry nations. "Lightnings" are sharp flashes of light, of penetrating truths. "Voices" are the shoutings or proclamations of the Truth. "Thunderings" represent bitter contentions, controversies that are always associated with the spread of the truth. The "Earthquake" is

the symbol of revolution or the complete overturning of government: "and great Hail"—hard, forceful truths that have the effect to expose and destroy falsehood and error.

VOICES THAT ANNOUNCE CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Who that is alive and alert at the present moment does not clearly recognize that the above symbolic picture is being fulfilled *before our eyes in this solemn hour*? Have the nations been "angry," and have there been lightnings and voices and thunderings and great hail? Yes, plenty of such manifestations. The present generation in these recent years has witnessed the blackest picture of human "anger" and "wrath" in all the annals of our race. While it may be said that, at various intervals in this Era, there has been a comparative "lull" for a moment, yet a fresh outbreak tells of plenty of anger and wrath *beneath the surface*, merely held in restraint for the moment. The nations *profess* to be bargaining for "universal peace," while their behavior—exhibitions of selfishness and pride manifested in mutterings and bitter disagreement, betray the *insincerity* of their profession and compel the conviction that there is *a further stage* of more dreadful anger and wrath *yet to come*. Yes, those who are truly keeping watch, have observed the "lightnings"—*brilliant flashes of penetrating truths* uncovering the dark places; and heard the "voices" *shouting from the housetops*, startling and incontrovertible facts. Yes, and "thunderings," *the roarings of bitter strife* and threatening controversies in connection with the settling of economic, social and political problems of the present hour. The "great hail" is also in evidence, as in these days of so much *upheaval and confusion*, men are compelled to feel the force of *hard dynamic* truths that expose the falsity of their selfishness and hypocrisy. No wonder the great "earthquake" is mentioned in this connection, for it is the symbol of revolution and complete overthrow of law and order—the *logical end and outcome* of all the belligerent forces in operation at the present moment. Indeed, how aptly these Apocalyptic symbolisms graphically portray the elements and factors that play their parts in the great strife that is to ultimately wreck the nations and thoroughly dissolve the present order in preparation for the subsequent reign of righteousness!

Let it not be overlooked in passing, that we have in the foregoing the clearest and most convincing proof that the Second Presence of Christ *has already taken place*. How so, do we ask? Answer: It is seen in the fact that the dispensing of Divine wrath on the angry nations (which is taking place before our

eyes today), is distinctly stated to be the *result* of Christ's assumption of kingly power *at His Second Presence*. Harken to the utterances of certain distinguished personages, as the Seventh Trumpet sounds and the results follow: "We give thanks to Thee, O Lord God Almighty, . . . *because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned.*" Here we have the aspect presented, that from the commencement of His Presence and assumption of power, *His reign is reckoned as begun*. This is *not in the sense* that His Kingdom is *instantly established* and that He is administering the affairs of government over earth's peoples. Ah no, there is no *such* reign yet, for we still have Satan's kingdom considerably intact. Not until every vestige of Satan's Empire is cleared away and the Kingdom *actually* inaugurated in power, can it be said that Christ is reigning in the *final and complete* sense. But we cannot ignore the plain statement of Scripture that unmistakably presents the standpoint that the work of overturning the present rule of evil is *counted* as part of His *official* reign, for our text declares that "the nations were angry" and the time of trouble came on, resulting in their overthrow—"because [as the result of] Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and *hast reigned!*" Again we have the clear-cut statement in Rev. 19: 11-15, which unquestionably represents Christ's assumption of kingly power at His Second Presence: It is declared in verse 15 that *it is in the capacity* as earth's new King, *present*, that He "smites the nations"; and all of this happens as a part of the Seventh Trumpet symbol.

RESURRECTION AND RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

We hear further the Seventh Trumpet description: "And the time of the dead, that they should be judged." What is this but a statement of the very heart of redemption's story!—an announcement that the blessed times of restitution of all things are being ushered in by the Seventh Trumpet proceedings. Who are the "dead" but the whole human family under Divine sentence of death? "Death has passed upon all men for all are sinners." *As yet* only the few "called out ones" of the present Age, who have heard and received Christ upon the Divine conditions, have life; the residue of humanity from God's standpoint are dead—under sentence of death, and rapidly approaching the tomb. As a result of sin-atonement through the death of the only Begotten Son of God, all the world of dead humanity is to be given an individual trial for everlasting life by hearing His voice, His words. How true it is that none can be judged *without* hearing His words,

to be either worthy or unworthy of everlasting life! Thus will the "dead" be judged and be given their opportunity with full light and understanding concerning the Will of the great Life-Giver. And this harmonizes well with the significance of the "day of judgement," which the Apostle declared to be, "a day with the Lord," but is "*as a thousand years*"—with men.

It is the time "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 [corrupt] the Earth." Surely *the entire proceedings of the Millennial reign* are here embraced in the Seventh Trumpet—the prophets and all the worthy ones of ancient times, the faithful Saints, members of the Body of Christ of this Age, these all are to be rewarded early under the new Sovereignty of Christ; indeed *their* reward is to be amongst the *first* events under the Seventh Trumpet. And "afterwards" others, all the willing and obedient of humanity, all who will obey that great Prophet will share in the rewards and blessings of eternal life. Thus will be fulfilled the rewarding of all "them that fear God's name, small and great." Further, such as will not yield to the righteous rule of God's Kingdom, and still refuse to adjust their lives in harmony therewith, will be deemed unworthy, *unfit to exist in holy society*, these will be considered "corrupt," and their influence corrupting, defiling; and hence the divine decree is that they shall be cut off from amongst the living, in the second death. As we thus behold all this rewarding and judging and cleansing of the earth from every defilement, restoring it to its original holiness and harmony with God, how marvellous, we exclaim, will be the accomplishment of the Divine Purpose under the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet!

THE TEMPLE AND THE ARK OF THE TESTAMENT

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament!"—a further significant accompaniment of the Seventh Trumpet sounding. The temple was the place of God's presence and dwelling with the ancient Hebrews, and therefore as stated by our Lord, it was the place of prayer and worship and meeting with God. In this Dispensation when we have the realities of the Jewish prefigurations, the Church is called, the temple of God. This *opening of the temple*, in the Seventh Trumpet, appears to express the idea of the opening up or the making of *new disclosures*, unfoldings and expositions of the Divine Purpose with regard to the *temple class*, the Church—increased knowledge and vision of

heavenly things especially as they relate to the mysterious purpose of God *centering in the Church*.

This thought appears to be supported by the further words that *there was seen "the ark of the testament."* The ark was also the emblem of God's power and presence with His ancient people. In Jewish history it was the repository of very important treasures. It contained the golden bowl of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the two tables of the law. Indeed all the compacts of the Lord with His people and all His solemn promises to them, were in the ark. All His engagements, whether particular or general, were lodged and treasured there. On earth, the waters of Jordan rolled asunder beneath the shadow of it. The walls of Jericho fell down before it. The enemies of God were scattered where it set forward. The many thousands of Israel were in safety and blessedness *where it rested*. Ah yes, what potency goes along with the ark!

Does not this suggest that it was the symbol of God's Presence and providences; of the spiritual riches and treasures of His grace and truth, *with, and in possession* of the New Creation of this Age? It is remembered that Israel's ark was lost. So indeed, have the spiritual treasures which the ark symbolized to God's people in this Age, been long lost and hidden as the powers of darkness of the great Antichrist (the Papal Dynasty ruling from the City of Rome) overran the true Church in the darker past, during a period of 1260 years from 539 A.D. to 1799 A.D. (Rev. 13:5.) Hence the reappearance of the ark *now* in the "open" temple, in connection with the sounding of the *symbolic* Seventh Trumpet, would seem to be a token of the recurrence and revival amongst the people of God *at this time, of all the ark symbolizes*, of God's power and presence, of spiritual knowledge of the deep and mysterious things of God.

WHEN THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHALL BE FINISHED

Yea, truly, the spiritually enlightened Saints of the last days of this Era of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, have realized *the opening of the temple of heavenly things*, and they have seen the ark of the testament, and can testify of the marvelous and sublime unfoldings and revelations of Divine truth, signifying to them the very Presence and keeping power of God in these last hours.

And all this thought of light and Present Truth for the last days, harmonizes and synchronizes well with what we have already mentioned, and with what is so clearly implied, namely, that this Era of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet represents the *early* Presence, or secret *Parousia* of our Lord in *advance* of His later, *open* revelation to all the world.

We recall again the closing words of the message to Laodicea: "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me!" Unquestionably the Laodicean period *synchronizes* with the Seventh Trumpet sounding. Christ Himself announces His Presence: *He stands at the door and knocks*; He is present, and He so graciously expresses His willingness to *feast* with those who will *recognize* His Presence. Verily have not God's people of these last days realized the overwhelming evidence and testimony of His Presence—of His "knock," of His feasting with His people, in that He has *made them to sit down to meat*, to a table that He Himself has furnished even as He promised!—Luke 12:37.

In this connection, it is again of special interest to recall the solemn asseveration of the angel in chapter 10, verse 7: "In the days of the sounding of the Seventh Angel, the mystery of God shall be finished"! The mystery of God is nothing more or less than the *final sum* of all the sublime features of God's great Redemptive Purpose. For long ages, to benighted creation on earth, *that purpose has been shrouded in mystery*. But as we approach the hour of its consummation, *the mystery unfolds*. Our Lord Jesus is seen to be the very *center* of that great "mystery"; and sharing with Him in it, is the Church, who is to become His Bride.

THE MYSTERY OF SACRIFICIAL CHRIST OF MANY MEMBERS

Through the unfoldings of the Spirit in the New Testament, a very important feature of this mystery is fully explained, that the Christ is not one member but many (1 Cor. 12:14, 27), and Jesus is Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:32.) Indeed, is this not the *same* "mystery" of the Christ mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians (1:26, 27), as "The mystery which *hath been hid* from ages and generations, but *now* is made manifest to His Saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery amongst the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"? Yea, verily, Christ in the Church, the Spirit of the Christ, the living influence and power of the Christ in those who have obtained an inheritance in Him, has enabled these to secure a position or place *in Him* as members of His mystical Body.

The High Calling of the Church to joint-heirship with Christ in His Kingdom includes first of all that she shall participate in His sufferings as *members of the sacrificial Christ*, and the provision is, that

those who faithfully perform their covenant of sacrifice as members of the great Sin-offering with Him, shall also share as members in His glorious spiritual Body, of the heavenly life and nature. How lucidly Pastor Russell presented this completion of the mystery long ago in the following statement:

"In point of time, the mystery of God will be finished *during the period of the sounding of the Seventh [symbolic] Trumpet.* (Rev. 10:7.) This applies to the mystery *in both senses* in which it is used: the mystery or secret features of God's *plan* will then be made known and will be clearly seen; and, also, the 'mystery of God,' the Church, the *embodiment of that plan.* Both will then be *finished.* The secret hidden plan will have sought out the full, complete number of the members of the Body of Christ, and hence it, *the Body of Christ,* will be finished. The plan will cease to be a mystery, because there will be no further object in perpetuating its secrecy."—Scripture Studies Vol. 1, p. 87.

Ah yes, in these days of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God, the Christ in sacrifice, is about to be finished; as indeed the whole

mysterious Redemptive Purpose of God shall be finished; *brought to its fullest consummation* as the Seventh Trumpet continues to sound throughout the blessed Millennial reign. But then this Seventh Trumpet is to *finish* sounding! What then? Ah, how comforting, how softening to all the ruthlessness and ruggedness of the present hour, as we listen and as the sweet voice of the beloved John falls on our ears, giving us the *last* word of this wonderful, wonderful story:

"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. AND GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS FROM THEIR EYES; AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH, NEITHER SORROW, NOR CRYING, NEITHER SHALL THERE BE ANY MORE PAIN: FOR THE FORMER THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY. AND HE THAT SAT UPON THE THRONE SAID, BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW. AND HE SAID UNTO ME, WRITE: FOR THESE WORDS ARE TRUE AND FAITHFUL."

Did Pastor Russell Ever Say He "Did Not Understand The Apocalypse"?

In some quarters, particularly in Great Britain, the report has gained some circulation that "Brother Russell in his later years declared plainly on various occasions that he did not understand the Book of Revelation, not having obtained the 'key'; that when he did obtain it, he would write the Seventh Volume."

Replying to the above, we do not believe there is any support whatever for the claim that Brother Russell issued such a statement. We find no such expression in any of his volumes, sermons or Watch Tower articles. Not only so, but those who lived with Brother Russell and frequently sat in counsel with him, and heard him answer thousands of questions during the last several years of his life, know full well from his various expositions that *he did not entertain any such attitude* as is implied in the statement above. Moreover, it is a well established fact that throughout his writings in the Scripture Studies and Watch Tower articles, as well as some of his sermons, he has left us *hundreds of pages of expositions* of one portion or another of the Revelation, some of which *go very much into detail* in explaining the meaning of its many sanctifying disclosures.

Considering all that Pastor Russell wrote on the Apocalypse, can anyone imagine him making any such statement as that he "did not understand the Apocalypse"? It is utterly unthinkable! We remark further in this connection that Brother Russell did not give his unqualified endorsement of certain "Convention Reports" purporting to give exact and accurate recordings of his answers at convention question meetings.

But further, it certainly is of the greatest importance

that about one month before our dear Brother's passing, he wrote a fresh Foreword for each of the six volumes of Scripture Studies. In these new Forewords, he makes *not the slightest reference* to repudiating or renouncing any of his many expositions of the Apocalypse that were contained in the several volumes; but his statements in general sustain and confirm the conviction that what he had written on the Revelation, he *still regarded as the Truth.* On the other hand, had our dear Brother reached the conclusion in his "later years" that he did not understand anything about the Book of Revelation, and did not comprehend its visions, and that what he had presented on the Apocalypse was *not* the true conception of the Book, then most certainly it would have been nothing short of his sacred duty to have *plainly stated his position* in these late Forewords to the six volumes of the Studies.

That our dear Brother may have acknowledged some uncertainty with regard to the meaning of *certain verses* of the Apocalypse, *it is quite freely conceded.* This would be a most reasonable position for him to have taken. Most surely there are *still* passages in the Apocalypse, the full meaning of which is not known by anyone to this day—notwithstanding the claim of some to the contrary! As a matter of fact, inasmuch as it is *history* that interprets the Revelation, we must, in the case at least of *some* of the visions, wait until the full significance is disclosed *by the events and occurrences of time,* before we are justified in *positive* conviction. Finally, Brother Russell instructed the Brethren to place no credence in any rumor or report of what he taught or did not teach, *unless it appeared* in some of his volumes of Studies, Sermons, or Watch Towers.

Dissolving Of The Fourth Universal Empire-- The Roman "Beast"

Rev. 17:3, 8; 20:4: So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. . . . The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition. . . . And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

TRULY we live and move in days of vast and far-reaching importance—days indeed freighted with revelations and unfoldings of prophetic scenery which have been more or less shrouded in mystery for long ages. But now, having reached by far the most important turn of dispensations in the history of our race when scenes of great significance are passing before our gaze, we observe *this* Era as the due time for marvelous disclosures to the people of God.

This section of the Apocalyptic imagery in which the words of our texts are found, has ever commanded the keenest interest and most careful investigation on the part of devout prophetic students; particularly as it brings to view the development and progress during this Age, of certain world-powers that stand related to the career of the Christian Church down to the time of her glorification.

The "scarlet colored beast" of our text is virtually another phase or view of that which is presented in the vision recorded in *chapter 13*, as the beast that was seen to "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." Again, it is well to be reminded of the uniform view of reliable and accredited expositors that the "Dragon" of chapter 12, the "Leopard-beast" of chapter 13, and the "scarlet colored beast" of chapter 17, refer to different stages, phases, or pictures of the Roman government that bears rule until the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Though we do not have *complete* and *connected* expositions from Brother Russell's pen of this section of the Apocalypse, there are *fragments* scattered here and there through his writings by which we are able to gather the substance and thread of his understanding, which in the light of these latter-day developments seems well sustained. One of his statements quite in support of what we have said above reads as follows:

"The great red dragon represents the Pagan Roman Empire; the seven heads represent Rome's *successive and distinctive forms* of government, and the ten horns, the *divisions of power*; these being mentioned to identify it (Rome) as the *same* beast or government described by *Daniel* and *elsewhere*

in Revelation [chaps. 13 and 17]."—Reprints p. 306.

That Brother Russell, in line with trust-worthy expositors in general, regarded the *fourth* beast of Daniel 7:7, as *identical* with those portrayed in Revelation 12, 13 and 17, there can be no doubt; for his express statement is that:

ANTICHRIST PICTURED IN THE SYMBOL

"Here, [Dan. 7:8], the Roman empire is shown; and the divisions of its power are shown in the ten horns, *a horn being a symbol of power*. The 'little horn' which arose among these, and which appropriated the power of three of them [of the ten], to itself, and ruled among the others [the other seven], represents the *small beginning* and gradual rise to power of the Church of Rome, the Papal power or horn. As it rose in influence, three of the divisions [of the ten], horns or powers of the Roman Empire (the Heruli, the Eastern Exarchate and the Ostrogoths), were plucked out of the way to make room for its establishment as a civil power or horn. This last specially notable horn, Papacy, is remarkable for its eyes, representing *intelligence*, and for its mouth—*its utterances, its claims*, etc.

"After giving some details regarding this last or Roman beast, and especially of its peculiar or Papal horn, the Prophet states that judgment against this horn would be rendered, and it would begin to lose its dominion, which would be consumed by gradual process until the beast should be destroyed."—S. S. Vol. 1, pp. 258, 259.

In this connection it will be of advantage to have in mind the further fact maintained by Brother Russell, namely, that St. Paul's portrayal of the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, the Mystery of Iniquity, etc. (2 Thess, 2:3-8), is definitely identified with the "beast" (and its "little horn" amongst the ten), of Daniel 7, and the beast of Revelation 13, as we read:

"The student of prophecy will find that the Man of Sin is distinctly noted throughout the sacred writings, not only by giving a clear description of his character, but also by showing the times and places of his beginning, prosperity and decline. This character is very forcibly delineated even in the names applied to it by the inspired writers.

Paul calls it 'That Wicked One,' 'The Man of Sin,' 'The Mystery of Iniquity,' 'The Antichrist,' and 'The Son of Perdition;' the prophet Daniel calls it, 'The Abomination that maketh desolate' (Dan. 11:31; 12:11); and *our Lord refers to the same character as 'The Abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet'* (Matt. 24:15), and again as a 'Beast'. (Rev. 13:1-8.) This same character was also prefigured by a little horn, or power, out of a terrible beast that Daniel saw in his prophetic vision, which had eyes, and a mouth that spoke great things, and which prospered and made war with the Saints, and prevailed against them. (Dan. 7:8, 21.) John also saw and warned the Church against this character, saying, 'Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come.' He then advises how to escape Antichrist's influence. (1 John 2:18-27.) The book of Revelation, too, *is in large part a detailed symbolic prophecy concerning this same Antichrist.*"—S. S. Vol. 2, pp. 271, 272.

TEN HORNS—DIVISIONS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

On what general principle or basis now, we ask, have our convictions been founded concerning this "beast," which in the three distinctly different views or pictures (Rev. chapters 12, 13 and 17), is shown to have exactly seven heads (*and no more*), and ten horns? Answer: *On the facts of history themselves*, than which there can be no sounder or more reliable foundation for one's belief. *History alone must be the interpreter* of this mystical prophecy before us; fulfilments recorded in history do indeed supply the *key* or interpretation.

It must be acknowledged by all, that the chief concern about this entire symbolic picture centers in the "seven heads" and "ten horns" on the beast. We will give consideration first, to the horns: the various descriptions of the beast invariably present it with "ten" horns, which, while explained by the revealing messenger to be "ten kings," must be understood to signify "powers" or kingdoms, as already expressed in the quotations above from Brother Russell's pen: "*The ten horns, the divisions of power; these being mentioned to identify it [Rome] as the same beast or government described by Daniel and elsewhere in Revelation.*" "The divisions of its [Rome's] power are shown *in the ten horns, the horn being a symbol of power.*"

If it be insisted that it cannot be clearly shown *that just so many as ten* divisions of the Roman dominion have occurred, either contemporaneously or successively in the past, we urge that the historian alone is the one to settle this question. It is a matter of common knowledge that when the

empire known as Western Rome fell at the overthrow of Romulus Augustulus, the last of the Emperors, 476 A. D., it was "broken up into many independent sovereignties bound together into the one family of Latin Christendom by common submission to the Popes of Rome. The number of distinct kingdoms *has always been about ten*—at times exactly ten, sinking at intervals to eight or nine, rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but *averaging on the whole, ten.*"

The differences in reckoning on the part of scholars, in naming these ten kingdoms, is the result of their calculations being made at different periods in history. The lists would of necessity have to be altered from time to time on account of the short periods during which some of the kingdoms held sway. The Roman Catholic historian, Machiavel, shows a list of the kingdoms which occupied the territory of Western Rome when Romulus Augustulus was overthrown. His calculations are impressive inasmuch as being a Catholic writer, he was not influenced to *make up* the number ten, with the thought of meeting the requirements of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. The kingdoms listed by him are as follows: The Lombards, The Franks, The Burgundians, The Ostrogoths, The Visigoths, The Vandals, The Heruli, The Sueves, The Huns, and The Saxons—ten in all. Very logically has another suggested that, "Whatever was their number afterward, as some of those kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose, *they are still (in the prophecy), called the ten kings, from their first number.*"

THE VISION HAS BEEN FULFILLED AS FORETOLD

Now we look carefully into the statement of the revealing messenger as expressed in the Apocalypse 17:12, 13: "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. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Finding this passage located amongst others that bear upon the *closing* stages of the beast-power, there are those who understand this statement regarding these ten kings (as having received no power as yet), *as still to be fulfilled in the near future.* And some even claim that the ten kings are to be understood *as ten individual men, dictators* who appear on the European stage and rule a brief space with the beast and give it their support; and then later, hate the "harlot," and "burn her with fire." It would seem sufficient to say on this, that if we are to witness a fulfilment in the future, it would be unquestionably a *repetition.* The fact that these

statements in verses twelve and thirteen are found along with others that pertain to *these last days*, argues nothing, inasmuch as it not infrequently occurs in the Apocalypse that a certain important description is found altogether *out of its chronological order*; and this evidently was *intended* by the Spirit, to hide the real meaning until the due time.

In reading the word of the angel, that the ten horns or kings had not received any kingdom *as yet*, we are to bear in mind that (as another has expressed), "the text demands, that the *seeing* (by the Apostle), is *down the stream of time* to where the judgment is executed on the Papacy [approximately, the close of the eighteenth century], while the *explanation* [by the messenger] is *back at the date of the prophecy* [near 96 A. D.]." Thus from this standpoint, all is harmony. In other words, *at the time* the angel was showing these things to John, those ten kings that he was permitted to see *in symbolic vision* had really *not yet received* their kingdoms; and the angel is merely stating this fact, that this part of the vision had not yet (*in John's day*) met fulfilment.

Brother Russell not only did not support the idea of ten individual European dictators fulfilling this symbolic picture, but *he clearly taught to the contrary* that it had *already passed* into history; as witness his words: "As, prior to the year 800, Papacy was rising supported by the Roman 'beast' (people) and by its 'horns' (powers), [the ten kingdoms] so since 1800 *it has been cast off from temporal authority over kings and peoples*, and has been torn and pillaged by those who formerly gave it support. (Rev. 17:16, 17.) Today, though still the recipient of honors, and still possessed of a wide influence over the consciences of the people, Papacy *be-moans its loss of everything* resembling temporal dominion."—S. S. Vol. 2, pp. 354, 355.

THERE REMAINS BUT THE PREDICTED OVERTHROW

What Brother Russell has expressed we have indeed witnessed: These ten kingdoms *did receive power* through the Papal beast, and in an important sense *reigned* with her. It was following Papacy's exaltation in the sixth century, as the historians confirm, that these ten kingdoms became uniform in temper and purpose, accepting the Catholic faith; and by so doing gave their power and strength, *the support of their kingdoms*, to the Papacy for centuries.

As for the words, "One hour with the beast," this cannot be understood to be a chronological prediction, and is not intended to indicate a *specific period* of time, either long or short. We believe there is a more reliable rendering of this verse. The

eminent Mr. Elliott, an accredited Greek scholar, also of the historical expositors, has thrown much light upon this passage, rendering it thus: "*The ten horns are ten kings which receive power at one and the same time with the beast.*" Quoting in part, Mr. Elliot's comment, it reads:

"As the point is one of considerable importance let me give a few examples from both the Old and New Testament (O. T. Septuagint): 'We dreamed both of us *in one and the same night*, he and I' (Gen. 41:11); 'We are all the sons of *one and the same man*' (Gen. 42:11); in the New Testament Phil. 2:2, 'of *one mind*,' or more literally, 'thinking the *one and same thing*'; Eph. 4:4, 5, where the sense is evidently, not that the Christians had each but one Lord, numerically, instead of the many lords of the heathen; or but one baptism, numerically, in contrast with the various baptisms of the Jews; but that they were united by the bond of *one and the same Lord, one and the same baptism*, and *one and the same hope*. And so, indeed, as the very next verse to the passage under consideration (Rev. 17:13), 'These have *one mind*'; that is, *one and the same.*"

Thus we believe it will be seen in the light of the foregoing construction of the text, that there is perfect harmony with the *requirement* of the vision, that the "beast" under its Papal "head" and the "ten horns" (kingdoms), *reign contemporaneously*.

As for the words, "The ten horns [kingdoms] which thou sawest upon the beast shall hate the harlot and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire," the foregoing observations clearly indicate that this prediction has *already been largely fulfilled*. The facts of history well support this view, as we realize that these kingdoms that once gave their support to the Papal power have one after another "snapped their concordats and alliances till the woman's bit and bridle are utterly broken; those kingdoms turning upon her and stripping her of endowments, rejecting her authority and tearing away her territory." Very near the close of the eighteenth century, 1797, the French Ambassador wrote to Napoleon, "Discontent is at its height in the Papal States; the government will fall to pieces of itself. We are making it *consume by slow fire*. It will soon crumble into the dust." And we, in these later times have *witnessed much more* of this "eating her flesh and burning her with fire," significant of the repudiation of the rule of the Papal church hierarchy.

We consider now the "seven heads of the beast": As Brother Russell steadfastly maintained, in common with a long line of expositors, the "seven heads" seen on the beast in its several descriptions

refer to *seven* distinct and successive forms of government ruling from the City of Rome; and they are counted as starting at the time when the Roman beast as a universal power, came into existence. Some say the date was about 31 B. C.; others claim near 51 B. C. It is of special importance to observe that at the time of Papacy's rise in the 6th Century A. D., four of the "heads" or forms of government had already appeared and passed into history. Further, that *the Papacy*, during its long centuries of political rule in the City of Rome, constituted the *fifth* "head." This was that era explained in the quotation above when the "little horn," the Papacy, absorbed the power of the three horns that were plucked up, and held that power till 1799. Unquestionably, about that date, 1799, marked the *end* of the rule of the *fifth* head—the complete end of Papal civil and military control over the nations.

THE FORETOLD HAS BEEN FULFILLED

We glance for a moment at the situation surrounding Rome following 1799; history reveals that though at various intervals following that date, the country of Italy itself was in turmoil and a state of siege, and torn by warring states and provinces seeking ascendancy, the Papacy has held control of the Seven Hilled City, and *from the City of Rome it has ruled* what was known as the Papal States from 1799 to 1870. This we believe fulfils the picture of the sixth head of the beast.* This latter date, however, 1870, marked a definite change in the status of the Papacy, for at that time Rome was by force of arms, brought under the Kingdom of Italy and the *Papal states were seized*. King Victor Emmanuel made Rome his capital, thus leaving the Papacy entirely shorn of all civil power. Pope Pius shut himself in the Vatican, a self-proclaimed

* Some "interpretations" hold that the British Empire is the sixth head of the beast. This claim, we think, is without real support, either from history or from any Apocalyptic statement. Let it be noted that it is a matter of common historic knowledge that Britain proved to be *one of the ten horns* or divisions of the Roman Empire following the fall of Imperial Rome in 476 A. D. It would be entirely inconsistent to think that the divine Spirit dictating the Apocalypse, would represent Britain as both a "horn" and also a "head" in this symbolic imagery. Besides, the symbolic picture of the City of Rome being the original capital of the great beast-empire, requires that all the "heads" of the beast representing *seven different forms of government, shall rule from the City of Rome*. Thus it would be incongruous to name Britain as one of the seven ruling heads of the Roman beast, while its location geographically, is in another section of the ancient Roman Empire.

prisoner. The Pope remained in that status until 1929, when the Vatican treaty with Mussolini was signed.

Thus with the fall of the *sixth* head, there began the *seventh* head, or form of government, which continued to rule from 1870 until late in the year 1943, when the United Nations invaded Italy, and Victor Emmanuel gave up his throne, fled from Rome and never returned. This was not by voice of the people but by force of arms. This would appear to mark definitely the fall of the "seventh head." Early in the year 1946 there was a move amongst the Italian people to call for the return of the monarchy; and though the Roman Pontiff indicated his wishes that the Italian people should return to the King Victor Emmanuel dynasty (as he could best control the people through their king), his wishes did not have the people's endorsement. The election held in June, 1946 resulted in adopting a Republican government. Thus the picture, so far as the "seven heads" of the beast are concerned, has come to an end—"the beast without a head," which signifies it is in the process of death itself—this entire time since the close of World War 2 has been a stormy, turbulent period, with no settled peaceful state of affairs in Italy, nor indeed for any of the European nations. The signals of this hour definitely confirm the interpretations given by Pastor Russell.

Now we ask the reader to carefully consider the reading of verse 10, as follows: "And there are seven kings [forms of dominions]: five are fallen [up to the time to which the angel was referring, *at the end of the Papal political and military dominion* of 1260 years which was 1799], and one is [in power, the Papal power again ruling from Rome], and one is yet to come [the King Emmanuel Dynasty]; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

Thus we come to what is of absorbing interest to prophetic Watchers, particularly from the standpoint of the last or seventh head of the Roman beast having apparently fallen. It is in the observation which Brother Russell makes when he points out that, as Victor Emmanuel took possession of Rome in 1870, making it his capital, there commenced the "seventh head" or form of government. Brother Russell's words follow:

"To our understanding the present Italian government is the *seventh* head of the 'beast' (Rev. 17: 9-11), which has continued a 'short space,' represented in the present monarch and his father Victor Emmanuel. According to this prophecy *Rome will never have another head—the eighth condition will be the beast without a head*—either a republic

or anarchy. If a republic, we shall shortly expect anarchy, 'perdition.' All the signs of our time corroborate prophecy, and bid us lift up our heads and rejoice that our redemption is nigh."—Reprints p. 2062.

We here consider verse 8 of chapter 17, particularly the words which are offered by some, as proof that the Roman Papacy will rise to power again, which reads: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition."

We do not believe that these words at all support the idea of the return of the Papal beast to power. Rather, something is being *read into the text* that is not there. In view of what has been offered foregoing in this discussion, we do not think the words of verse 8, "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit", can have any such meaning as that of another exaltation to power. It has been conceded by expositors generally, that this verse and two or three others in chapter 17 closely related, have around them an air of mystery, placing them amongst the most difficult passages in the Apocalypse; and this is indicated in the words, "*Here is the mind that hath wisdom!*"

IN WHAT SENSE HAS THE "BEAST" BEEN IN THE BOTTOMLESS PIT?

It is not at all sufficient nor satisfactory to say that when the Papacy lost its ruling power over the Nations in 1799, or when it lost its hold upon all temporal power in 1870, that *there*, the Papal "Beast" went into the "Abyss", or "bottomless pit" condition. It was indeed shorn of its civil and military power; but viewing it as we must, from the standpoint of *the movements of its "heads" and "horns,"* it has continued to be a mighty and influential ecclesiastical system, and very effectively but subtly reaching out its tendrils through many agencies and instrumentalities into the affairs of all the civilized nations. Again we emphasize the fact that *all this aspect* of the beast, presents the standpoint of the activities and movements of its heads and horns, etc.

We are better enabled to grasp the situation if we, in thought and imagination, take our position with John as he stands there observing this huge and most cruel-looking monster. Presumably there was a vast *body* to this beast, that constituted an important feature on which were located the heads and horns. The entire animal commanded the most absorbing interest, "wonder" and "amazement" on the part of John. Naturally as he hears the angel's strange explanation, his eyes are glancing first at one section of the beast and then another. As his

attention is held on the *body* of the beast, *apart* from the "heads" and "horns," it seems to move and struggle as if restrained, bound, imprisoned. A strange anomaly is this, causing John to say, "I wondered with great amazement!" Hence, we are not surprised to find that in its various descriptions, sometimes what is said of the beast relates to the activities or doings of the *horns and heads*, and at other times the "*body*" of the beast is *exclusively* meant. What is the symbolic meaning of this apparently, vast huge *body* that stood before John's gaze? Obviously, *the Empire itself*, composed of nations and peoples, is inferred or represented in the "*body*" that supported those seven heads and ten horns. Plainly, it was the beast *from the standpoint of the "body,"* that is meant in the statement, "*shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.*"

Here again we rely upon *the facts of history*, which reveal that the beast, meaning the "body", nations and peoples making up the Empire, had for long centuries been in the "abyss" state, held in slavery, ignorance and superstition and downtrodden by priestcraft and kingcraft (as represented in the aspect of *the movements and behavior* of the "heads" and "horns.") Thus the angel in his explanation to John is portraying how a time comes approximately at the close of the beast's career when the beast, meaning the Empire, the nations and peoples arises and *ascends out of the "abyss"*—throws off the yoke of this long enslavement and oppression of centuries.

ASCENDS OUT OF BOTTOMLESS PIT AND GOETH INTO PERDITION

For the best part of two centuries now, this has been going on, as the peoples who have supported the *Beast-government* have become enlightened, and as a result, have "ascended" out of this state of imprisonment, ignorance and superstition. This fact cannot be disputed, for the results are manifest to every intelligent reader in these days as he looks over the European countries and sees how one after another of the nations and peoples supporting the cruel "heads" and "horns" *have broken the spell* and come out of this bondage. This, then, is what we believe is the meaning of the mysterious statement in verse 8. Let us now read it from the standpoint of the above explanation:

"The beast [Papal System] that thou sawest was [*in power* through its various heads] and is not [*now in power*, the *ruling* heads having fallen]; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit [that is, the beast as represented in the "body," the peoples, nations and kingdoms supporting the heads, shall rise up out of the imprisoned state] and go into

perdition [as a result of this enlightenment of the supporting peoples and nations, the beast as an empire and governing system, goes into complete destruction at the hands of the lawless and anarchistic elements; probably as a *closing* feature of this Day of vengeance]. And they that dwell on the earth [the unrenewed *earthly* minded of the professing church not understanding spiritual things] shall wonder [be amazed, confounded] whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world [who failed to gain membership in the elect Church] when they behold [see, observe] the beast that *was* [once in power] and *is not* [now in power] and yet *is* [still exists as an empire in the sense of *nations and peoples*, but powerless, as its heads and horns are fallen]."

As verse 11 is closely related to the foregoing, we submit the following:

"And the beast that *was* [once reigning] and *is not* [now in power] even he is the eighth [*the "eighth" condition or state of the beast*; all seven of the heads having fallen—*the beast without a head*, ready for the last act] and is of the seven [it is still the same beast, empire, nations, peoples, etc., which once was "*of*" or once possessed the seven heads, that one after another had been in power and reigned] and goeth into perdition [complete destruction, as noted in verse 8]."*

"SOULS THAT WERE BEHEADED"— THE ENTIRE CHURCH

We ask the reader to carefully consider that the facts and circumstances surrounding this mysterious "eighth," mentioned in verse 11, do not permit of the construction, "the eighth *head*," as claimed by some. Let it be borne in mind that in all the various descriptions of this beast and in all the explanations made by the revealing messenger, we discover no reference whatever to the beast having "*eight heads*." Seven is *invariably* the number recorded. Now if there were actually to come another head in *addition* to the seven that had appeared before, then unquestionably *eight* heads would have been *seen through all the symbolic descriptions* of the beast, and the sacred narrative would read, "The beast *having eight heads and ten horns*." But the mys-

* To the objection made by some that it were entirely unreasonable to think of this beast still existing on and moving about "without a head," our reply is, the facts show that the history of the beast is substantially *at an end*, and its movements and operations are *completed when this "eighth condition" is reached*; and therefore the obvious conclusion is that this "eighth" is the beast in its *dying* process.

terious "eighth" is *conspicuous by its absence* in the various descriptions. Therefore the advocates of "clearer light" on this text, are without any real support in calling it the "eighth head". It seems then, a matter beyond question that the divine Spirit purposely made use of the term "eighth", in this connection to further conceal the real meaning until the due time. Now that the *foretold* is largely the *fulfilled*, the seven "heads" of the beast are seen to have appeared; and *history* claims them all. Hence the designation, "the eighth", can mean nothing less than *the eighth condition or state*. As we have seen, there has been no settled order nor peaceful rule in Italy since the fall of the Monarchy.

A further word of explanation is here appended bearing upon the claims of some, that there is *still* an era of special persecution of the Saints, of the near future; the principal "proof" offered in support of this claim, is that of Revelation 20:4, which reads: "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." We are asked to believe that as John represented the Church of the last days, beholding the meaning of these visions, therefore it must be understood that these persons mentioned in verse 4 of chapter 20, as being "beheaded," etc., are exclusively the Saints of the Laodicean period and that the meaning is that the last remnant of these will suffer death by violence as a result of their faithfulness in giving their "final witness." We can only say in reply to this that such a construction of the text is *not in harmony with the context nor the facts* in this era of Laodicea. *None* of the Saints in the Laodicean period thus far have been persecuted unto *death* by any beast-power; and we cannot for one instant think that the few Saints who, according to this theory are to suffer violence in the future, can be the sum total of the class mentioned as "beheaded."

A brief but careful glance at this passage, we believe, reveals that this is another view of Christ's Second Presence and the assembling of all those who are to compose the Kingdom with Him; just as chapter 14 mentions the 144,000, the *complete* Church with Christ on Mount Zion. Thus the venerable John is telling us that he saw the Church of the entire Age exalted with Christ; all who had, in their consecration and uncompromising devotion to Christ, proved that they were *at heart, of the martyr spirit*—that they would gladly suffer violent death for Him if need be. The fact, then, that the exact number of 144,000 is not mentioned here in chapter 20:4, is *no proof* that the Church *complete* is not comprehended in this description.

As for this final "witness" that the last members are supposed to give in the future, according to the "interpretation" of some, we are asked to accept as proof, the statement in Revelation 10:11, which reads, "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings." Our reply is that here we are confronted again with what we believe is a misapplication and misconstruction. And once more we rest upon the records of the historian, which show that this prediction about a "second prophesying" has also gone into history. In the first place, a careful examination of this vision recorded in chapter 10, shows that it is a portrayal of events and occurrences that came to pass *before* the Second Presence of Christ took place, inasmuch as it all happened *prior to the sounding of the seventh trumpet*. Therefore as previously explained, it is our conviction that chapter 10 is a portrayal of events beginning with the sixteenth century reformation and reaching down to the last days in which we live.

THE "SECOND FLIGHT"—"COME OUT OF HER
MY PEOPLE"

Let the reader note particularly what is said in verses 9 and 10 of this chapter, about the eating of the little book and the results of sweetness and bitterness that followed. Again we have Brother Russell's very illuminating statement with regard to this era, during which, as a result of the reformation and the letting in of wonderful light, there was the grand portion of truth given to the holy people and accepted by them with the results that are recorded. And thus *out of this era of special enlightenment* there has come the "second prophesying" as represented in the wide dissemination of the truth for the past century and a half in particular, which most certainly fulfils all the requirements of these verses in chapter 10. Brother Russell's words follow:

"This message concerning Michael's Kingdom, *gradually opening from 1829 onward*, is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation (chap. 10:2, 8-10), as a 'little book,' which the 'wise' of the 'holy people,' represented by John, are instructed to eat. And John's experience, as expressed in verse 10, is the experience of all who receive these truths. They bring wondrous sweetness: Oh, the blessedness! But the after effects are always more or less a blending of the bitterness of persecution with the sweetness. And the effect upon those who patiently endure to the end, is to purge, purify and refine, and thus to make the Bride of Christ ready for the marriage and exaltation, due toward the close of the Day of Preparation."—S. S. Vol. 3, p. 89.

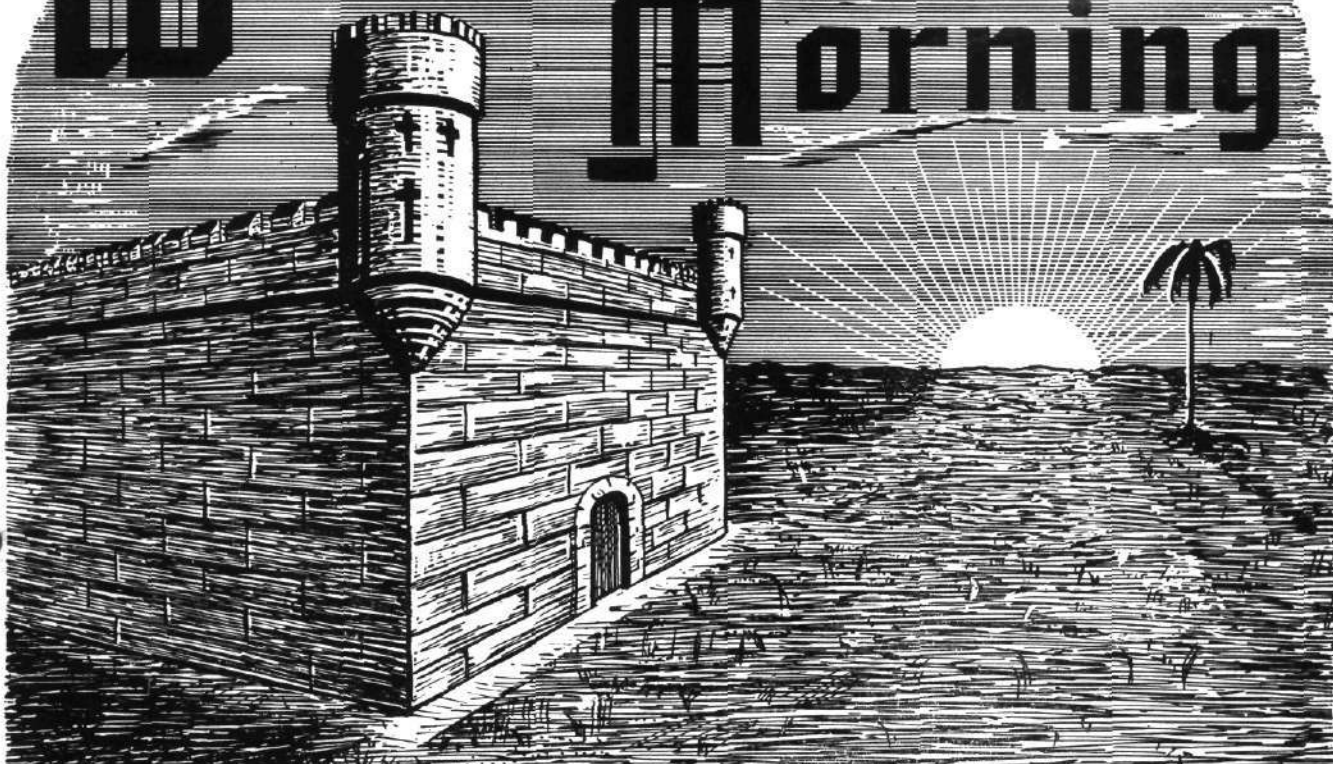
The "interpretation" we are examining, offers a further line of testimony concerning the second witnessing or "prophesying" which is *supposed* to be yet *future*. It is in the picture of the "second flight" of Elijah from Jezebel. (1 Kings 19:3.) This is construed to mean that as a result of the *future* second "prophesying" there will be *another* era of persecution and another "flight" of the Church, etc. Again it is sufficient to say that the historical facts of the last days confirm the conviction that the "second flight" *has already taken place*, just as the "second prophesying" is *practically finished*. As the daughter systems, together with the great "mother of harlots," constitute great Babylon, so the *second* prophesying has been more in connection with the "Protestant" daughter systems; and the second persecution, *in the main*, has come from *this* section of Babylon. The Light for the last days, culminating in the opening up of the truth constituting the Harvest Message, has aroused again the persecuting spirit. True enough, no one has been literally put to death, but there has been the *symbolic killing of the name*, vilifying, misrepresentation, and "casting out of the synagogue," from all of which the true Saints have had to "flee" in obedience to Christ's command, "Come out of her, My people."

And now in this late hour, *where is the real Elijah class* on earth that has fled Babylon and its persecuting spirit? Answer: The antitypical Elijah has evidently gone from public view again, into the wilderness—the unknown, isolated condition. No one can locate the *true Saints* today *as a body, in any concrete form*, operating under any particular title or designation. The true Elijah class, the *real Saints* of this time, are generally unknown except as the ones, the twos and the threes isolated and scattered here and there amongst multitudes of *professing* "truth people," composed of many groups and factions. Ah yes, have we not indeed witnessed the second flight of the Elijah class!

Having briefly but surely traced the fulfilment of these strange symbolic prophecies through the centuries and *to our day*, we believe there is every reason for the conviction that we are brought close to the margin of the long predicted overthrow, and the "going into perdition" of the great antichristian system. It is not the province of any of us at this time to prophesy, nor to be wise above what is written, but it is the blessed privilege of the "wise virgins" to be awake and to keep their lamps trimmed and burning *brightly* at this solemn hour when they are "going out to meet the Bridegroom."

HE THAT HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO THE CHURCHES. THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN. —REV. 3:22; 22:21.

Watchers of the Morning



"Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth." — John 17:17.

SEPTEMBER, 1951

- THE DIVINE SPIRIT SPEAKS THROUGH THE APOCALYPSE
- SEVEN EPISTLES CONTAIN PROPHETIC COUNSEL FOR ENTIRE CHURCH
- CHRIST STILL WALKS AND SPEAKS—MIDST THE CHURCH OF LAST DAYS
- PROPHETIC PHOTOGRAPHS OF PAGAN AND PAPAL ROME — FOUR HORSEMEN
- LEOPARD-BEAST AND HIS IMAGE—IN THE LATTER DAYS
- REVIEWS AND QUESTIONS ON THE APOCALYPSE—CHAPTER TWELVE
- VOICES OF COMFORT

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"

I have espoused you to
one husband, that I may
present you as a chaste vir-
gin to Christ.

For we are members of
His body.

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.—
2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:30-32



Behold, I stand at the
door, and knock. If any
man hear My voice, and
open the door, I will come
in to him, and will sup with
him, and he with Me.

To him that overcometh
will I grant to sit with
Me in My throne. . . .

He that hath an ear, let
him hear what the Spirit
saith unto the Churches.

—Rev. 3:20-22.

“Looking for that Blessed Hope.”

Watchers of the Morning

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This Journal is regarded as a Stewardship to be used only in the Divine service. Hence a responsibility to the Master is recognized for the conduct of this ministry, which cannot and will not be cast aside. Our decisions as to what shall or shall not be published in these columns must be according to our judgment of the Lord's good pleasure, the teachings of His Word for the upbuilding of His people in grace and knowledge in this day of His Presence. However, helpful suggestions and constructive criticism will be warmly welcomed. The reader is urged to prove all utterances by the infallible Word of God.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE CONCERNING THIS SPECIAL DOUBLE-NUMBER TREATING PORTIONS OF THE APOCALYPSE

This issue of WATCHERS OF THE MORNING, a double-number of thirty-two pages, is intended to cover the two months of September and October. Hence the next regular issue of this Journal will be that of November. As will be observed, this double-number is devoted exclusively to expositions of the Revelation visions. From the many warm expressions of deep interest in the studies of the Apocalypse published in the double-number of WATCHERS in September, 1950, also that published in August, 1945, we are assured that our readers have been richly benefited and edified by what has already been presented. We are accordingly sending out this double-number for September, 1951, devoted specially to these Apocalyptic visions that were given to the "Disciple of love" for the entire Church of the Age. It is our confidence that the earnest and prayerful study of the Revelation disclosures cannot fail of yielding to the devout reader the rich "blessing" promised, Rev. 1:3—especially as it is realized that the days in which we live are increasingly filled with ominous and impressive signals of vast importance to all faithful Watchers. Some of the themes dealt with in previous Revelation editions, have been partially included in this issue, as some of the earlier ones are now long out of print. It is our earnest hope and prayer that this issue of WATCHERS OF THE MORNING will fulfill the purpose desired at this time, and that the blessing of God may richly accompany our mutual efforts to comfort one another with these messages of faith and hope. Our subscribers may feel free to order extra copies to pass on (with careful discretion) to others whom they believe may be interested in, and helped by the contents of this issue. Also extra copies of the Revelation issue of September, 1950 may be had on request.

Adding a further word, our readers may order freely of the two regular issues of July and August, containing special matter of importance to all.



"GOD SHALL HELP HER IN THE DAWNING OF HER MORNING"

The Divine Spirit Speaks Through The Apocalypse

Rev. 1:1; 2:7: The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

THE last message spoken by the Redeemer to His Church, was "signified by His angel unto His servant John," and bears the inspiring title, "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST." The word, Revelation, is from the Greek term, "*Apokalupsis*," from which we derive the appellation, APOCALYPSE, which signifies, revealing, unveiling, uncovering, unfolding. Truly this is the basic thought throughout this Book that completes the canon of Divine inspiration.

Some sixty years after the Apostles had witnessed the Ascension of their adorable Master, the venerable John was now once more to behold in Apocalyptic vision, the risen and glorified Redeemer—yea, and hear from His own lips what, in some respects seemed a strange and startling announcement: "I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD; AND, BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOR EVERMORE." This appearance of the Savior was *not* for the purpose of convincing John that He was the living Christ, for indeed this fact had long ago become a *crystallized truth* in his soul. And in the strength of it the Apostle had spent long years in faithful ministry, and his race-course was nearly run. He is even now, at the time of receiving the Revelation, an exile on the desolate and barren Isle of Patmos, "FOR [BECAUSE OF FAITHFULNESS TO] THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST." This final visitation of the risen Christ on Patmos had for its object the imparting of a series of Apocalyptic messages which indeed must have comforted the aged Apostle as well as the local churches of that time, to whom the messages were sent; but were doubtless intended more particularly to counsel, instruct and illuminate the Church of the entire Age.

Deeply thankful are all devout students of the Word, that a most kindly providence designed that the final Epistle to the Church, by St. John, should be this profoundly inspiring symbolic prophecy,

known as "The Apocalypse," or "The Great Revealing." That it was to be particularly for the Church, and its fulfilment to commence at once, there can be no reasonable doubt, as stated in the introductory words, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must *shortly come to pass*." "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify these things *in the Churches*." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith *unto the Churches*." (Rev. 1:1; 2:7; 22:6.) As indicated in the opening verses of chapter 1, a special blessing was promised to those in the Church who would *read and hear*.

PRIMITIVE CHURCH SAW MIRROR OF HER EXPERIENCE

It is therefore with sound and excellent reason that someone has remarked that the Apocalypse is a "prophetic story of the trials and the triumphs of the Church of Christ," and was so regarded by the early Church, who attached a Christian meaning to the entire Book. To those who constituted Christ's Church in the first three centuries, the *fulfilment* of the visions of Revelation *had already begun*, for they immediately saw on opening the Book that it was *not to some distant period* in the Church's history merely that the prophecy related, but to those occurrences and transactions that were even then, nineteen centuries ago, "at hand"—in the sense of marking the *early stages* of the fulfilment. The inspired asseveration contained in the introductory words, as we have seen, determined this primitive interpretation—"THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY BE DONE." "FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND." And as has been effectively noted, not a single trace is to be found, in that interpretation, of the "gap theory" of modern Futurism—the theory that the prophecy, overleaping the last nineteen centuries of Christian history, *plunges at once into the remote future* and occupies

itself with the events of a brief closing period, *a mere stormy sunset hour*, in the story of the world.

Considering that the Apocalypse was given to the Church toward the close of the first century, while she was enduring great suffering from the cruel persecutions of Pagan Rome when such characters as Domitian ruled the Roman world, this prophecy of the trials and the sorrows of the Saints and martyrs, struck a chord which strongly vibrated in every Christian heart. Further, it is most reasonably deduced from the accounts of history, that to the Martyr Church of the first three centuries, this book of martyrs was at once the mirror of her experiences, and the treasury of her hope. It *illuminated the darkness and dreariness of her lot*, with rays of celestial brightness. It was recognized as "the golden crown of Revelation;" the highest stone of its structure; the most triumphant note of its lofty music. What wonder that every sentence of the mysterious prophecy should have been studied with earnest attention by the Church of primitive times? What wonder that its visions should have arrested the gaze of men eager to read the meaning, and to pierce the secrets of futurity? What wonder that the hands of humble sufferers of lonely exiles, of holy martyrs should have transcribed its pages with loving care, and transmitted them to their beloved companions in "the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ"?

Thus as we go backward in our investigation, to those primitive days of purer faith and nobler heroism, and endeavor to realize what must have been to the brethren of that time, the first faint dawns of the understanding of this mysterious prophecy that penetrated their minds, we are able to appreciate and mark how that beacon-light has been gradually increasing and growing brighter "as the course of history unfolded the meaning of the prophecy, and the secrets of Providence became revealed" to the eye of faith.

THE KEY TO THE ENTIRE PROPHECY

It matters not that some of the views entertained were more or less hazy; not discerning the fulness of the truth respecting the Divine plans and purposes, they nevertheless recognized the underlying principles indicated in the visions throughout, that Christianity was *ultimately destined* in the consummation of the Divine purpose *to prove itself a mighty conquering force*, bringing all things and all creation in subordination to the Divine Will as indicated in the Redeemer's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done in earth, even as it is done in Heaven."

Brethren in the early part of the Age were therefore enabled to recognize with many today, that the vision of Christ going forth on His world-conquering

mission, most naturally begins the Apocalypse. In the very commencement in the sacred Drama the glorious conqueror goes forth, to whose Head at the close of the Drama, are transferred the "many crowns" of universal dominion.

In the vision thus understood, is discovered *the key to the entire prophecy*; for this is the starting point of the whole. Seals, trumpets, and vials present a continuous course of history stretching to the great consummation, having as its commencement the going forth of the Gospel of Christ to accomplish ultimately its world-subduing work. The inference is unavoidable that the Apocalypse presents a prophetic foreview of the entire course of Christian history, from the foundation of the Church to the end of the Age. Nor was any other interpretation ever known in the Christian Church till the rise of modern Futurism.

ONE BRIGHT STAR SHONE IN THEIR SKY

While the early Christians were correct in applying the historical principle in their study of the Revelation and in leading features, yet their interpretation of the Apocalypse was necessarily deficient in scope. Their viewpoint *must of necessity* have been narrow as compared with the privilege of *devout truth seekers of this time*—who are now permitted to have before their vision the grand sweep of centuries with the many occurrences and developments which throw so much light upon the Apocalyptic visions. And so the early Church knew nothing of the long centuries which were destined to elapse *before* the Dispensation had run its course. It knew nothing of the great anti-Christian Papal Apostasy which was to darken the earth by its long and terrible eclipse; and nothing of the glorious reformation which was to follow, although all these were foretold in the far-seeing Apocalyptic Prophecy. Rome *Pagan*, in her declining dominion and proximate doom, *filled the scene* on which the early Christians gazed. One bright star shone in their sky, burning with intense and uncontaminated splendor—the hope of the speedy Coming of Christ. For that great event they watched and waited. They believed that to suffer with Christ was the prelude to reigning with Him, and that His Kingdom was close at hand. And this conviction nerved them to endure the utmost torments which Rome had power to inflict. In this conviction they lived and died "more than conquerors."

Thus it is seen that the Apocalyptic Prophecy *filled a place of the very highest practical importance* in the Martyr Church, pointing as it did, ever and always, toward Him who is the Alpha and Omega, announcing again and again, "Behold, He cometh,"

thus sustaining in the Church of that time, as it ever has since, the blessed hope of the speedy Advent of the world's Redeemer and King.

Then, ere the curtain of this great Apocalyptic Drama was allowed to fall, they saw the descent of the New Jerusalem in all its glory and splendor—significant of the long promised Kingdom of God; they saw the resurrection of the "blessed and the holy"; they beheld the picture of redeemed humanity; they heard the Voice of Him that sat upon the Great White Throne saying, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the Throne said, "Behold I make all things new. And He said unto Me, Write: for these things are true and faithful."

As we of these last times thus read the record of that excellent company of Christ's followers, of how they were blessed in heart and soul as a result of their patient and earnest inquiry into the visions of the beloved John, we are reminded of how wonderfully the Lord fulfilled to His faithful people of those early times, as well as throughout the Age unto the present moment, that blessed promise with which the Apocalypse opens, "BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH, AND THEY THAT HEAR THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY."

PASTOR RUSSELL SAW MEANING OF APOCALYPTIC VISIONS

Considering that the illustrious ministry of Pastor Russell has doubtless been of greater aid to the Church than that of any man since the days of St. Paul and St. John, we are not surprised to observe that he made an exhaustive study of the Apocalypse, *which unquestionably had to do with greatly illuminating his mind*. Throughout his writings there is richly interspersed a vast array of Apocalyptic testimony, the character of which definitely shows that he followed the historical line of interpretation; that he believed that the Revelation was a history of God's people, and in fact, of the entire Divine Plan, particularly from our Lord's First Advent forward to the end of the Millennium. A brief passage from his writings will sustain this thought:

"During the Christian Age, some of the Saints sought to understand the Church's future by examining this symbolic Book, and doubtless all who read and understood even a part of its teachings were blessed as promised. (Rev. 1:3.) The Book kept opening up to such, and in the days of the Reformation was an important aid to Luther in deciding that the Papacy, of which he was a conscientious minister, was indeed the "Antichrist" mentioned by the Apostle, *the history of which we now*

see fills so large a part of that prophecy."

From this standpoint of the prophetic character of the Apocalypse, and seeing now that more than eighteen centuries have passed into history since the visions were communicated to the Apostle, with what thrilling and consuming interest do devout disciples of Christ *now* read his description of the appearance of the risen and living Savior! For, to those now walking in the light of the Spirit, this cryptical manifestation was evidently intended *to set forth and portray* that most soul-comforting truth of Christ's presence with, and providential care for, His Church throughout the entire Age.

CHRIST AMONGST SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

From John's description, the appearance of the Savior *was as a priest* as He is seen walking amongst seven golden candlesticks, *exercising a special care and oversight, watching the supply of oil*, that the spiritual light was not permitted at any time to be extinguished by the cruel powers of darkness. In the Tabernacle, and subsequently in the Temple of Solomon, the golden candlesticks or lampstands were placed by the Lord's direction—not seven candlesticks, but one with seven branches, representing the whole Church, the complete Church during this Gospel Age. In Revelation the same candlestick or lampstand is brought to our attention, but the parts are separated—the union, the relationship between them, being supplied by our Redeemer, the Antitypical High Priest. The lampstand symbolized the Lord's *nominal* people of this Gospel Age, including His "members." It holds forth the light of life, the light that shines in the darkness and which He directed should be so let shine before men that they might see our good works and glorify the Father in Heaven. Alas! the Master evidently found but few good works, but little glorifying light shining out from His earthly representatives in many of these epochs. This is represented by His messages, chidings, encouragements, etc., given to each of these epoch-churches represented by the different candlesticks or lampstands. Thus *the lampstand represents the nominal church of Christ rather than the true*. This is shown by the fact that in the Lord's addressing each of these lampstands or churches, HE FINDS FAULT WITH THE MANY AND APPROVES THE FEW, ESPECIALLY SO IN THE LAST, THE SEVENTH, THE LAODICEAN CHURCH OF OUR DAY.

We are not to regard the Apostle's description (Ch. 1:13-16) as a portrait of our Lord in glory. *That appearance was primarily of symbolic and prophetic significance!* The Savior will not look as here described, when the Saints *see Him as He is*, and behold His glory. As noted above, this cryptical

picture has precious lessons for us, more useful than an attempt to describe to our minds the appearance of our Lord as a spirit being, "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto," and which none can appreciate until "CHANGED" AND MADE LIKE HIM, AND "SEE HIM AS HE IS."

His head and hair as white as wool and snow, tell us of His wisdom, and that He is the "Ancient of Days"; they speak also of splendor and purity. His eyes, like a flame of fire, tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing; omniscient! that He is not deceived by outward forms or ceremonies, but can and does read every thought and intent of the heart. The contemplation of His glance should of itself purge and purify our hearts to the extent of ability, *to put far from us everything which would have His disapproval.*

Having described the head, John mentions the hands and feet. The remainder of the body was covered with a garment which reached from His head to His feet. This may possibly represent the fact that the glory of Christ was manifested in His own person, in His own ministry and in that of His twelve Apostles, His representatives, and that with their death *the body of Truth was almost completely veiled throughout the eighteen centuries* intervening until now, in the end of the Age, when the feet-members have been illuminated by the Truth, and shine forth—*not like the Head*, but as "FINE BRASS AS IF BURNED IN A FURNACE"—suggestive of fiery trials of this Laodicean Era. Then further, when we think of the great advantage in every way, which we of the present Age possess, we are inclined to say, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness of living and Godliness! We who have the focused rays of Divine inspiration and revelation from the past six thousand years shining upon us with almost burning brightness, how it should consume in us, all the dross of selfishness, how it should purify us—how humble it should make us, how we should be even in our flesh, polished bright, luminous representatives of the glorious Head and members of the Christ!

Now it is this One whom we thus recognize as the Instructor and Caretaker of the candlesticks, the churches, that we are to recognize also as having in His right hand, *in His favor as well as in His power*, seven stars—the angels or messengers of the seven churches. These stars are symbolical also and apparently represent special ministers or servants of the Church. In Revelation 12:1 the Church is pictured as a woman "crowned with twelve stars." These stars evidently represent the twelve Apostles as the special lights of the Church. Similarly, in the picture before us, the seven stars which the Lord holds in His right hand seem to represent special

light-bearers in the Church in each of the seven phases or developments. That they are held in His right hand, seem to teach us that these should be considered as *in some special sense under the Master's guidance and protection and care* in the interest of the churches which they represented.

It will be noticed that the messages to the various churches are all *addressed to these stars or messengers or angels* of the churches, as though He would have us understand that the appropriate message for each appropriate time or epoch in the Church's experience, would be sent by the Lord through a particular star or messenger whom He would specially commission as His representative. Who is there in this Era of the Church's history, that will question that our venerable Brother and Pastor, C. T. Russell, is amongst these special light bearers whom St. John saw in our Lord's right hand! Our Lord Himself is represented by the great light of the sun; and His special messengers in the Church throughout the entire period are consistently enough represented as stars. The difference between the figures of the star and the candlestick is manifest: the star light is the heavenly light, *the spiritual enlightenment or instruction*; the lamp light is the earthly light, representing good works, obedience, etc., of those who *nominally constitute the Lord's Church, or the church at large, in the world*, and who are exhorted not to put their light under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and to let their light so shine as to glorify their Father in Heaven.

"IN HIS RIGHT HAND SEVEN STARS"

Now the question is logically before us here: how came these stars to gain the positions as special luminaries in the Lord's right hand?—was it through the instrumentality of some earthy agency or through the offices of some person or special influence?—or was it by the appointment of some religious system or organization? Our reply is, that there is *nothing* in the symbolical description that conveys any such thought. Obviously, these special light-bearers occupy those positions by reason of the *arbitrary decision of Christ Himself*—though it may even be that at least some of these "stars" or "light-bearers" may never have known, during their entire lifetime that they were occupying such distinguished positions. It is well to bear in mind in this connection that in the formation and early stage of the Church, we read much in the Word about *the Holy Spirit indicating the mind of the Lord* respecting all important developments and appointments in the Church. Hence, these stars seen in Christ's right hand are according to the *order and procedure of the Primitive Church.*

Now that there lies behind us more than eighteen centuries since the visions were given to the Apostle, the signals about us indicate beyond question that many of those symbolic prophecies, "those things" that were, in St. John's day, "shortly to come to pass," *are now matters of history*. And the careful and devout student may today, place the Apocalypse alongside any reliable secular history and *trace the fulfillment in such detail and remarkable accuracy*, as to leave no doubt regarding the soundness of the application; finally establishing the conclusion that we are carried far down the stream of time, and indeed, into the very days of the Presence of the Son of Man.

With what burning interest may we today, "His servants," reverently examine and study the things that the beloved Apostle saw! So doing, we behold from those symbolic pictures seen by John, the stormy

and tempestuous course of the people of God throughout the long dark centuries of the past, and can distinctly observe the nature of the trials that have been upon the Church in every one of the stages of her history.

Realizing from the rapid succession of events of our time, yea, events of enormous magnitude, indicating that "the end of all things is at hand," what joyful inspiration should the Church of Christ feel today as she recognizes the manifestation of the Parousia of her glorious Redeemer! For she is thereby made to know that the next great act in the Divine Drama (and even now in its beginning stages), is the sweeping away of the entire present world-order, and the completion of the glorification and exaltation of the Bride of His love—to be speedily followed by the full ushering in of the Kingdom of God.

Seven Epistles Contain Prophetic Counsel for Entire Church

Rev. 1:11: What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.



DISTINCT and unique section of the Apocalypse is that embraced in Christ's Seven Letters to the Churches. By some, they are termed Epistles; and one observer states that they are not so much "messages from an absent Lord, as *sentences from a present Judge engaged in the solemn act of inspection and decision*." Indeed these messages are observed to be a prominent and most vital part of the Apocalypse which pronounces specific blessings upon consecrated readers and hearers; and the devout student is sure to find much to recommend them to his prayerful consideration.

In the most solemn and impressive manner, are these Epistles of Christ addressed, which cannot but inspire the feeling that they are something of unusual solemnity and importance. Yet it is said that even writers on the Apocalypse itself, in very many instances, have passed these Epistles with hardly a word of remark, erroneously assigning to them nothing but what concerns the particular seven local churches named as then existing in Asia Minor. And though, *so specifically and urgently addressed to the churches*, it would seem as if there had been some general concerted effort to prevent them from being seen or heard—so little attention has there been paid to these, Christ's last most solemn messages, superscribed with His own marvelous attestations, and *urged upon all by the sevenfold admonition to hear and ponder* what they contain.

We believe the fact is not disputed by any that

there were the seven local churches named by the trumpet voice which said: "What thou seest, write in a book, and send to the seven churches." These cities named are not unknown places. They all lie within the scope of a few hundred miles north of the Mediterranean and east of the outlet of the Black Sea. Nor were these seven churches named, the only churches of that time, for by the end of the first century there were many assemblies of Christian brethren where the Gospel had been preached; such as the churches at Colosse, Antioch, Alexandria, Corinth, Rome, and others, some of them larger and more powerful than some of the seven mentioned. Do we ask, why were not these taken into account?—Did they not need instruction, and rebuke, and encouragement, and warning, as well as the favored seven? The logical deduction is, that they were by *representation included in the seven*, the numeral "seven" representing completion or perfection. These others were not specifically and locally addressed, because what concerned their estate and the mind of Christ with reference to it, *are embraced and expressed in the seven*. In other words, these seven churches in their names, in their graces, in their defects, in their relations to Christ, and in His promises and threatenings to them severally, **COMPREHENDED EVERYTHING FOUND IN THE ENTIRE CHURCH AS IT THEN EXISTED. AND IT THEREFORE SEEMS THAT WE MUST SEE IN THESE SEVEN CHURCHES, A REPRESENTATION THAT COMPREHENDS AND EMBRACES THE ENTIRE CHURCH OF**

THAT TIME. Especially is this thought sustained when we remember that the number "seven" is distinctly the sacred number throughout the Apocalypse, and in fact, the entire Bible; and as another has appropriately observed: The seven must be regarded as constituting a complex whole—as possessing an ideal completeness. Christ, we feel sure, could not have placed Himself in the relation which He does to them—as holding in His hand the seven stars, walking among the seven golden candlesticks, these stars being the angels of the churches, and the candlesticks the churches themselves—*unless they ideally represented and set forth in some way or other, the universal Church militant here on earth.*

SEVEN EPISTLES CONCERN EVERY PERSON IN THE CHURCH

Nor can we be satisfied with the thought that the seven messages merely concerned the churches or the whole Body of the one Church *as it existed in St. John's day.* Considering that the entire Apocalypse is unquestionably a historical prophecy that covers the Church's entire career and is therefore of vital importance to the Church in every period and stage of her history, what are we to gather from it but that, in the mind of Jesus, there is *much more in these seven Epistles* than is observed on the surface of them; and that they therefore *undoubtedly apply to Christians generally,* and concern every person in the Church throughout this *entire Gospel dispensation.* This conclusion we think gathers support from the *seven times repeated admonition:* "HE THAT HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO THE CHURCHES." Indeed *the whole Apocalypse is permeated* with a special promise of blessing to him that reads and keeps it.

Then as we prayerfully ponder the nature and character of what is said in the seven messages, and see that those descriptions logically carry us over into times and conditions *far beyond that of the Apostolic period,* we conclude with double assurance that these seven particular churches named must be regarded as illustrations or images of the Church general, from the beginning even unto the end of the Age.

If we admit, as it seems we must, that these seven Epistles contain a panoramic or prophetic outline of the entire visible Church of the Age, as the professing Church and her deeds actually appear in the light of Heaven and from God's standpoint, then we see a force, a depth and value to the Apocalyptic Epistles *far beyond* what is observed if we merely view them as seven messages addressed to local churches of St. John's day. The word "mystery" as used too, in the first chapter, verse 20, as applied to these churches and their angels, intimates from

the very beginning that there is something more intended *than what is seen on the surface;* and what that something is, we find in the view outlined foregoing; that indeed, the *nature of the vision* in which the beloved John received these Epistles, assumes that not these seven local churches alone, but in them, *the entire Church of the Age is to be contemplated.* These seven churches then, in addition to being literal historical churches, stand for *the whole Christian Body* in all of its seven phases or stages of its history, stretching from the time of the Apostles to and *including the entire Era of Laodicea,* now extending far into the secret stage of the Second Presence of our Lord.

BROTHER RUSSELL SAW PROPHETIC CHARACTER

In this connection we observe with more than usual interest the view in support of the foregoing, as expressed by Pastor Russell just prior to his death: "While the messages given to the seven churches specified in the Revelation were doubtless applicable to them, they properly have a still wider application *to the entire Gospel Church,* the number seven representing completeness. The Book of Revelation is a book of symbols, which our Lord 'sent unto His servant John.' (Rev. 1:1.) Bible students know that the book abounds in symbols, or signs, and we are satisfied that *these are the rule,* and that the literal is the exception, being used only when unavoidable.

"To be in harmony, then, with the rest of the book, 'the seven churches which are in Asia' must be symbolic; and as the book is chiefly, *history written beforehand,* they must symbolize seven successive stages in the history of the Christian Church, covering the period between the First Advent and the Second Coming of Christ. The *fulfillment,* we think, *proves* the correctness of this position.

"In the first chapter we have a description of 'One like unto the Son of man,' as seen in vision by the Apostle John. Some one or more of the features of this description would seem to be peculiarly appropriate *to each of the successive stages of the Church;* and in each case He who sends the message is thus described. The last part of each message is a promise to the 'overcomers,' and is also adapted to the different periods of Church history."

The facts of history themselves have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the peculiar characteristics described, the wide and general application of the reproofs, the rebukes, the warnings, the dangers, and the evils pointed out, as well as the special words of comfort and promise to the overcomers, to each of the Churches, *fit exactly seven distinct successive epochs* of the history of the Church

in the order mentioned, which establishes the prophetic character of the messages themselves. As therefore the seven churches addressed, were representative and inclusive of the entire Church, so THESE EPISTLES ALSO GIVE CHRIST'S APPRAISAL OR JUDGMENT OF THE ENTIRE CHURCH, AND ARE NECESSARILY ANTICIPATIVE OF ITS HISTORY. In other words they give us from the beginning, the exact picture of the whole Church of Christ, as that history when finished, shall be contemplated and regarded in the mind of Christ.

APOCALYPTIC FOREVIEW OF GREAT ANTI-CHRISTIAN PAPAL APOSTASY

We believe it will be well at this juncture, and to the reader's profit, to pause a moment, while we glance at a particular case in the Apocalypse where a symbolical description is now clearly seen to have *largely been fulfilled* and passed into history; it is that of the great anti-Christian Papal Apostasy—reference is made to it in the messages to the Churches, and more or less in chapters 11 to 19. Reliable expositors of the Apocalypse are in general agreement with this application. We quote from one of these, a devout and careful writer, who has briefly summed up what historians have had to say of the Apocalyptic descriptions of the Papal System, in the following clear and convincing statement with which Pastor Russell was also in full agreement:

"The Holy Spirit, foreseeing, no doubt, that the Church of Rome would adulterate the truth by many gross and grievous abominations, that she would *anathematize all who would not communicate with her*, and denounce them as cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of everlasting salvation; foreseeing also that Rome would exercise a wide and dominant sway for many generations, by boldly iterated assertions of unity, antiquity, sanctity, and universality; foreseeing also that these pretensions would be *supported by the civil sword of many secular governments*, among which the Roman Empire would be divided at its dissolution, and that Rome would thus be enabled to display herself to the world in its august attitude of imperial power and with dazzling splendor of temporal felicity; foreseeing also that the Church of Rome would *captivate the imaginations of men* by the fascinations of art allied with religion, and would ravish their senses and rivet their admiration by gaudy colors and stately pomp and prodigal magnificence; foreseeing also that she would beguile their credulity by miracles and mysteries, apparitions and dreams, trances and ecstasies and would appeal to such evidences in support of her strange doctrines; foreseeing likewise that she would enslave men and

(much more) women, by practising on their affections and by accommodating herself with dangerous pliancy to their weakness, relieving them from the burden of thought and from the perplexity of doubt by proffering them the aid of infallibility, soothing the sorrows of the mourner by dispensing pardon and promising peace to the departed, *removing the load of guilt from the oppressed conscience by the ministries of the confessional and by nicely poised compensations for sins*, and that she would flourish for many centuries in proud and prosperous impunity before her sins would reach to Heaven and come in remembrance before God; foreseeing also that many generations of men would thus be tempted to fall from the faith and to become victims of deadly error, and that they who clung to the truth would be exposed to cozening flatteries and fierce assaults and savage tortures from her—THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE SAY, FORESEEING ALL THESE THINGS IN HIS DIVINE KNOWLEDGE, and being the ever blessed Teacher, Guide, and Comforter of the Church, was graciously pleased to *provide a heavenly antidote* for all these dangerous, widespread, and long-enduring evils, BY DICTATING THE APOCALYPSE. In this Divine Book the Spirit of God has portrayed the church of Rome such as *none but He could have foreseen that she would become*, and such as, wonderful and lamentable to say, *she has become!* He has thus broken her spells; He has taken the wand of enchantment from her hand; He has *lifted the mask from her face*; and with His Divine hand He has written her true character in large letters, and has *planted her title on her forehead* to be seen and read of all: 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.'"*

SPIRITUAL DEFECTION AND DECLINE IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Pondering carefully the foregoing statement, it is recognized that its author has successfully assembled the threads of testimony and evidence identifying the long-predicted antichrist, the "Man of sin"; leaving us with the definite conviction that the Apocalypse was especially designed to portray in startling symbols, the history of the great apostasy and falling away from the simplicity and purity of the primitive faith, and marking the culmination in a great counterfeit system which would blind and deceive all except those whose names were written in the "Lamb's book of life."

Now, considering the primitive churches founded by the Apostles, and bearing in mind that they had

* *The Apocalypse or Book of Revelation; Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse*—BY CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH.

the unusual advantage of such powerful and inspirational personalities *as the twelve Apostles in their midst*, we might presume that they would be perfect patterns and models of excellence; that they would be pure in morals and free from evils, false doctrines, and the defections we find later on in history, as also in this last time. However, as we examine these messages, it is to be observed that those early congregations to whom the Epistles were addressed, were *very much according to the pattern of the churches that have existed in every generation since that time*. There was equally as much to censure as there was to commend. There were loyal and true children of God, whose affections were centered on things above and whose citizenship was in Heaven, but there were *many whose love for Christ had lost its fervor*; some whose affections were set on things on the earth—their consecration to God not being thorough. Others who had a name to live, but were dead to a real *experimental knowledge* of the saving power of Christ; and still others who were proud, boastful, claiming to be rich and increased with goods—with all that they thought was necessary for a church to possess, and yet were so *blind to the real riches* that they are represented by the Savior as wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked—actually possessing nothing of the true inward qualities necessary to represent the Savior and to perform His work.

WHAT CHRIST IS LOOKING FOR IN HIS CHURCH

Out of the whole accumulation of the Master's commendations and reproofs, it is of the utmost importance that we shall observe the stress and emphasis which our blessed Lord lays upon those practical and spiritual features of our holy system of faith and religion. For it is upon these that His smiles and commendations, His censures and His rebukes turn. For example, what He praises in one of the churches is their labor, their endurance, their resistance of evil, their patience, their courageous perseverance in well doing; and what He proposes as the remedy for their defects, was that they should return to first works. Love, ministries, patience, labors, works: these are the things to which He refers with most delight, as the marks of the true election, *and the proper signals of approved Saintship*. It is in vain to boast of a correct creed, of right conceptions, of sound doctrine, if there be no practical godliness, no good works, no positive virtues, no spiritual ministries and labors of love. Soundness in the Truth is important, *but that alone will not do!* The most correct in this list doctrinally, *according to the letter merely*, is depicted as the *deadest*. MERE EMOTIONS, PLEASANT FRAMES OF MIND,

HAPPY FEELINGS, LOUD PROFESSIONS, OR DREAMS OF OUR OWN VIRTUES AND OF OUR "UNITY WITH, AND LOVE FOR EVERYBODY," OR THAT WE ARE RICH IN GRACE AND IN THE DIVINE FAVOR, WILL NOT DO; FOR THE MOST ENRAPTURED AND THE BEST PLEASED WITH ITSELF, AMONG THESE CHURCHES, WAS THE WORST.

There must be faith, and a true faith; but also a living, working, *humble, self-denying faith*—a faith which shows its life and power by *meekness and love*; by gracious ministries, by active services and *sacrifices for God*, and by *faithfully standing to the truth, whatever might be the cost or storms*.

There are, indeed, such things as "dead works"; works that have *no life-connection with God*; works put on from without, and not brought forth from within; fruits tied upon the tree, and not the product of its life; which are *not at all* characteristics of true religion. There may be prayers, vigils, self-denials, temples, altars, teachers, and forms of worship, and *still be no Godliness*. *Heathenism has all these*. THERE MAY BE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION, A BELONGING TO SOME ECCLESIA EVEN OF THE PROFESSION OF "PRESENT TRUTH," AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCES OF PIETY WHERE REAL SPIRITUALITY HAS NEVER TAKEN ROOT. None of these things alone characterize a Christian. That which distinguishes him, where all other tests fail, is his quick discernment of the Will of God, his living, active love of God and man, and his lowly Christ-like ministries to fellow-members of the Body. *If these be lacking, the defect is fatal*. All knowledge, all faith, all mastery of tongues, all miraculous powers, (valuable and necessary as they have been and are to the Church's sanctification) *cannot make good for such a deficiency*. For the substance of the true spiritual life is portrayed in the Apostle's words, "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep unspotted from the world."

HIS ALL-REVEALING GLANCE AND SEARCHING GAZE

Through the telescope of prophetic vision then, we are endeavoring to read the "mystery" or hidden meaning of the seven Epistles, and the seven churches. Though we are far down the stream of time, more than eighteen centuries beyond the point when the messages were given, and though the prophetic foreview given to St. John in these Epistles, has now all but passed into history so far as *this* Age is concerned, yet none of the lessons set forth have lost any of their meaning. They are in fact more than ever solemnly impressive to the *faithful Church*. Indeed, the fact that we can now read from history the fulfillment of the Apocalyptic letters, supplies much to confirm and establish our faith at

this time *when real faith is swiftly ebbing*, and the foundation of all confidence seems rapidly disappearing. Yea, what spiritual lessons come to us in these days when special testings and subtle temptations are at hand to try all them that dwell upon the earth, especially those who belong to the discipleship of Christ! As we study the conditions portrayed both in the prophetic letters and their unfolded meaning in history, what solemn impressions are left us! *Holy ones* in the midst of abounding defections and apostasy, and *unholy ones* in the midst of the most earnest and active faith; *light in dark places and darkness in the midst of light*.

In some important respects we find the seven churches in *every Church*, giving to these Epistles a directness of application of the utmost importance

to ourselves, and to professing Christians in every stage of the Church's history. The messages tell what the Savior's judgment of *each of us is*, and what we each may expect, even in this solemnly important time of His Parousia or Second Presence. In every period, and in every assembly of professing Christians, it may be said that *Christ is walking among His Churches with open, flaming eyes; and these Epistles give us His opinion of what His all-revealing glance discovers*. And as we would know what to expect and where we stand in the Divine counsels when at last this Apocalypse is fulfilled, it is eminently appropriate that we seek wisdom from above by which to understand these Heaven-inspired epistles, **THAT WE MAY HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO THE CHURCHES.**

Christ Still Walks and Speaks—Midst the Church of Last Days

This article is contributed

Rev. 1:3; 3:20: Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, . . . Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

THE SANDS of time in the great hour-glass marking world-history, are running out. Nearer and nearer approaches the time for the complete dissolution of the symbolic heavens and earth—the closing up of the long Dispensation of sin, sorrow and death. Closer still comes the hour for that culminating event when the last remnant of the Church shall be "changed" and joined in marriage to the Lamb. (Rev. 19:7.) The march of events in the earth today which presage this great crisis, urge upon the children of God the utmost necessity of solemn contemplation and vigilance.

Each individual disciple of Christ may well ponder his own case and ask, Have I, as a member of the sacrificial Church, *done my part* to make her (the Lamb's wife) ready?—Have I been faithful *over the few things* entrusted to me here, that I may be prepared to hear the "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord"? (Matt. 25:23.) Have I contributed to the spiritual welfare of the Body, as each member should, according to my best ability?—Eph. 4:16.

Among the questions which we may properly raise at a momentous time such as this, is one which we here briefly consider for mutual edification: Have we been sufficiently heeding, especially *in this day and hour*, the voice of the Revelation? **HE WHO SPEAKS THEREIN, GIVES A SOLEMN PROMISE THAT THE READING OF THE "WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY" CARRIES A SPECIAL BENEDICTION.** And was not this in the nature of a plea on the part of the

glorified Savior, to *read* and to *hear* what the Divine Spirit saith unto the Churches?

To those who have been expecting someone to bring forth a volume *which will fully and wholly* interpret the Apocalypse from beginning to end, let it be said that there have been such productions *purporting* to do so, which appear to sadly miss the mark. Whatever may have been the merits or demerits in such interpretations, the idea of constantly waiting for that "super-volume" on the Apocalypse (which never seems to appear), is a deluding one, and appears to have cheated the individual out of years of enjoyment of the study of this most sanctifying portion of God's Word. Again the words are sounding in our ears, "BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH, AND THEY THAT HEAR THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY"—the very words themselves. Let it be well remembered, however, in this connection that there is a vast amount of most helpful expositions of the Apocalypse throughout the writings of Pastor Russell, which are easily accessible in his Watch Towers and Studies in the Scriptures.

SEVENTH EPISTLE OF UNTOLD IMPORTANCE IN THIS HOUR

How sublimely appropriate is it that our great volume of inspiration—the Bible, should have as its final revealings, the Apocalypse given to St. John, containing the utterances of the *risen and glorified* Christ Himself! It is further remarkable that this illustrious One declares that these last unfoldings are particularly for His Church. In confirmation of this, He addresses seven messages to His Church—obviously intending these to represent

seven divisions, or eras of His Church *as a whole*. All the signals of our time indicate that we are living in the last Era—the Seventh, that of Laodicea; the one that is freighted with more enlightening, encouraging, but warning, cautionary matter than any other. And *it is in this final period*, the Seventh, that the risen Lord presents Himself, using His own “voice” to inspire response to His personal message.—Rev. 3:20.

It would be a mistake to assume that there must now be a *complete* unfolding of the *entire* Apocalypse in detail, seeing that the symbolic visions carry us on through the close of the Church’s earthly career and including the entire Millennial reign of the Kingdom of God—to the completion of the great redemptive purpose. Unquestionably, there are details of some of the visions *yet to be fulfilled* which cannot be fully understood until we approach nearer to them, or until they pass into history.

To all the “angels” of the seven Churches He gave His injunction to “write” the respective communications applicable to each one, and there was no exception in the case of Laodicea. Yet He divided this charge to the last Church into two parts: the first was a commentary on the apostate church with contempt for its lukewarmness, vanity and worldly pomp (Rev. 3:14-19) and a *statement of its complete rejection*. The second was in the form of a personal call at the heart of the individual, preceded by a “knock,” and followed by His hallowed voice. (Rev. 3:20.) It was the “knock” of *fulfilled prophecy* that was heard or recognized by faithful watchful servants individually, and *not by church systems and organizations as such*.

HOW NEAR ARE WE TO CHRIST IN THIS HOUR OF HIS PRESENCE?

A voice identifies its owner more quickly than a published message. And if we hear a man’s voice, it is evident that he is near—close at hand. And in this time of Christ’s Presence, it has been the wide circulation of Bible truths throughout the length and breadth of the earth, concerning the state of the dead, ransom, restitution and resurrection, the Plan of the Ages in general—and particularly the wondrous illumination concerning the Church’s sharing with Christ in His inheritance—having part in Christ’s sin-offering and sacrificial sufferings, and finally, in His high exaltation and Divine Glory—all this has constituted the *voice* of Him who has *returned*. THESE TRUTHS BEAR THE STAMP OF CHRIST; AND SINCE THEY WERE AS HIS VOICE, THEY EVIDENCE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THE FACT OF HIS PRESENCE, AS HE PROMISED.—Luke 12:37.

No portion of the Church had ever experienced

such blessing, unless perhaps it was the first disciples who had seen and known Christ in the flesh, who beheld His ascension and received directly the dispensation of the Spirit. And His Presence now in Laodicea is, in many respects, like the *beginning* of the Church in which individuals had the unspeakable privilege of *personal* communion and transactions with Jesus. When Jesus offered His companionship to a man out of many, such as to any one of the Apostles, or to women like Mary and Martha, then bliss must have been at its full. *If we have faith to receive it*, it is like that once more now in Laodicea—the final Era of the Church on earth. He is back again, and throughout the Harvest has been reaping grains of wheat, and asking for reapers to join Him in the same personal manner, though invisible, as He had asked Peter and Andrew to be “fishers of men.”—Matt. 4:18, 19.

IN THIS ERA OF LAODICEA HE HAS BEEN KNOCKING AT THE DOOR OF THE HEART OF INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLES THROUGH THE UNFOLDINGS AND DISCLOSURES OF PROPHECY. He has caused His voice to be heard by such, and has come “in” and *supped* with them. Can this fact be wholly and fully appreciated? It is, to be sure, more difficult to recognize His voice when He is not visible, because He is now Divine and spiritual; and *He communicates to the spiritually-minded, the Spirit-begotten ones*. Yet this personal intimacy and fellowship is none the less real. And we wonder if many have not missed the joy of this personal, this spiritual dealing between Christ and His own in this Era of His Presence because the fleshly mind prevails and they *perceive only the human earthly standpoint of things*. Let him that readeth understand!

The veil that intervenes, then, between Christ and the disciple in this Laodicean Era is *thick or thin*, in proportion to his spiritual understanding and his *spiritual contacts with Christ*; and according to the strength or weakness of his faith. If the consecrated one will “open the door” Christ “will come in to him.” (Rev. 3:20.) It seems a common failing amongst “truth brethren” that the preciousness of Christ’s Presence and His nearness in this solemnly important Era, are entertained mainly in a *theoretical sense*, and of no different proximity than they were, during all the centuries of His absence. (John 14:3.) Each one of the small remnant of the Church on earth, has a high privilege to *sit down and “sup” with Christ*. If faith will not reach out and appropriate that nearness, it needs strengthening and reinvigorating by prayer and more personal contacts with our present Lord.

What then constitutes the essential exercise to develop the power of faith? Let us draw lessons from the physical world. If we want to listen well to

someone who is speaking, we do two things: First, we draw close to him ourselves; and secondly, we eliminate all interference from other sources. We draw closer to Christ *when we read intently* His words. We must, "in the Spirit," read what Christ has said to us in the Revelation, as well as in other portions of His Word.

"IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY"
WE HEAR HIM

Let it be borne in mind that John, receiving the Revelation, pictures the Church receiving the revealings or unfoldings of the Apocalypse. And particularly is this true in the last days of the Church; and, that as John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," so we must be "in the Spirit"—definitely possessed and moved by the Spirit of the Lord—*spiritually minded*, if we would be in the attitude to receive the sacred disclosures. And it must be on "the Lord's day." While it may be said that the Church now living, is in the *beginning* of the Lord's day, meaning the period, *chronologically*, of His glorious reign, yet we wonder if there is not a still deeper meaning. Let it be remembered that the "Lord's day" was observed in remembrance of the Savior's resurrection. It is inseparably linked with the resurrection hope and blessing. The designation then, "the Lord's day," *to the New Creation*, carries with it all the blessed realization of their resurrection hopes. Even now in the present lowly pilgrimage of the Church, she is counted as "risen with Christ," as sharing in His resurrection. THEREFORE OUR PRECIOUS HERITAGE AS NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST JESUS, IS INSEPARABLY CONNECTED WITH THE LORD'S DAY, THE RESURRECTION DAY. Hence, to be in the Spirit "on the Lord's day" may well mean that it is only the Spirit-begotten ones who have *really partaken* of the Lord's day blessedness with all its present heritage of spiritual communion and fellowship with Christ—that *only these are now made the recipients of these marvelous disclosures of the Apocalypse*. It must then be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day"—in the sense of this *experimental* realization of *our having been risen with Him*, that we would hear the voice of our glorified Savior in the Apocalypse. And is it not *this* conception of our relationship to Him in this time of His Presence, that brings Him nearer to us, and us nearer to Him!

The Adversary has well succeeded in confusing the simple counsel and communications between Christ and His Church, and in hindering many from reading "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." He has done this by inducing all kinds of "heads" and "leaders" to issue messages. In His earthly ministry, Jesus cautioned His disciples to guard against this thing which was bound to occur in due course. In the

parable of the shepherd and the sheep, He described those who were to "follow Him: *for they know His voice*" and flee from the "stranger" because they "know not the voice of strangers."—John 10: 4,5.

"THE DOCTRINE OF THE NICOLAITANES"
IN LAODICEA

But the mixed state of the Church had to be. The "strangers" were the more *numerous*, and many of *them* became *lords* over the people. (Acts 20:28-31.) They have ever flourished. And nothing was calculated to evoke Christ's repugnance so much as this condition; for in speaking of it symbolically, "the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes," He said it was a thing He *hated!* (Rev. 2:15.) The name, Nicolaitanes, had the meaning of "conquerors" or "lords" of the people. So these false lords usurped the office of Head of the Church; or, if they did not fully do so, they distorted the voice of the true Head by interference.

If it were for no other reason than to put the Lord's people on guard against this "lordship" tendency, which is an ever-recurring affair in the Church, the constant re-reading of the Revelation would serve a great objective. For in this book of symbols, Christ repeatedly portrays the *dangers* of the *incipient* stage of this condition, as well as the horrible effects of the *ripened* state of apostasy.

Every individual of the Lord's mystical Body must ever be on guard against this spirit of lordship, of usurping the headship of Christ in the Church. It is a *leaven* which has always had the tendency to *creep in* practically *unawares*. But it is always most *easily detected* when there is a *strong figure or group* headed up as an organization, and directing the policies of the Church membership *as a whole*. It is most easily detected when that central figure or group *act authoritatively*, instead of by example. THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH REVEALS THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY HAVE HEARD THE VOICE OF A MAN, A "LORD"; WHILE THE "FEW NAMES" HAVE HEARD THE VOICE OF HIM WHO SPAKE ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT. This was the state of affairs in the Church at Sardis. This has been the pattern followed by the true Church in every Era of her history.

And so this all leads us to contemplate the matter of *small gatherings in these days*—small gatherings of spiritually-minded children of God. They resemble the "few names" in Sardis. When a class is fortunate enough to be made up of like-minded ones, *spiritual* members of Christ, there is a condition of true blessedness. The spiritual profit in these small assemblies is abundant.

It seems that Jesus, while on earth, must have had these small gatherings in mind, as *at the end of the*

Age; and that His words were specially intended for their consolation. He said then: "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20.) At no time in the Church's history could He have been so literally "in the midst"; for He has been personally present. He must have known that conditions would come when two or three of like faith would be all a meeting could muster. While such conditions have actually been common to all periods, they *distinctly characterize* the *present* time. The disunity, the separations, and "falling away" of the Lord's professed people are, *humanly speaking*, bewildering, and the assemblies are necessarily small. BUT LO, HE IS IN THE MIDST OF THE SMALL GATHERING—"THE TWO OR THREE."

CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF THE FEW NAMES OF LAODICEA

And if He has been in the "midst of them," how shall we know it? Answer, the name "Christ" has the meaning of *Anointed*. Here is the key. One who is worthy of His name is anointed, having been received into His Body, coming under the *anointing of the Spirit*. Thus when two or three Spirit-begotten, meet for mutual edification in spiritual things, they constitute a *representation of the Body*. Yet it is not a complete Body without the Head. Consequently Christ, the Head, fills the need immediately. Hence *He is in the midst*. And it is now that His voice becomes recognizable. For there is none to usurp the headship; in small companies of two or three, this is naturally the case, and His voice is especially articulate.

The testimony of the "twos and threes" generally is, that the *spiritual* blessing from such meetings is plentiful. How can it be otherwise? For, when such spiritual assemblies gather in His name (representative of the anointed Body), He verily *is in the midst*. So it is that a "few names" of likeminded, Spirit-begotten ones are the special object of His love and tenderness. But let these "twos and threes" (or for that matter, the "ones") ponder as often as occasion permit, the words of Christ in Revelation. Let them meditate on the personal words addressed to His own in this period of Laodicea.

To the individuals within the circle of His extraordinary love, He promises *rebuke and chastening*. (Rev. 3:19.) Is that supposed to be a mark of favor? Ah yes, just as our Heavenly Father made it an outstanding mark of spiritual paternity. (Heb. 12:5,6.) This is not necessarily, rebuke and chastening in a punitive sense. RATHER, IT IS TO LEAD THE FAITHFUL IN WAYS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, TO LEAD AWAY FROM UNSPIRITUAL ASSOCIATIONS. It is in the Laodicean period that He called those whom He

recognized as "My people," *out of Babylon*. (Rev. 18:4.) Earlier in the Harvest Era, this "coming out" related to coming forth from one or the other of the two great sections of Babylon known as Catholic and Protestant. All Saints who came out, did so from *bearing His voice*. Yet some, at first, were reluctant in leaving the old city with its many attachments. Here is where rebuke and chastening were necessary. The vicissitudes in this condition of embracing His message while still remaining in the nominal system, were many. There was conflict both from within and without. And there was no peace until *full separation* was made.

LAST HOUR CALLS, TO "COME OUT" OF SMALLER BABYLONS

But this *earlier* call from the popular nominal churches was not to be the *last and only* time Christ was to beseech His own to "come out." For alas, *men will ever build cities*, though the *Saints* are to have "no continuing city, but we seek one to come." (Heb. 13:14.) Men in the professing church of the "Truth movement" have proceeded to build a Babylon again—a miniature one, to be sure, but none-the-less, it is a city in the sense that it built up a framework of government with officers and leaders to *rule* the spiritual citizens. Christ, seeing various of His "people" again ensnared in a feudal system, calls to them once more to "come out."

Now were many perplexed. Had they not left the "real" Babylon? *This* newly created system was "God's organization" (so the leaders said)! *Here*, were all God's people, were they not? Previously these had come out of "great" Babylon! To come out again—that would be "causing divisions," would it not (!), and the more the resistance to the call, *the more severe the trials*. This was Christ again *rebuking and chastening* the ones He loved. He was saying to them: "Be zealous therefore, and repent." (Rev. 3:19.) Those who heeded the call to come out from little Babylon were relieved of rebuke and chastening as soon as they emancipated themselves.

But still closer to this present solemn hour, men in the Church (of the persuasion of "Present Truth") *continue to "build cities."* Smaller and smaller Babylons are founded—"truth" *systems and organizations*. But no matter how small, the spirit of Babylon (which is virtually synonymous with the spirit of the Nicolaitanes), is detestable to the Lord. And He has ever rebuked and chastened when it was necessary to convince *His own members* to "come out of her,"—draw away from the *individual* or the *organization* that is usurping the Headship of Christ.

Naturally, any rebuke from Christ cannot be by way of His *physical* voice. It must come in the form

of conditions which, while they may cause pain, are for the purpose of convincing His people. In fact, the meaning of "rebuke" here is rather that of "convince" than "reprimand." Such conditions are the friction—the hard friction—that comes from remaining in circumstances *not in harmony with a true Saint's heart*. And so the Lord "convincing" the one He loves. What greater proof of His grace can there be?

In actual practice, the friction arises when there is a condition of *human "authority,"* headship in a class—and it is tolerated; in which case the friction touches the heart; or, one registers his protest, in which event the friction is *real*. If the situation is one which is beyond repair, the voice of Christ will speak out to the heart and say: "*Come out!*" But the person involved weighs in the balance other considerations, such as the "fellowship," and the fact that he may be *called* "one who causes divisions." And the longer such one lingers in futile effort to reform, the more severe becomes the trial and conflict. These fiery trials constitute the "rebuke" and "chastening" (teaching) which Christ promised *to them whom He loves*.

FIERY TRIALS ARE CHRIST'S "REBUKE"
AND "CHASTENING"

When at last, the decision is made to step out into the liberty of Christ, sudden peace of mind results. This, then, marks the end of the "rebuke." Often thereafter, fellowship may be had with "twos" and "threes" who respect no *human* headship, but hold only the true Head. Those who can testify of these experiences in these recent days, can also give testimony to a marked blessing, one which is evi-

dence of Christ still dwelling in the midst of His people.

Thus, reading of the Revelation brings a sense of *Christ's personal relation* to each of His own. And a re-reading makes His "*standing at the door*" of each heart, "knocking" and speaking, *seem more real*. We have had contacts with various of the "Truth people" through the years, who have separated successively from one group after another because of intolerable conditions of human headship. These were seemingly left without any fellowship except with others who, for similar reasons, had no spiritual affiliation. Such persons, as they have met others of the same mind, have found in one another the one ground that makes the only *real* fellowship—the refusal to honor any man or organization, as in any sense taking the place of the *invisible One who is the only true Head*. So OUT OF A SEEMINGLY MIXED COMPANY, A REAL UNITY OF SEPARATED ONES HAS RESULTED FROM THE MANY SEPARATIONS IN THE LAST THIRTY-FIVE YEARS. Pastor Russell urged the brethren to "come out" of every condition of Babylonish confusion. When he was giving that advice, *human* headship among the "Truth people" had not developed, *as at present*. How much more true these wise words seem today!

What child of God in this time of dire need of the Shepherd's care, would be without the sweet comfort and benign influences of our present Lord—the consoling Christ? Who of us would want to be denied the blessing of *having Him as our constant guest to sup with us*, and we with Him! Let us then hear His voice in this, His last message to His Church, as He, our glorified Lord, speaks to us in living tones. Hear Him!

Prophetic Photographs of Pagan and Papal Rome— Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Dan. 7:23: Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

HERE is general harmony of understanding amongst devout and accredited students of the prophetic Word, that we have reached by far *the most important turn of dispensations* in the history of the human race. Truly we live and move in days of vast and far-reaching importance—days indeed freighted with revelations and unfoldings of prophetic scenery which have been more or less shrouded in mystery for long ages. Indeed, beholding in this unprecedented Era, scenes of great importance passing before our gaze, we cannot but regard this as the due time for marvelous disclosures to the true people of God. And such, we have truly had! But there

doubtless will be further unveilings, particularly, regarding the *closing up of this Dispensation* of the reign of sin and death. This is in full accord with Daniel's prophecy that "at that time" of the standing up of "Michael" (His assumption of Kingly power), "KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED," AND "THE WISE [IN HEAVENLY WISDOM] SHALL UNDERSTAND."—DAN. 12:1-10.

As the days pass, earnest students of the Word are more and more profoundly impressed that *history* is the true *interpreter* of prophecy; in that the historian is the recorder of events that long beforehand were predicted in sacred prophecy. Instead then, of guessing and speculating wildly or even uncertainly,

on *what* is to be, far better is it that we shall turn our attention to what *has* been and what *is*. Let us soberly compare *the indisputable facts of history* with the mysterious predictions of God's holy Word, for in *such* a comparison, if anywhere, the truth on the subject is to be found.

To the noble Daniel the Angel said, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are closed up and sealed* till the time of the end." To the venerable John six hundred years later subsequent to Christ's First Advent and near the close of the first century A. D., the angel said, "SEAL NOT THE SAYINGS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK; FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND!" Thus we have the definite indication that *time would be the interpreter*, and history would *then* commence and continue all through this Age to mark the unfoldings of the things contained in the mysterious visions of both Daniel and the Disciple of Love.

Never in all history has the word of prophecy meant so much to God's people as at this critical and solemn hour. Figuratively speaking, the foundations of the earth are fast being removed. Hitherto *unheard* of forces and potentialities are unleashed; *which are none other than those of Armageddon itself*; which not only threaten, but will yet eventuate in the reign of death and destruction that shall rapidly devour what men have achieved of treasure and civilization in past ages. Ah yes, the word of prophecy affords the surest and best of information as well as consolation, because *sacred prophecy is the Word of God* spoken long ago telling us of these days and their strange consequences. Of no little significance is it, that vast destructive forces have, of recent years gathered in deadly battle in a great historic centre, embracing the entire area of the Imperial Roman Empire. It is *to this theatre* of the recent vast world-conflict that the nations *are once more assembling* vast armies for further deadly conflict, that is of the most compelling interest to devout prophetic students. It is on this *Roman stage* that was so recently a dark and bloody battlefield, that we are to yet see enacted the final features of those startling symbolic and dramatic scenes contained in the prophecies of Daniel and John.

Well-known to earnest students is the prophetic outline—the long stretch of 2520 years of history peculiarly designated by Jesus as "The times of the Gentiles"; as He said, "JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED." These "times" are the same "seven times" predicted as a punishment on Israel in those far-off days when they were so often disobedient to the commandments of God. It has been abundantly proved by various godly and learned writers that in symbolic prophecy a "day" is the symbol of a year; and a "time," signifies 360

years. Thus in certain prophecies where we have the statement, "a time, times, and a half time," a period of 1260 years is embraced; while seven "times" would be 2520 years.

FOUR UNIVERSAL MONARCHIES FOLLOW THE FALL OF JEWISH KINGDOM

Familiar to all students of sacred history is the fact that the Jewish Monarchy which God established in the days of David and Solomon, was, on account of the gross sins of the idolatrous Jews, repudiated by God some 500 years later, approximately 606 B. C. And *there, a great change* in God's providential government took place—as the Jewish nation was sent into Babylonian captivity. God at that time declared that the government of the world was to be left in Gentile hands until the time should come that the Divine Kingdom under the whole heavens should be established. Thus the long period of Gentile history which started with the beginning of the succession of the four great universal Gentile monarchies revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, *ends with the close of these four empires*. The period of 2520 years was intended to be the *lifetime* of the fourfold metallic image of the Gentile monarchy shown to the king of Babylon (Dan. 2); as well as the period of the four wild beasts shown subsequently to the Prophet. (Dan. 7.) In other words, it is the *joint duration* of the rule of *Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome*.

It is the period during which supreme power on earth is by God Himself committed to Gentiles rather than to Jews, as it is written of Nebuchadnezzar, "THOU O KING, ART A KING OF KINGS: FOR THE GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN THEE A KINGDOM, POWER, AND STRENGTH, AND GLORY. AND WHERESOEVER THE CHILDREN OF MEN DWELL . . . HE HATH MADE THEE RULER OVER THEM ALL." It is the period which elapses between the fall of the crown of Judah *in the days of Nebuchadnezzar*, and the *restoration* of that throne by the establishment of it forever *in the person of Christ the Son and Lord of David*. It is this long stretch of time during which the government of earth's peoples including Israel, has been given into the hands of rulers who are *like wild beasts in their cruelty and ferocity*, as well as in their ignorance of God, who exist only by preying on others, who are evermore warring and slaughtering, and who have often opposed and persecuted the Saints of God.

It is then a strange but intensely interesting fact that more than 25 centuries ago, our Father in Heaven unveiled in symbolic vision to His servant Daniel in Babylon, the political future of this evil world. And it is really true that *so far*, the events of all subsequent ages have slowly and *perfectly*

fulfilled the predictions *up to this hour* when we find ourselves in the midst of the most colossal and stirring scenes of history, which obviously mark the *closing up* of this long period of Gentile supremacy. All this is unquestionable fact that candor and common sense themselves are *compelled* to admit.

THERE IS TO BE NO FIFTH GENTILE MONARCHY

This established truth carries with it, conclusions most momentous! It is indeed a fact *so* wonderful, that a *little* incredulity is excusable—yet when one returns *involuntarily*, to re-examine the evidence by which it is established and proved, the most careful scrutiny reveals no flaw. Four great successive world-ruling Gentile Empires were, according to the Divine program, to intervene between Judah's fall and Judah's restoration. Babylon, brief and single; Medo-Persia, double in origin and longer in duration; Greece, one notable king and then *four* kingdoms; Rome, one vast, terrible, all-subduing Empire, and then *ten separate kingdoms*. Roman rule was to endure to the *end* of Gentile dominion, but, was to undergo a strange transformation. *No other* worldwide Gentile power was to *replace* Rome. No *fifth* Gentile monarchy was to succeed it, but rather that blessed state of things for which the Church has prayed for the last nineteen centuries, "THY KINGDOM COME!"

Of special concern is it that in the midst of the "ten" separate kingdoms into which Rome was divided, a *strange, new kind of dominion* sprang up, a wicked, blaspheming, idolatrous, persecuting power, and lasted for 1,260 years—from 539 A. D. to 1799 A. D. This was represented by the "little horn" that arose *in the midst of the ten* (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24-26), and is unquestionably a true prophetic photograph of the *Roman Papal dynasty*. This strange politico-religious power, after a long career of unprecedented iniquity and cruelty, was to be first, *gradually* consumed towards the end, and then *suddenly* destroyed by the "bright shining" of Christ's Second Presence, and succeeded by the everlasting Kingdom of the Son of Man and the Saints. (2 Thess. 2:8.) Such was the sketch presented in the far-away days of ancient Babylon. Events of history definitely show that *it has been all but fulfilled*, and that now, living as we are in the Second Presence of Christ the elements and agencies of destruction are definitely mobilized for the great slaughter.

Now it is readily seen that the chief concern of the prophetic student gathers about the last of these universal monarchies, the Roman; the *first three*—Babylon, Persia and Greece, covering a space of less than six centuries beginning 606 B. C. and terminating 51 B. C. Counting the fourth, the Roman

Monarchy as starting 51 B. C., it is seen to cover a period of nearly 2000 years, reaching to 1915, when the "lease" of Gentile power was due to expire—and *since which point of time* the Gentile kingdoms and the "times of the Gentiles" have been in process of liquidation. No wonder our highest interest in all this symbolic drama of empires is centralized in the *fourth* great beast-power revealed to Daniel and John; seeing the First Advent of our blessed Lord, the institution of the Christian Church and her entire dark and stormy career, find their place *within the nearly two millenniums* occupied by this fourth universal monarchy.

HISTORY OF CHURCH INTERWOVEN WITH FOURTH GREAT BEAST-POWER

And no marvel either, that when early in this Age the time came to give the Church Apocalyptic foreviews of her sad and stormy history, the revealing angel made no reference to, nor gave any symbolic description of the *first three* Gentile world-powers—Babylon, Persia and Greece, inasmuch as these had all *then* gone from the stage of action and passed into history. Thus their history had no particular illumination to lighten the pathway of the Church. BUT WITH THE FOURTH GREAT WORLD-POWER, THE ROMAN, THE TRUE PEOPLE OF GOD HAVE BEEN VERY MUCH CONCERNED FROM ITS BEGINNING TO ITS END. Accordingly, it may be truthfully said that the *greater portion* of the Apocalypse given to the Seer of Patmos for the special benefit of the Church, is devoted to varied descriptions and aspects of the Roman beast. Hence the history of the fourth universal monarchy—the Roman, answers so perfectly to certain other of the Apocalyptic visions, namely, the great red dragon of Revelation 12, the Leopard-like beast of Chapter 13, and the scarlet-colored beast of Chapter 17. THESE REPRESENT DIFFERENT ASPECTS OR PICTURES OF THE SAME RULING POWER. Each is said to have "7 heads and 10 horns"; these being mentioned to indicate that *all three pictures refer to one and the same beast-power*, though in three *distinctly different forms of manifestations*.

It is generally conceded by devout expositors of this sacred prophecy, that the history of the experiences of the Christian Church, both true and nominal, *are definitely interwoven* with the history of the Roman power, both in its *pagan* and *papal* aspects. Well-known it is from his voluminous writings that our well-esteemed Pastor Russell, in harmony with the deductions of a number of godly expositors who preceded him, *had precisely the view presented above*, of the Revelation symbols in their application to Rome, the fourth great universal monarchy.

It was no doubt a special provision of Divine Providence that the vicious pagan Rome had just gotten established in supreme control of the *then* known world when the Savior's First Advent occurred. Under this cruel power Christ's crucifixion took place. As the new Gospel spread, following His resurrection, many of the primitive Church, including some of the Apostles, likewise suffered martyrdom under the bitter and savage influences of Pagan Rome. Thus the stage was set for ominous, dark and sorrowful experiences for the entire Church of Christ; experiences that were to continue on through long centuries.

Of what signal interest in this connection then, are the Apocalyptic unfoldings! THE ANGEL ANNOUNCED TO JOHN FROM THE FIRST, THAT THE SYMBOLIC IMAGERY HE WAS TO LOOK UPON WAS SIGNIFICANT OF THINGS "SHORTLY TO COME TO PASS." Ah yes, some of them had already appeared in the first century as Paul had, perhaps 25 or 30 years prior thereto, announced that the *beginnings* of the great iniquitous "Man of Sin," the Antichrist, were *already* putting in their appearances.—2 Thess. 2:7,8.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE

Further, how pointedly the disclosures of the Church's career were indicated in connection with Roman history, in the breaking one after another of the seals of the seven-sealed "Scroll," significant of the great Redemptive Purpose as a whole! The opening of the first four seals discloses four mysterious horsemen, differing in appearance and purpose. Various are the weird and strange applications that men have given to these symbolisms! They are highly cryptical representations! Obviously these horsemen are intended to picture general movements and developments that stand closely related to the entire career of the Church—the second, third and fourth, particularly, portraying three marked stages in the development of the Antichrist *early* in the Age.

Thus on opening the first seal, we have the appearance on the Apocalyptic stage of the victorious warrior seated upon the *white* horse going forth to conquer. It is a symbolism taken from the military field, and obviously is intended to portray the conquering forces of *pure* Christianity on their mission of world conquest. Logically the early victories of the Gospel, the rapid spread of Christian teaching and extension of the Christian Church throughout the Roman Empire in the face of tremendous opposition from Jew and Gentile, EXPLAINS THE MEANING OF THE FIRST SEAL, THE GOING FORTH OF THE RIDER UPON THE WHITE HORSE, "CONQUERING AND

TO CONQUER." Not that these Christian forces were intended to be victorious in *this* Age which had been set for the calling out of the elect Church, but rather that the *final* conquest of the world was the *ultimate objective*. This application is confirmed by the somewhat analagous vision in the 19th Chapter, of the going forth of the rider on the *white* horse of victory, and the name of the rider bears, "The Word of God," "The King of kings and Lord of lords." This, however, *represents another stage* and refers to Christ and His conquering forces at His *Second Advent* as He then establishes His Kingdom and brings all things into subordination to the Divine Will.

With the opening of the second seal, "There came out another, a *red* horse; and to the one sitting on him was it given to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill each other; and there was given him a great sword." The "great sword" indicates that this rider is also a warrior. The symbolism is drawn from the natural world of *war and political strife*, the annals of which make up such a large portion of Roman history *during the 2nd and 3rd centuries*. The *red* color of the horse would suggest much shedding of blood through the violence of various wars, and this is confirmed by the historian. Jealousies, conspiracies and political intrigue led to civil wars by which the Roman Empire was distracted and weakened. Briefly, this was the *symbolic picture in the Roman world*. In the religious realm, the counterpart of this Roman picture is, that in the very early centuries of the Church's history, *the forces and influences of apostasy operating through ambitious and unspiritual leaders*, brought forth perverted teaching and false doctrines destructive of the pure message as well as of faith itself. From what we read in the New Testament Scriptures, we are prepared to understand how the stage was all being set *in the Apostolic Era*, for the forces of apostasy to quickly overwhelm the infant Church. Hence, the visible and popular church was soon left *barren of spiritual power*. Thus the rider of the red horse "took peace from the earth," the true spiritual peace that should prevail among Christ's followers, replacing it with unrest and a state of carnal strife.

The opening of the third seal revealed a "*Black* horse, and he who sat on him having a *balance* in his hand." Again we glance at the symbol in the natural world: "Black," in the Scriptures, is the image of fear, famine, disease, etc. The "balance" was commonly the emblem of justice and equity and so denotes the idea of something being weighed. But the "balance" was also sometimes the symbol of *exaction and oppression*. (Hosea 12:7.) The mysterious remark "a *chenix* of wheat for a denarius, and three *chenices* of barley for a denarius," express-

es the fact of abnormal and disturbed values of certain of life's commodities, and so indicates a *distressed economic state*. Thus the picture in the natural Roman world *confirmed by history*, is that of tyrannical and oppressive rulers who, by unjust and oppressive legislation and taxation plunged the population into economic distress, poverty and starvation. Answering to this picture the rider on the black horse in the *religious sphere* is descriptive of a definite advanced stage in the work of apostasy in the *professing church*. Men of influence, power and rank entered the church. Many ambitious and designing leaders were allowed to fill responsible places, who instead of feeding the church, robbed her of the true spiritual food which alone can nourish the spiritual life. Thus entrance was made for a further flood of false and God-dishonoring doctrines to be taught, including numberless meaningless forms and ceremonies which resulted in the church's sad spiritual impoverishment and decay, fulfilling the symbol of the *black horse*—fear, famine and disease.

THE FULL BLOOM OF THE ROMAN PAPACY

Next we have the opening of the fourth seal and the appearance of the "pale" horse, and one sitting on him whose name was "death," etc. . . . "And the power was given unto them . . . to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." The "pale" color is a symbol of death; *one of the most striking aspects of death is paleness*, no matter from what cause. The pale horse obviously denotes an era of the unusual prevalence of death. No description is given of the rider of the pale horse except that his *name* was "death"; nor does he appear with any emblem, as a sword or spear or bow; the idea of open war is not suggested so far as the rider is concerned. In this portion of the symbol, the simple idea is, that death would prevail under the opening of this seal, *to an extraordinary degree*—whether by sword, famine, poverty or pestilence.

Looking again to the Roman symbol, the historian has given overwhelming testimony as he TRACES THE CAUSE OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. Unjust and iniquitous rule by corrupt emperors, and the carrying on of many wars of aggression and conquest meant the death of untold multi-

tudes and led further in the direction of the overthrow of the Empire. In the *religious or spiritual realm*, the rider on the pale horse then pictures *that stage of decline in the church* when the great Roman anti-Christian apostasy was fully developed and seated in power. False teaching and blasphemous man-made doctrines replaced the pure Gospel truth originally given; and men were exalted to *take the place of Christ* as head of the church. Thus the "pale" horse of the Man of Sin meant death to all *spirituality*, in those coming under its power; but physical death also to those who faithfully met its cruel persecuting power.

After noting the ravages of these riders on the red, black and livid horses, we are prepared to understand the meaning of the *opening of the 5th seal* which announces the persecuted martyr-souls under the altar saying, "HOW LONG, O LORD, HOLY AND TRUE, DOST THOU NOT JUDGE AND AVENGE OUR BLOOD ON THEM THAT DWELL ON THE EARTH?" Unquestionably, then, the second, third and fourth "horsemen" are a cryptical portrayal of the bitter persecutions of the Saints *by both pagan and papal Rome reaching unto the latter days*.

Behold then what advantage is that of devout students of prophecy today in occupying a high eminence of observation from which to view the past, present and future! Beholding as we may, so much of the fulfillment of the sublime imagery shown to Daniel and John portraying the outworking and final overthrow of the *fourth* great universal dominion, with what thrilling interest do we now review *the present world-struggle* that will yet convert what remains of practically the entire theatre of the Imperial Roman Empire into a heap of ruins, leaving in its wake, the horrible spectres of anarchy and chaos. Truly, to trace the hand of God in history, to note how all the ages of His providential government *have moved according to a foreseen and foretold order*, to watch the *last stages* of the Divine program of universal history *fulfilling themselves* in our very sight in these last days, is to find hope merging into *definite expectation*, and in patient waiting for Christ's *full Revelation*; IT IS TO LIFT UP OUR HEADS, CONVINCED THAT OUR REDEMPTION, OUR FULL DELIVERANCE, THE REDEMPTION OF CHRIST'S MYSTICAL BODY, AND OF THE ENTIRE GROANING CREATION, IS NIGH.

Louder Swells the Seventh Trumpet's Sound

And now at last, the Seventh Trump is blown;
From year to year it swells with louder tone;
From year to year the signs of wrath
Are gathering round the Judge's path;
Strange words fulfilled, and mighty works achieved,
And truth in all the world hath hated and believed.

But what are Heaven's alarms to hearts that cower
In wilful slumber, deepening every hour—
That draw their curtains closer round
The nearer swells the trumpet's sound?
Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel Thee nigh!

—Selected

The Leopard-Beast and His Image--In the Latter Days

Rev. 13:1,2,11,14: And I was placed upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending from the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and on his heads names of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard . . . And I saw another wild beast ascending from the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by the signs which it was given him to do in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast, who has the wound of the sword and lived.—DIAGLOTT

IT IS WELL that we have freshly before us the thought that the true blessing promised in connection with the study of the Apocalyptic prophecies, is realized only as we shall succeed in ascertaining the *mind of the Spirit*—our own speculative theories count for nothing. May we then earnestly and humbly seek guidance from above as we review this subject. In response to a number of suggestions and inquiries, we place before our readers what seem to be reasonable deductions concerning the symbolic descriptions of chapter 13 of the Revelation, particularly with reference to the "Image of the Beast."

Being as far along as we evidently are in the "Day of the Lord"—this time of the dissolution of the present world-order, it would seem that the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse should now be *largely a matter of history*. Indeed we believe that this is so. Close observation clearly indicates that this symbolism before us is amongst the Apocalyptic imagery that has been filling the stage of these last days with most interesting drama. Even in this Day of its fulfillment, similar to other portions of the Apocalypse, this cryptical description is variously misconstrued and misapplied. Hence there are some at this time who are building startling expectations on this symbol, believing that there is yet to be an era in the midst of this "Day of Vengeance" during which the persecution of the Saints unto death such as was practiced in the dark ages, will be re-enacted by the "Image of the Beast." There is nothing to be gained then by a hasty, irreverent and reckless dealing with this holy prophecy, which can result only in more or less fabulous and fanatical impressions and conclusions.

We can consider ourselves greatly favored as we come to this study, in having before us Brother Russell's examination and exposition of chapter 13, published more than sixty-five years ago. (Reprints, pp. 318-323.) Remarkable indeed is it that the progress of events, developments, etc., since that time have served *not to unsettle or change* our convictions as to our Brother's interpretation, but to *confirm practically all* that he then gave us. What we are therefore submitting below is in large part a rearrangement of our Brother's own thoughts and words in the light of *where we stand today*.

Though it is the "Image of the Beast" that occupies our special attention in this discussion (chap.

13, vv. 14-18), it will be of much advantage to briefly review the preceding verses of this chapter which relate to the Leopard-like beast having seven heads and ten horns, and the Two-horned beast. With regard to the first of these, the description is familiar, being unquestionably another picture or aspect of the *same* beast shown in chapters 12 and 17; chapter 12 being considerably under discussion in another article in *this issue*.

First, in examining the significance of these symbols, it will be well to have in mind a simple rule which Brother Russell very wisely suggested long ago, and concerning which he never made any alteration, namely, that the term, "Dragon" symbolizes the civil and military power of Pagan Rome; "Heavens," the higher or ruling powers; "Earth," the people under or obedient to the ruling powers (heavens); "Sea," the general masses of mankind, not under religious restraint.

SYMBOLIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPAL BEAST

The second verse of this chapter directs our attention to the Dragon which we believe symbolizes the *Pagan Roman Empire*; the same which Daniel saw in vision, called the "fourth beast dreadful and terrible." (Dan. 7:7.) The Dragon passed its dominion over to a beast which arose out of the sea—a government which came up from among the irreligious masses; in other words *the Roman Empire* passed under a *new rulership*—the Leopard-beast—whose mouth was *lion-like*, its body *leopard-like* and its feet *bear-like*. This beast which came into possession of the Dragon's seat and power, we understand to be the Papal beast—meaning the *Papal ecclesiastical power* united with the Roman Empire; which corresponds to the "man child" of chapter 12. In other words, it has certain qualities which *resemble the first three beasts* of Daniel 7, namely, the Lion, Bear and Leopard—described as representing Babylon, Persia and Greece. This new Beast, then, would combine certain leading characteristics of the preceding empires and unite them in the power of the *last*—the Roman.

Babylon was celebrated for its splendor and its pride—the *Lion* the king or ruler of all beasts—so Papacy had a *mouth of this sort*, that is, it *claimed to be the Kingdom over all kingdoms* by divine right—the Kingdom of God, which was to break in pieces and consume all others—a strong mouth.

The bear's feet suggest another of Papacy's peculiarities as an empire, namely, its persistency. Like the *Bear-Empire* (Medo-Persia), which would besiege for years, and even turn a river aside from its channel to accomplish its ends; so Papacy moves cautiously and gets possession of kingdoms rather by strategy than by battle. This same quality is illustrated in the bear; it *hugs* its prey to death with its *paws*.

The body of the Papal beast was like a *Leopard*. The Leopard was the third beast seen by Daniel—namely, Grecia. Greece was noted as the center of learning, piety and wisdom. (Acts 17:1-23.) So Papacy's chief boast, to be the ruler of all kingdoms, is based on the claim that it is the *center of wisdom, learning and piety*. Other peculiarities of the Leopard are its activity, vigilance and secretiveness; so with Papacy. Again, a Leopard is spotted irregularly; so too, Papacy's policy differs in various parts of the earth: in *enlightened* liberal countries it is *liberal*, in other places it varies in its rulings to *suit the circumstances*. This beast (Ecclesiastical Empire) is given the power, seat, and great authority of the Dragon, Pagan Roman Empire, and for a time becomes the only representative of the dominion—the *ten horns* (kingdoms), rendering allegiance and support to it.

"AND THE WHOLE EARTH WONDERED AFTER THE BEAST, AND THEY WORSHIPPED THE DRAGON [CIVIL POWER] BECAUSE HE GAVE SUPPORT AND AUTHORITY TO THE BEAST, SAYING, WHO IS LIKE UNTO THE BEAST, AND WHO IS ABLE TO MAKE WAR WITH HIM? [WHO IS ABLE TO WITHSTAND THE WITHERING CURSE OF PAPACY, THE SPIRITUAL EMPIRE?]"

"And there was given him a mouth [lion-like—strong—terrible utterance] speaking great and blasphemous things [grossly false claims and false teachings]. And authority was given him to act forty-two months." This permission we understand to have been to execute and put to death Saints of God, whom it called "heretics." These 42 symbolic months or 1260 symbolic days are *the same* as mentioned in the preceding chapter and also foretold by Daniel (12:7) as $3\frac{1}{2}$ times. With the end of those 1260 *years*, Papacy's power to act or to execute for heresy, *ended*—1799. There the delusion that none could successfully war or contend with Papacy was shown, when Napoleon in defiance of the curse, took Pope Pius VI a prisoner to Paris, where he died. The dread of this beast has not been so great since, and the ten horns (kingdoms), which once defended, *have made war with the woman*. The dominion was taken away.—Rev. 17:16.

Now we observe how this Beast succeeded during its career of power. We read: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme

His name and His tabernacle, and those who tabernacle in heaven."

This Beast power was a slur—a smear and a travesty upon God and upon the true coming Kingdom. "And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them; and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation." [Papacy's authority as a spiritual empire or "kingdom of God" was generally acknowledged.] "And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him—every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life, of the Lamb that hath been slain."—Rev. 13:8—Revised Version.

"THEY LOVED NOT THEIR LIVES UNTO THE DEATH"

The deception of Papacy was so complete that *the World was deceived* and all the church, *except the overcomers* whose names were "written in heaven," were deceived in the same way, and hasted to unite themselves with, and to worship the Beast, and have it enroll their names on its *books*. From this, has sprung the delusion so common to all Protestants at this day—namely: that their names must be connected with *some such* earthly church systems, or they are not the Lord's Saints. But, the important item is, to have their names recorded *in the Lamb's book of life*—HIS IS THE ONLY RECORD OF ANY VALUE. "IF ANY MAN HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR." Only those whose ears had been circumcised—those who had come to a considerable knowledge of God's Word and who had the hearing of faith—to respect Him and His Word, despite the magnificence, success and power of error, would be able to *receive* the foregoing statements concerning those who were *deceived* by Papacy; that such were of those *not written* in the *true Church*, of which that was the counterfeit.

"IF ANY ONE IS FOR CAPTIVITY, INTO CAPTIVITY HE GOES AWAY; IF ANY ONE WILL KILL WITH THE SWORD, WITH THE SWORD MUST HE BE KILLED. HERE IS THE PATIENT ENDURANCE AND THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS." The Papal system was one of *bondage*. All who acknowledged its *claims*, must of necessity render implicit obedience, as unto God; for it claimed to be the Kingdom of heaven; and its head, the Pope, to be God's vicegerent; consequently those who were for, or in favor of such a captivity of individual thought, and who acknowledged the *right of that Papal system to limit and define the faith of all*, by consenting, *became captives*. Many Protestant sects have gotten into the same snare of the Adversary, and are vainly striving to make a dominion by *blending church and state*.

On the other hand, there were some who asserted that Papacy was a usurpation of the titles and power of the true Head and ruler of the Church, and claimed their right to the individual liberty where-with Christ had made them *free*. SUCH USED THE "SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD," in the defense of their liberty, and such were put to death by Papacy—it overcame the Saints during its 1260 years of power. This was a *severe test of true saintship*—would they go into captivity and join in the usurper's ranks, or would they remain faithful to the true King and wait for the Kingdom which He promised to establish? Those whose names were written in heaven, stuck to the "sword" and sealed their testimonies by death.

It will be well to observe at this point that the reference made in verses 3 and 14 to the *wounding* of the Leopard-beast by the "sword," refers to the Reformation work, when Luther, Zwingli and other reformers, by advocating the teachings of the Word of God, as opposed to the teachings of Papacy, SHOWED THAT IT WAS THE FALSE SYSTEM REFERRED TO IN REVELATION, AND IN PAUL'S WRITINGS, CALLED THE "MYSTERY OF INIQUITY"—"ANTI-CHRIST"—"THE MAN OF SIN." However, it is said that the wound was *healed* as a result of some of the horns (powers) showing their sympathies with the Papacy; though the beast was *not* restored to power again.

"ANOTHER BEAST, TWO HORNS LIKE A LAMB
SPAKE LIKE A DRAGON"

"And I saw another wild beast ascending from the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb. And he spake as a dragon." If the preceding wild beast represented an ecclesiastical power, as we have just seen, then this beast called, "another," should be understood to represent a *similar ecclesiastical or church power—a blending or uniting with civil power*. As the first beast had ten horns or powers which gave it their strength and protection, so this beast has "two horns," which indicate that *two powers or governments support it*.

Again, notice that this beast "ascended [came gradually] out of the *earth*," while the first one came out of the "sea." Now, if our definitions of these symbols be correct—as the coming of Papacy from among the *irreligious* of the Roman Empire, was shown by its coming out of the "sea," then the coming of this second beast *out of the "earth"* would signify that it sprang up out of a *professedly religious people*. Now it was at the *zenith* of the first or *Leopard-beast's* power, and just when the great Reformation was getting under way (1531 A. D.) that the Church of England threw off her allegiance to Rome and *became a separate ecclesiastical gov-*

ernment. It thus followed exactly the example of Papacy, in blending civil with ecclesiastical powers, and also made the same person, Henry VIII, and his successors, *head of all power*.

Now let it be borne in mind that following out the symbolic picture of the Two-horned beast, we must see that a church or ecclesiastical system becomes an element *in or part of the government*. There is *but one church* which this symbol fits perfectly and that is the established "CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND." This system, like the Papal, was therefore a blending of church and state, an ecclesiastical empire. England withdrew from the Papal rule in 1531 and became an *entirely separate government*. The convocation of the clergy called the same year, in its decrees declared King Henry VIII to be "THE ONE PROTECTOR OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH, ITS ONLY AND SUPREME LORD; AND AS FAR AS MIGHT BE, BY THE LAW OF CHRIST, ITS SUPREME HEAD." Those are the exact words of the decree. The Reformation movement had not reached England at this time, and *certainly it was much needed*. The clerical convocation which could acknowledge such a head as Henry VIII was *certainly not far from being as corrupt as the Papacy*.

It is of no little significance that the same title given to Henry VIII, "supreme head of the church on earth," etc., *STILL APPLIES TO ENGLISH SOVEREIGNS*. It is this uniting of the church *in the government* that constitutes it a "beast" in fulfillment of the Revelation symbol—*exactly* as was represented in *the first or Leopard-beast*. England was one of the "two horns," and the evidence is most convincing that Ireland was the other.* History tells us that in 1537 the *Irish parliament in Dublin* "passed the act of supremacy, declaring Henry VIII supreme head of the church, prohibiting intercourse with the court of Rome, and making it treason to refuse the oath of supremacy." Henry VIII also took the title of "King of Ireland." From 1538 to 1871—333 years—the title of the church was "THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND," thus recognizing both "horns."

Though the horn represented in Ireland was cast

* Some, favoring a different interpretation of this passage concerning the two-horned beast, claim that the word "two" should be omitted from verse 11, because not contained in the Vatican MS. In our judgment this is not sufficient reason for the word to be stricken out. Authorized and standard versions, such as the American Revised Version, *retain the word "two,"* obviously for the reason that it is found in others of the *oldest MSS.*, such as Sinaitic, etc. Even though the word "two" be omitted from the text, it would still read, "and he had horns like a lamb." There would be no point in such a rendering, since, as the lamb has two horns and *no more*, the "two" is logically a part of the original text, thus sustaining the interpretation we have herein presented.

off in 1871 (by action of parliament and the consent of the Queen, then the head of the church), *this beast still carries the title of the "Two-horned beast."* So too, although all the horns that once supported the Papal beast have broken off, *it still is known as the "Ten-horned beast."*

The "two horns like a lamb" suggests that the beast was peaceably inclined—not disposed to be aggressive, but merely using the horns for defense. The text states that this beast spake like a dragon (not like *the Dragon*). This we would understand to mean simply that its utterances resembled those of a *purely civil (dragon) power*, and in its words there was little to denote that it is an *ecclesiastical government*. The description in verses 12 and 13 confirm the thought however, that this beast *is much like the Papal beast*. . . . It does various performances in the "presence (at the same time) of the first beast; meaning that it *does not take the place of the first beast, but operates, reigns contemporaneously with it*. The "Two-horned" beast does not act in opposition to the first beast but rather its policy is such as to encourage and *further the cause and foster the interests of the Papal beast*. This second beast also makes its boastful and blasphemous claims to be backed by heavenly powers and that its denunciations, judgments, etc., come from heaven.—vv. 13,14.

WHEN THEY MADE THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST

We now reach the point in the course of the proceedings of this beast where an extraordinary thing occurs; it is in the *utterance of this Two-horned beast*; "*Saying to them that dwell on the earth [independent companies of Christians] that they should make an image to the beast [Papacy] which had the wound by a sword and did live.*" It was by her *example that she advised this*. From the year 1800 to 1846 was a time in which great numbers of new sects arose; whereas before that, they were few and not prominent. This gave rise to uneasiness among the various older denominations who wondered whereunto this thing would lead. As the Bible came to be read more and more by the masses, occasional individuals would *feel free to preach what they thought it taught, regardless of denominational creeds and the views of older sects*. As a consequence, Protestants were fast splitting up into fragments. They began to say, by what means shall we check and stop this disposition to individual thought and opinion relative to the teachings of Scripture? *They wanted to stop the very thing God desired, namely that each individual should be free and independent of restraint, with his faith based, not on the views of others, not on the decisions of councils or presbyteries, nor on the decision of the*

Pope, nor on the things approved of the head of the English church, but *on the Word of God*.

The question came—how can we restrain these creatures? This was a quandary to all except the Roman and Episcopal churches, since these both claimed the "APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION," and that this *ordination conferred upon their ministers special power and authority to preach and to administer "sacraments"; hence that no others had a right to do so, but were clerical pretenders*.

But the *example of the Church of England showed what a prestige she had by reason of the voice of authority with which she commanded a reverence for her clergy and her teachings. This teaching by example was not lost*. The various denominations *felt a necessity for some common standard of doctrine which would be supported and upheld by all of them, and thus give prestige to their teachings, and bring the combined influence of all against any further advance in knowledge or the development of any different phase of truth*. Thus they would protect themselves by being enabled to say in substance—*The combined opinion of all Protestants is against you; therefore you are heretics, and therefore we will shun you and not call you brethren, but use all our influence against you*.

This was done by the formation in 1846, of the "EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE." It was stated to be one of the objects of the Alliance (and we believe the *principal one*) to "promote between the different evangelical denominations an effective co-operation in the efforts to repel common enemies and dangers." Thus by their actions they were following Papacy's tactics, and IN THAT ALLIANCE THEY DID MAKE "THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST."

Now at this juncture let us have before us several important points: the "Image" *was not another "beast."* To be a "beast" in the sense of this symbol, it would have to become AN ECCLESIASTICAL POWER UNITED IN AND AS A PART OF THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT; and such it has *never been nor ever contemplated*. Nor is there anything in the sacred description to indicate that it *developed into a beast-government*. It remained just as that term signified, an *image—a thing that takes on an outward form and outline, and presents an appearance as a beast exercising authority, but is only an image—not an ecclesiastical government allied with any civil government*. This Image answers completely to another familiar symbolism showing the relationship of Protestant systems to the ecclesiastical aspect associated with the beast. It is in the term, "mother of harlots"; the "mother" is the ROMAN PAPAL CHURCH HIERARCHY system, etc., while the Protestant "daughters" are called "harlots"—being the *offspring of the "mother," they too have curried*

favor with the world and various of the civil powers, though never becoming allied with or united to them as the "mother" has. Thus we have the *two symbolic pictures*, namely, (1) THE "MOTHER" AND "DAUGHTERS,"—"HARLOTS"; and, (2) THE PAPAL BEAST AND THE IMAGE. So palpably evident is this Image a present realization, that it seems strange for anyone to be prophesying and warning concerning something that is *yet to develop* and appear on the scene—when the "Image" has been a matter of history for a century now. In later times since the formation of the Evangelical Alliance, the forces of Protestantism have been further consolidated or solidified as represented in the term, "church federation," or the "federation of churches"; the object of which has been to more *effectually carry out* the purposes of the Evangelical Alliance.

How *much* the Image resembles the Papal beast may be judged from the fact that Papacy acknowledged the Image—owned it as a creditable likeness—by the Pope's *sending "greetings" to the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance*. Strange to say, the delegates to the Alliance had so far lost sight of the principles and doctrines which led to the *protests* against the Papal church (that it was the harlot church—ANTICHRIST AND MAN OF SIN, mentioned in Scripture), that they actually felt flattered by the Roman Pontiff's notice, instead of being alarmed, and examining *how* and *why* he who is "THE [CHIEF] ANTICHRIST," should feel *pleased* to greet them as fellows!

GIVING LIFE TO THE IMAGE

A prominent characteristic of the beast *copied* by the Image, is the honoring of the special class, the clergy, with special honors and titles. They are known as Revs., Divines, etc., but Jesus the Son of God said, "YE CALL ME LORD AND MASTER, AND YE SAY WELL, FOR SO I AM." (John 13:13) "BE NOT YE CALLED RABBI; FOR ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST; AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN." (Matt. 23:8.) These titles are *assumptions fashioned after those of Papacy*.

When the various denominations *began their existence*, more full of the Spirit of Christ, they claimed no such high sounding titles. The reformers were not known as Rev., D. D., etc., but as John Knox, Martin Luther, etc.; *unpretentious*, like Jesus and the Apostles, they were intent upon serving God and therefore became the servants (ministers) of the Church. *These had marks of God's approval*, and as a result, their ministry was wonderfully blessed; but *now* the clergy are *far* from being servants; they are *lords*. They have itching ears, loving the approval of men. As pride and worldliness

have come in, vital Godliness and power have gradually departed.

"AND IT WAS GIVEN HIM [THE TWO-HORNED BEAST] TO GIVE LIFE TO THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST." It may not be known to many, how much stress was laid upon the "Apostolic succession," which was supposed to be a virtue transmitted through hundreds of years of Papal corruption (!) by the "*laying on of hands*" of the Bishops. This of course, was vested in the *Roman* church, and also in the *English* church, on account of its being *at first* rather a secession from Papacy than a reformation. To many minds, even among the clergy, there was a *veneration for that ceremony*, which neither Papacy nor the English church was *averse* to promoting.

In the introduction of Methodism into the United States much difficulty was experienced because of John Wesley's superstition on this subject. He would not sanction the giving of the "Sacrament" by any except those *ordained* by the holy hands of an *Episcopal* Bishop. Thus up to 1874, Methodists could partake of the Sacraments, only from Episcopal ministers (ordained). The "War of Independence" tended to make the Methodist preachers independent, and the expedience of taking the authority was discussed. John Wesley heard of this, and *applied to the English Church* to have at least *one* Methodist minister "ordained" for the American church. Finally, in despair, he did the best he knew how to patch up an "Apostolic succession." He, with two other ministers (none of them bishops), "ordained" Thomas Coke to the office of Bishop, and *from this*, sprang the office of Bishop in the M. E. Church. This is merely mentioned to show the *superstition on this subject*, of even so great and good men as the Wesleys.

Now, *none of these allied sects had the succession* except the EPISCOPAL, and *its recognition* of the Alliance (Image), gave it vitality—breath—authority, "THAT THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST SHOULD SPEAK, AND CAUSE THAT AS MANY AS WOULD NOT WORSHIP THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST, SHOULD BE KILLED."

HOW HAS THE IMAGE PERSECUTED THE SAINTS?

The worship and the killing are symbolic as well as the Image, and this signifies, that all who will not bow to the decrees of the EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE are esteemed as *heretics*, shunned and cast out by all who are orthodox. Thus in this Image of the beast or "federated churches," the various sects *have had a sort of backing*, and each may act as the *mouthpiece of the Image*, in denouncing as heresy, all matter not included in this general creed; and in *ecclesiastically, beheading* those who differ.

The buying and selling are symbolic also, and unquestionably refer to dealing in spiritual things. The various Protestant churches constitute the marts or markets of *teaching, instructing, communion, exchanging views, etc.* None may be recognized as having any *right to teach or preach* or baptize or administer the emblems of our Lord's death, except those *licensed* to do so by some *orthodox members of the Image.* And acts of such persons as are contrary to these "authorities" are *not counted valid.*

Now, living at this late hour of the Age and glancing back over the Harvest Era, we see distinctly, the marks of this Beast-Image in connection with the Harvest work. When the due time came for the announcement of the Lord's Presence and related truths that make up the Harvest message, Pastor Russell found all the doors of federated Christendom *closed against him.* The churches were logically the places where such important truths should find entrance and be given a hearing; but not so! The Image of the Beast, the Alliance of Churches, *permitted no "buying or selling."* Not only so, but the Image through the various agencies of the churches had power to "KILL (SYMBOLICALLY, THE NAME, REPUTATION) all true representatives of the Truth. Thus the Lord's Servant and his associates who have given out the *unadulterated message* throughout the entire Harvest Era thus far, have met with opposition, misrepresentation and vilification and had their names cast out as evil; thus fulfilling the symbolic description of *persecution by the Image.*

Though Pastor Russell had thought there *might* be some more pronounced manifestation on the part of the Two-horned Beast imparting ordination to the clergy of Protestant orthodox churches, yet we see the prophetic description has *really met* fulfillment *just as it stands.* And in confirmation of this we quote Brother Russell's own statement published in the WATCH TOWER in June, 1908 under the caption, "GIVING LIFE TO THE IMAGE":

"Many of our readers know that for years we have been waiting for a fulfillment of the symbolic statement about the Two-horned beast of Revelation 13:15. Our expectation has been that the Church of England, represented in the Two-horned beast, would give life to the Protestant Image of the Papacy, namely the Protestant Evangelical Alliance. Just what we have been waiting for *may* yet occur—Episcopal ordination may be granted to the 'clergy' of other denominations; *but possibly the action of the Episcopal house of Bishops some months ago is all that we should expect.* By opening Episcopal pulpits to other orthodox Protestant ministers it *tacitly acknowledged their ordination and thus gave them sanction, acknowledgment, validity—'life.'*

This at least is the view taken by some of their own 'clergy'."

We may ask ourselves: Since Pastor Russell wrote the above, has the "Image of the Beast"—the Protestant Evangelical Alliance, been given *any more "life" than it had before?*—does it have the power *now* to *actually* "put to death" those who refused to obey its commands and behests? Answer, it has no such power! Nor is there any prospect of it ever receiving such! As has been pointed out in this discussion foregoing (and the explanation is Pastor Russell's), the "killing" and "putting to death" *is all symbolical and figurative—meaning, power to injure the name and "kill" the reputation.*

In consideration of all the foregoing testimony, what room is there left to doubt that there has been a complete fulfillment of the Apocalyptic Image of the Papal beast?—that the Two-horned English beast has, *by its example, prestige, influence, and various manifestations, IMPARTED "LIFE" TO THE PROTESTANT ORTHODOX IMAGE—*and the entire symbolic description substantially passed into history.

"LET HIM THAT HATH UNDERSTANDING, COUNT"

Our discussion of this chapter presenting the symbolisms of the Leopard-beast and its Image, and including the Two-horned beast, would scarcely be complete without a concluding word on verse 18 which reads:

"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."

The interpretation that is submitted below which in substance, is that of Pastor Russell, was not expressed in any dogmatic spirit or as "the last word" on this mysterious number—rather, we would say that it was submitted in a very cautious and careful attitude—and this is now, *our spirit* in publishing it at this time. The mind of this writer is open to consider another interpretation that would appeal to us as more convincing and satisfactory; such we have not yet found. This verse has long held the very keen interest of expositors, and scarcely is there another utterance in the Apocalypse that has gathered about it, more of the imaginative and speculative thought than this one. That it has in it the element of mystery is freely conceded by all, and such implication is obvious, in the words, "HERE IS WISDOM. LET HIM THAT HATH UNDERSTANDING COUNT THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST." "Wisdom" and "understanding" would be required in comprehending its meaning. Yet, as is often the case in discerning the significance of spiritual and symbolical terms,

so in *this* instance, men have often failed to grasp the meaning of a mysterious text, purely because of its *simplicity* rather than because of its *complexity*.

Thus in the case before us, we have the seemingly mysterious statement, "It is the number of a man." Altogether in too much haste have students in general concluded that some individual *man* occupying an unusual eminence among men, must have been in the mind of the revealing angel in making such a statement. And since the Papal Beast is under discussion, many, in looking at this strange symbolism, have searched through various hieroglyphics and dead languages, hoping to locate the charming letters of some alphabet that would *spell out the name of the Roman Pontiff* or head of the Papal system. We have carefully looked into various of these suggestions, but have found none that have appealed to us. We do not believe that the solution to this mysterious text lies in that direction.

Early in his studies of the Apocalypse, Pastor Russell was led to give this text careful and prayerful thought; however up to a certain time he said its meaning had not been made clear to him, and his statement in that connection was as follows:

"Though I thought I had given a correct analysis of the symbols of the chapter [13], yet I could not claim it to be *wisdom*, since I could not interpret the number. I suggested, however, that if *ours* be the correct understanding of the *time* in which we are living—the "Harvest" of the Age—and if our general application of these symbols be correct, *the number should soon be understood*. I urged examination on the subject by all, for the Lord is sometimes pleased to give wisdom through the weakest of His children, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained praise'."

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

Our Brother then explains how, in conference with other earnest and devout Brethren, the significance of this mysterious symbolism was determined; and we submit below, the exposition our dear Brother has left us:

Jesus, who gave this Revelation to us (Rev. 1:1), well knew that this symbol could not be understood *until about the present time*, for the reason that the *Image* was only made in 1846. Jesus also knew, of course, that *English* would be the language used by probably four-fifths of His earnest truth-seeking children, in the "time of the end." He knew, also, that not many *wise*, not many *great*, not many learned in all languages, would be of the chosen "little flock." Moreover, it was His custom to adapt His teachings to the "common people," and *of this sort*, His Jewels have been, from the twelve Apostles and since.

However, this statement under consideration seems to indicate that this "name" and "number" of the Beast are, in some sense, a *secret*, and that it will indicate *wisdom*, or a correct knowledge of the foregoing symbols, if we are able to solve the mystery of the name which is symbolically given as 666. "Here is wisdom. Let him who hath understanding [of the foregoing symbols, *prove* it by a *proper application* of the following number] compute the number of the Beast, for it is a man's number [or *reckoned after a human manner* or custom]; and his number is 666."

Therefore it would appear that the number 666, should be open to the comprehension of all the earnest and *spiritually discerning ones*—these being the ones told to *count*—as much so as were the other symbolic numbers of Daniel and Revelation. Let us try, then to apply these figures in *English*. (This is the first application in English, known to the writer, but the reasonableness of it is obvious.)

First, then, the number is that of the (first) Leopard-Beast. Let us see whether it will apply to *some* of its names: That *system* which Paul calls "the man of sin" is the

Roman Catholic power = 666
123456 123456 123456

He is in Revelation called a Beast,

Roman Catholic "Beast" = 666

The system is also called the "woman" (Rev. 17:18),

Roman Catholic "Woman" = 666

She calls herself the

"Holy Catholic Church" = 666

She is really and truly (Rev. 17:5),

"The Mother of Harlots" = 666

Thus we see that the number fits the Beast well.

The second (two-horned) Beast was anxious to have exactly the *same* name, and in fact it claimed to have the pre-eminent *right* to the name—

"Holy Catholic Church," = 666

Other names by which it is often known, are,

"English State Church," = 666

"The Episcopal Church," = 666

"Episcopal Church," = 666

"The Church of England," = 666

This application of the number, will doubtless appear to some, too *simple* to be accepted, but thus God ever deals with us—hiding truth under the vail of its own simplicity, so that it may appear to the Greek (worldly wise) foolishness, but unto them which *believe* (not to those who believe without evidence, but who believe on the strongest kind of evidence—the harmony of His Word), the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. 1:24.

The Image causes all who claim relationship, or whom it recognizes as having a *right* to "buy or

sell"—teach—to have as a creed, that which shall mark them as having either "the name" of the Beast, or the "number" of his name—666. Many take the name and in their creeds recite, "I believe in the

Holy Catholic Church" = 666.

Among those who thus openly mark themselves in their forehead (*by their creeds*) are Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians and others. But others give a seeming support ("mark" in their "hand") to the general principle by organizing under various sectarian names. After these are blended in the *Image* (and no one would be admitted to membership in the Evangelical Alliance, unless he be a member of some such *sect*), they all are collectively known as the

"Protestant Churches," = 666,
which we see contains the Beast's number.

Adding a concluding word: it is claimed by the propagators of the so-called "Seventh Volume and Finished Mystery" that Pastor Russell in his latter years, repudiated his own interpretation given above, and that he accepted instead, another "interpretation" that was given in the "Finished Mystery," the substance of which is, that certain Latin ciphers are supposed to spell out the name or title on the crown of the Roman Pontiff—"Vicarius Filius Dei," and this is known as the "Vicarius Filius Dei theory." However, the author of the "Finished Mystery" gives no reference to where Pastor Russell ever published such an idea, nor is there any kind of testimony, proof, or evidence to show that Brother Russell accepted the theory just named.

It would seem to be sufficient to say that *it is the "Beast" only*, that is referred to as being numbered or that has a number, and not any particular official

or agency that might be connected with the "Beast"-system; therefore, any kind of number that might be conjured up, as spelling out the title on the crown of the Roman Pontiff is not at all sufficient, and is of no significance. The mere words, "It is the number of a man," would seem to have the significance as explained in the interpretation which Brother Russell himself submitted—meaning, the number of the Beast is arrived at according to a *human manner, custom or method* of using numbers.

Finally, it is interesting to observe that some months after Pastor Russell had published the interpretation concerning the "Beast's" number that we have submitted above, he received an interesting question from one of the Watch Tower readers. We submit the question with Brother Russell's reply:

"Ques. Please explain more fully the method of counting the number of the beast and image. I could not fully comprehend this part of the January number.

"Ans. We gave several of the *names* of the Beast and Image. Each of those names will be found to contain exactly 18 letters, or three sixes, which written numerically, form the number 666. This corresponds with the number designated (Rev. 13:18) and proves that we have a correct application of the symbols (Beast and Image) of this chapter.

"Read in the January number again, and be sure you see it clearly enough to prevent your being of those worshipping the Beast or his Image, or receiving his mark, or the number of his name. Those who are worshippers and marked thus, are not reckoned of the *overcomers* who shall sit with Christ in His throne. See Rev. 20:4."

Reviews and Questions on the Apocalypse--Chapter Twelve

Rev. 12:5; 2 Thess. 2:3,4: And she brought forth a male child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Not having space in this issue to include the full discussion of Chapter 12, "Michael and the Dragon," we are submitting below some reviews and questions bearing upon this interesting section of the Apocalypse.

IT HAS BEEN indeed encouraging to hear from many of our readers that they have been richly benefited and edified by their careful and prayerful study of the Revelation reviews and discussions presented in WATCHERS OF THE MORNING. And especially is it gratifying to note the cautious attitude of the Brethren as they desire to accept only what seems well established by harmonious interpretation of Scripture, and corroboration of historical fulfillments. After all, history is the great interpreter of prophecy.

It is a cause of satisfaction also to learn that so many of the friends are recognizing the value of Pastor Russell's expositions, as throughout his writings, *he has*

dealt with a large portion of the Apocalypse. Indeed, the devout student can readily trace throughout the Book, the golden thread of prophetic truth, and thereby is enabled to grasp very largely the import of the Revelation in its entirety.

We learn of some, however, who see matters differently and have expressed their objections to what we have reviewed of Pastor Russell's expositions, claiming they have "much more and clearer light," etc.* In this connection we mention the 12th chapter of Revelation, which records the vision of the sun-clad woman, the male child, the seven-headed ten-horned Dragon, the war between Michael and the Dragon, and the casting out of the Dragon to the earth, etc. Following the *historical line of interpretation*, we presented in substance, the exposition of this symbolic picture given us by Pastor

* "Old Paths Publications," London.

Russell, which in our judgment, leaves room but for one conclusion, namely, that the symbolisms mentioned above *have been fulfilled and passed into history.*

Those who object to what we have presented on this subject claim that the prophecies, particularly those of the Old Testament, which foretold the birth of the Savior and the development of the Christ, Head and Body (through a process of suffering—"travailing," etc.) are *identical* with this Apocalyptic imagery of the sun-clad woman, "travailing" and giving birth to the man child, which was caught up to the Throne of God, etc.; hence those holding this view, claim that this is a picture of the exaltation of the true Christ. Further, the claim is made that the war between Michael and the Dragon, pictures the last great struggle in the end of this Age, when Satan will be overcome and cast out of heaven and bound, etc., Rev. 20.

WHERE DO WE FIND THIS IMAGERY IN HISTORY?

However, a careful examination of this "interpretation" discloses that a number of very important considerations are ignored. In fact, as we shall presently see, such an "interpretation" could be arrived at only after a *very meager and superficial examination* of the vision. As for Old Testament prophecies setting forth the birth of Christ, and the development of the Church and the exaltation of the true Christ (Psa. 2:6-9; Isa. 9:6,7; Micah 5:1,2), all devout students of the Word *freely acknowledge such prophecies*, and recognize their fulfillment in the true Christ. **BUT THESE PROPHECIES HAVE NO CONNECTION WHATEVER WITH THIS IMAGERY OF THE APOCALYPSE IN CHAPTER 12.** There are certain facts clearly stated in the description of this imagery that *definitely fix* its fulfillment in the past. Let us carefully look at these facts:

First, the vision requires that the setting of the stage for its fulfillment shall be in the days when the great seven-headed, ten-horned red dragon (symbolical of Imperial Pagan Rome) was in power; and as Pastor Russell has clearly shown in the discussion which we published, this was in the early centuries of this Age.

Second, we must accordingly look for the sun-clad woman (symbolical of the Church) in the *same* Era as that of the Dragon.

Third, while the "woman," the Church, commenced her primitive purity in the Apostolic days, yet, within three centuries she had become sadly mixed with unrenewed and carnal elements, resulting in worldly entanglements and alliances. Hence, *the sad disclosure—her "travailing" to be "delivered,"* etc.

Fourth, the male child which was born *out* of proper order, and therefore illegitimate, could represent nothing but an undesirable and fictitious offspring. However, most strangely, the male child was immediately "caught up to God, and to His throne!"

Fifth, the "travailing" of the woman *logically ceases*; but her career continues on—she is supernaturally borne to the "wilderness" where she is nourished and has her abode, "a thousand, two hundred and three-score days"—considered by all accredited expositors as a period of 1260 years. Obviously, following the birth of the child, the woman no longer represents a *mixed or defiled church* but the pure Saints only—it would seem that the meaning of the symbol somewhat changes at this point of the woman's delivery of the man-child, as her career and character are shown to represent *thereafter, pure ones* alone, as she dwelt in the "wilderness".

Now again looking at those Old Testament prophecies that describe the development and exaltation of the true Christ, on what grounds, we ask, could anyone be justified in looking for the fulfillment of these prophecies in connection with this Apocalyptic imagery of chapter 12, *which depicts the exaltation of a corrupt offspring?* There are no grounds whatever for such an application. Such an "interpretation" leaves nothing but a misfit all around. For example, following this "interpretation" of the male child (as representing the exaltation of the true Christ), we must logically look for the completion and exaltation of the true Christ to power and glory to take place approximately in the fourth or fifth centuries, A.D. Further, to be consistent with this, we should look for the *career* of the woman to *end* with the *birth* of the male child, for certainly there would be no point in continuing the picture of the woman, which represents the earthly course of the Church. But to the contrary of this, the facts show that the woman lives on for many centuries under Divine care, *subsequent* to the time when she (according to this "interpretation") was supposed to have been glorified.

ERA OF 1260 YEARS FOLLOWS BIRTH AND EXALTATION OF MALE CHILD

The fact stands out in noonday clearness that an important *key* to the proper interpretation of the vision is to be found in the fact that the woman, *after* giving birth to the male child, and following its exaltation "to God," *continues her earthly existence and career* and is nourished in the "wilderness" condition where she has her abode for "a thousand, two hundred and sixty days." This period of "twelve hundred and sixty days" referred to several times in the Book of Daniel and in the Revelation, is conceded by all reliable expositors to be symbolical of that period of time covered by the supremacy and reign of the Papal system from 539 A.D. to 1799 A.D., marking *not the end* of the Church's career but merely the end of her "wilderness" experience—her long isolation from public view.

It is well to note in passing, that the "interpretation" which we are examining, tells us that the "travailing" on the part of the woman, represents the Christian sufferings of the entire Church from beginning to end. But, as we have seen, the "travailing," *to fulfill the symbol*, must logically *cease* with the *birth* of the male child. What "travailing" (of the kind taught by the symbol) did the woman, the Church, experience during all the period in the "wilderness"? *None whatever*, we answer! But this did not mean that the Christian sufferings, pain, distress, etc., of the Church incidental to following Christ, were finished at the birth of the male child. Oh no! the sufferings continued on, yes, all through the 1260 years, and on through the centuries since then, down until the latter days in which we live; and her sufferings will cease only with the *end of her earthly career* and as she passes into glory in these days of Christ's Parousia.

Thus we have positive proof that the woman's "travailing" relates to something else altogether than that of *Christian sufferings*, namely, her agony was due to the fact that she had violated her virginity—having engaged in forbidden world alliances, which resulted in the birth of an undesirable offspring—the Man of Sin, the Antichrist. Surely the unbiased reader can readily see that the so-called "more light" and "clearer interpretation" presents nothing but discord, and involves enormous inconsistencies and absurdities.

Now we take a look at the imagery of the war between Michael and the Dragon: again we must look for the fulfillment of this highly symbolic picture in the *early part of the Age* when the great red Dragon-power was ruling the world. As pointed out in the interpretation which we have heretofore submitted, we believe this "war" to be symbolical of the struggle between the forces of Christianity in the beginning of the Age, and the cruel powers of Imperial Pagan Rome, symbolized by the Dragon. Surely this conflict between Michael and the Dragon does not picture the last great struggle between Christ and Satan in the end of this Dispensation, for the reason that when the Dragon is cast out of heaven, nothing is said about his being "bound" or restrained "for a thousand years." He is merely cast out of heaven, that is, *the symbolical heavens* of authority and rule; and he is represented as *continuing* his career and activities on the earth—*de-throned, not bound at all.*

Besides this, the record clearly shows that following the casting down to the earth of the Dragon *after* the "war," he persists in his persecution of the "woman" through pagan agencies and influences. And there, again we are told, the woman is protected from the assaults of the Dragon by being nourished in the wilderness, "*for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*" Thus, once more we meet with *the same period* of 1260 years, referred to as an era that *follows the war in heaven and the casting out of the Dragon*; and which makes *impossible* the application that the war between Michael and the Dragon relates to the end of the reign of evil at the close of this Age. In other words, the war between Michael and the Dragon is altogether a different matter from that which is presented to us in Revelation, chapter 20, concerning the Second Advent of Christ and the binding of Satan. Thus seen, the two chapters, 12 and 20, do not run parallel in their symbolic significance, *in any sense*, nor refer to the *same* transactions and events in history.

SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT MALE CHILD

We come now, to what some seem to easily stumble over, and so we have the question: How could an evil unholy male child be represented as "caught up to God and to His throne"? Answer, those who will approach this matter with an *unbiased* mind, will recognize that we are furnished with the "key" *in the Word itself*, to which Pastor Russell has called our attention; and has given us the only satisfactory and consistent interpretation that has ever been offered. ST. PAUL REALLY FURNISHES US THE KEY IN 2 THESS. 2:3,4.

Here we remind the reader of what has been previously noticed, namely, that various Scripture accounts plainly indicate that our great Adversary has, a number of times along through the ages, attempted to *duplicate or counterfeit what Jehovah has been doing or has promised that He will do.* Thus, far back, God promised a Seed, a great Messiah, a great Deliverer for all people. HE FORETOLD THAT HIS FIRST APPEARANCE WOULD BE AS A BABE, A "HOLY MAN CHILD"—LITERAL RENDERING, "MALE CHILD." (Isa. 9:6,7; Micah 5:1-4.) No sooner had our Lord's First Advent taken place and the primitive Church started, than the evidences appeared that Satan had *also* planned a deliverer, *but a false one*, which would follow *exactly* the same *prophetic pattern* outlined for the *real* Christ. It was none other than St.

Paul who put his finger squarely upon this false personage, designating him the "Man of Sin." Obviously this "Man of Sin" had to have a *beginning* as a man child or male child; just as the *real* Christ-Deliverer had to be born the Male Child, the Babe in Bethlehem. The Apostle Paul does not state that the "Man of Sin" was *already* born and existing *as such*, in his day. But he does state that the "Mystery of Iniquity" was *already at work* in his time—manifest in the spirit of *ambition, lordship and self-seeking* in the Church, which he could plainly see would lead to the *birth*, development, etc., of the evil male child or "Man-of-Sin" system.

It is when we come to the Apocalyptic description that we find this male child's birth and development, *not* as a literal individual person but as a *great evil counterfeit system*, in full keeping with St. Paul's outline of its gradual growth and development. Thus as the spirit of Satan crept into the Church from the very beginning and became the instigator of false teachings, the way was prepared for the beginning of the "Mystery of Iniquity" which came to the birth early in the fourth century. And apostate Christianity replaced Paganism and resulted in the maturing of a great counterfeit, Antichrist system, which followed closely the pattern, *in an external sense, that will obtain in the true Christ-Mystery—the Christ glorified.* It is interesting in this connection to note that Pastor Russell presents the striking similitude between the "Man-of-Sin" apostasy established in power, and the true mystical Christ, the Kingdom that is to operate during the Millennial Age. We ask the reader to note carefully the following from Pastor Russell's pen:

One general mistake made in judging of the Papal church is to suppose that it is "Congregational," that is, that the congregation is any part of the *church*. It is what is known as "Episcopal," that is, there is a *church hierarchy*, which rules *over the laity*. The Roman church represents the very extreme of *Episcopacy*. It recognizes three classes; first, the Hierarchy or church proper, which consists of Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, and the Pope; secondly, the *priests or brethren*, who are the direct servants of the church; thirdly, the people, who are called *the children* of the church.

This *outline* of their government, *resembles what we are told of the true Church glorified*: First will be the Hierarchy—the overcomers with Christ at their head, all reigning. (So in the Roman church, Cardinals and Bishops have the Pope as their head—yet all are in authority.) Second, the "great company" before the throne, who serve—the second company not overcomers, who come to spiritual conditions "through great tribulation." (Rev. 7:14, 15.) These will be *brethren*. (These correspond to the priests—the *brothers*—servants of the Roman church or *hierarchy*.) Third, the people of earth, as fast as they come into harmony with the Kingdom, will, we have seen, be regarded and called the *children* of the Church or hierarchy. (So Papacy calls its adherents the *children* of the Church.)—Reprints pp. 355-356.

THE MALE CHILD EXALTED RULES NATIONS WITH ROD OF IRON

Having before us the foregoing outline of the Adversary's attempt to counterfeit the stately steppings of God throughout the ages, we are the better enabled to recognize the true meaning of that symbolic description of Revelation 12, concerning the birth of the "male child," a *counterfeit* offspring which grew to be the "Man of Sin," the "Mystery-of-Iniquity" Papal system. As already noted, the Dragon is used in the Apocalypse as a forceful symbolic description of the Imperial Pagan Roman Empire. Not for one instant can we think of this Dragon as descriptive of Satan *personally*—as though *he* were such a dreadful looking monster, "having seven heads and ten horns." All who are familiar with early Church history know that as

Christianity began to spread, it met with fierce persecution from Pagan Rome. However, the Gospel Truth given by Christ and the Apostles *was not maintained in its purity*, and as a result of compromise, the lowering of standards and the entering in of apostate influences, the church grew in numbers, and with its growth came the greater and more bitter persecution from Pagan Rome. This growth of the church under the influence of apostate teachings, and this struggle against Paganism, was the preparatory process, *the "travailing" of the "woman" looking to the birth of the "male child,"* which in the fourth century came forth with the conversion of Constantine, the first "Christian" emperor. **THUS WAS FULFILLED THE DESCRIPTION OF THE "DRAGON"-SYSTEM OF PAGANISM DESIRING TO "DEVOUR" THE "MALE CHILD" AS SOON AS IT SHOULD BE BORN.**

History plainly records that this male child which developed into the Papal system (illegitimate offspring of the mixed worldly church) was thus *figuratively* "caught up to God and His throne," that is, *exalted* to the *symbolic* heaven of control—an ecclesiastical Government acting as God's Kingdom in *advance* of the true heavenly Kingdom of Christ and the true Church. Again let us be reminded that we are discussing what is positively a strong symbolic description, and to be consistent with the Word of God *as a whole*, we must in our interpretation, see the *fulfillment in a figurative or symbolic sense only*. We are greatly assisted in this by a careful reading and examination of St. Paul's prophecy to the Thessalonians wherein he says that **THE MAN OF SIN "EXALTETH HIMSELF ABOVE ALL THAT IS CALLED GOD, OR THAT IS WORSHIPPED; SO THAT HE, AS GOD, SITTETH IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD, SHOWING HIMSELF THAT HE IS GOD."** We can hardly imagine a clearer or a more pointed interpretation of the exaltation of the male child, than this prophecy by the Apostle concerning the rise and enthronement of the "Man of Sin." Pastor Russell remarks on Paul's statement as follows:

This One will exhibit himself as a religious ruler, claiming and exercising authority over and *above all other religious rulers*, even to the extent of exalting himself in the Church, which is the true temple of God, and there claiming and exercising lordly authority as its chief or authorized ruler. Wherever in the Greek the word *theos* is used in any sentence where its meaning would be ambiguous, it then is preceded by the Greek article, if it refers to Jehovah; as if in English we were to say, *the* God. In the texts above, which refer to *other* gods, and in this text (2 Thess. 2:4), which refers to Antichrist, there is no such emphasis. With this seen clearly, a great stumbling-block is removed, and the mind is prepared to look for the right things as fulfillments of this prediction: not for an Antichrist claiming to be Jehovah and demanding worship as such, but for one claiming to be the chief, supreme religious teacher in the Church; *who thus attempts the usurpation of the authority of Christ*, the divinely appointed Head, Lord and Teacher.—S. S. Vol. 2, p. 275.

Now the question, Did the exalted male child, Papal Man of Sin "rule all nations with a rod of iron"? Indeed, the facts of history leave no question that for a thousand years this evil Antichrist system did ruthlessly "rule all nations with an iron rod." We need add nothing further. The reader is referred to Pastor Russell's illuminating chapter on the Man of Sin in his Scripture Studies, Volume 2, pages 267-361, for proof in abundance. The Prophet Daniel adds his testimony when he prophesied that **"IT WAS GIVEN HIM [THE ANTICHRIST] TO MAKE WAR WITH THE**

SAINTS AND TO OVERCOME THEM"—TO "WEAR OUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH."—DAN. 7:21,25.

ANOTHER OBJECTION CONSIDERED

It is claimed by *those who reject* Pastor Russell's expositions of the Apocalypse, particularly chapter 12, that "apart from a brief article found in the *Watch Tower* during the first year of its publication, 1879, there is little indication in his writings that he had arrived at any fixed conclusions regarding the significance of the vision of chapter 12." Hence, it is urged that we should *attach no importance* to what Pastor Russell gave us. But our objector has left out some important information, namely: that in December, 1881, *two years subsequent* to publishing his first version of chapter 12, our Brother republished the same interpretation in much enlarged form, covering the subject in a much more comprehensive manner. This enlarged edition of his views shows definitely that he *did* have "*fixed conclusions*" regarding this portion of the Apocalypse, even though this was in the early years of his ministry. We remind our readers here, that it was *prior* to December, 1881, that Pastor Russell wrote **TABERNACLE SHADOWS** *as we now have it*. Not only so, but in the early 80s, our Brother published in the **WATCH TOWER**, much of Volume 1, Scripture Studies, as also portions of the Second and Third Volumes. He made *no change whatever* up to his death, in **TABERNACLE SHADOWS** nor in what he had published of the Volumes in those early years. Now if we are to reject his exposition of Revelation 12 because he wrote it in 1881, then, *to be consistent*, we should also *now* reject **TABERNACLE SHADOWS** and the first three Volumes of Scripture Studies, on the *presumption* that in those early years, Pastor Russell "did not have any fixed conclusions regarding the significance of the truth" which he expounded in **TABERNACLE SHADOWS** and the Volumes—surely all can see that such logic can result in nothing but sheer folly.

The facts as we have them, show that Pastor Russell *did definitely* maintain down through the years *the same views* of the symbols in chapter 12 that were elaborated upon and presented comprehensively in December, 1881. Let the reader carefully pursue the Pastor's exposition of the Man of Sin, chapter 9, of Scripture Studies, Volume 2, and he will find that our dear Brother traces *the same line of reasoning* concerning the development of the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, and its rise to power over the nations—the same as that which he presented concerning the male child and its "exaltation to God, and to His throne." If we accept Pastor Russell's exposition of the Papal Man of Sin, presented in Volume 2 Studies, we must necessarily accept his applications and interpretation of the symbolic imagery of Revelation, chapter 12, as given in the December **WATCH TOWER**, 1881.—Reprints, pp. 304-307. Again in the **FEBRUARY** and **JUNE WATCH TOWER OF 1916**, Pastor Russell reviews various portions of Rev. 12; and what he *there* presents, particularly on verses 6 and 14 concerning the two references to the 1260 years, *is the same as that which he gave in December, 1881*. (See Reprints pp. 5857, 5911.) It then appears definitely clear that the Pastor maintained his early views of chapter 12 of the Apocalypse, up to his passing in 1916.

Voices of Comfort

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Love and greetings in our blessed Master's name and service! Thank you for your encouraging and uplifting letter to our Class acknowledging our contribution, and now it is again time for our next opportunity. Enclosed is a check for \$— as a thank offering to the Lord's service which He has committed to your charge. We do appreciate so much your loyalty to the trust in which the Lord has placed you in charge, and we fully appreciate the faithful service you are rendering to the scattered sheep of the Lord's precious fold. There are so many conflicting voices these days, but none of them have any attraction for those who know their Master's voice and way. True, there are larger groups to be found of professing brethren but after investigating and losing valuable time in finding them out, we must always come back to the same strait and narrow way that the Lord, the Apostles and faithful Brethren in Christ Jesus have trodden since the door was opened by His kind favor. Many things indicate that we are nearing the end of the Church's career on earth and we trust that we shall finally be found amongst those who will be admitted to His presence with exceeding joy and will be sharers of His joy and love throughout Eternity.

We all do thank you for the heroic efforts you are continually exerting to maintain true doctrines and to keep the proper Christian principles for character development before the Saints. We are glad to know we have one so able, tried and approved in these matters to watch for the vital interests of the Lord's flock amidst the babel of confusion and compromise on the part of the weak, immature and unsatisfactory leaders astray. Please convey our love and appreciation also to your faithful co-laborers in the glorious Divine service which you are pursuing. At our meeting last Sunday it was voted to have Brother — serve as secretary-treasurer of our Class, replacing Sister Brown, who has moved to St. Petersburg, Florida, after rendering faithful, efficient and very acceptable service to our Class in this office for twenty-three years. We truly will greatly miss her, and trust the Lord's blessing and presence will go with her in her new environment. God bless and keep you to the end of your way and day. We remember you and those fellow-helpers with you in our prayers, and desire that you will also remember us.

Sincerely yours in Christ, Brother G.C.S.—Buffalo, N.Y.

Dear Brother in Christ:

Please find enclosed money order as a donation towards the Lord's work, in which He has placed you in charge for the spiritual upbuilding of His Elect during the short duration of their journey here in the flesh, for there are not many of us left who will "dare to be a Daniel," and stand alone with God, and who are not depending upon any group or sect for their peace of mind, but only upon "My peace which I give unto you."—John 14:27.

The article in April WATCHERS, "The Feast of the Saints," has been such a blessing to me that I am positive that God put that message into your mind at a time when it was most needed. The Voices of Comfort letters also show us that the Brethren are strong in faith, and I like to hear of their experiences, and, as the May WATCHERS says, "They have Christ in their hearts."

My wife was called Home over two years ago, and although she is absent from the body, she is present with the Lord, and I am sure she will be in Heaven to meet me when I have reached my Goal. Her only goal was "to be with Christ; which is far better." (Phil. 1:23.) The sweet fragrance of her Godly life still lingers by my side,

and I feel that we are only a step removed, and we shall soon meet around the Savior's Feet. What a privilege is ours of being called out of darkness into His marvelous light!—and it is only the called, chosen, and faithful to whom He has revealed His secret regarding His purposes; but we are glad to know that in His due time, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

I am placed in a happy position in my same home, living with my nephew and his wife and son, and God is pouring showers of blessings upon us, as He says He will: "Prove me, and see if I will not pour out such a blessing upon you that you will not be able to contain."—Mal. 3:10.

May God continue to bless you and use you to comfort us in these last days of Satan's rule, for you have always advised us to have on the whole armor of God, so that at all times we can tell our Adversary to be about his own business and get far from us, for "we are on the Lord's side." With Christian love from

Brother F. S.—Australia

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Today, I want to let you know that our dear Sister —, of New York, passed away May 23, 1951. I dearly loved her, and the fact that I did not know about her death at the time has made me very regretful, as I believe I was the only one with whom she had fellowship. . . . She has been such a sufferer, and faithful always.

Dear Brother, could you send me some tracts, "Our Tomorrow Beyond the Grave" and "The Present World Distress," or any others you may have? I'll manage to get them placed. I sometimes wonder if people are alive to the times so well described in the Scriptures; I cannot see how they can be so apathetic. I have been wonderfully blessed with the privilege of giving the good news to many (in fact, I always seem to be able to drop the seed). I receive so much spiritual food through WATCHERS; somehow God seems to give me just what I need at the time I need it. I am enclosing \$1.00 and my gratitude to you for all the help you are giving to us in these last days. I am going to read "The Day of Vengeance" again right away. Your last WATCHERS is most wonderful; all are wonderful, but the June issue is so full of good things. . . . It is a time to "hold fast to that which is good," and with God's help I will do so—I have stood alone (yet not alone) for nearly ten years, not a Truth friend in this village—but Brother, I have studied more in those years than ever before. I have had the Truth since 1912. I live with my son and his family. My son and his wife love the Truth, his two boys are not unfavorable to it, so I am allowed the blessing of not being opposed. May the Lord's blessing rest upon you and your timely work. I will close with a prayer for you and yours,

Sister E. N.—New York

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Greetings in Jesus' dear name! I am writing to tell you how very much I have enjoyed the issues of WATCHERS for July and August. The contents seem to me just what our dear Brother Russell would have written at *this* time. How much we need comfort and encouragement as we travel along seeing the increasing darkness as regarding the precious Truth that we have loved these many years, and which has become dearer as we press along in the narrow way. I have seen many drop out whom I had felt sure nothing could move, but they have gone after delusions which we were warned against. My prayer has

been these very many years that I might be kept from delusions. The "new light" in its many forms has no attraction for me. I have desired nothing but the Truth proven by Scripture. This was Brother Russell's advice. I left the I. B. S. A. in 1918. The conditions in the world show us that our "deliverance draweth nigh!" We may well be watching and praying, keeping close to the Lord, for the Adversary is specially busy at this time to stumble and confuse those who are striving to be ready when called.

Thank you, Brother, and your helpers, for WATCHERS. I enjoy them all as I read and reread; these give me comfort along the way. Our dear Lord never leaves His true followers without assistance. What a joy will be ours when we meet the dear ones in the Kingdom and our dear Heavenly Father, the Source of all our blessings! The poem, "HE GIVETH SONGS IN THE NIGHT," has been my experience since 1907. With Christian love to you all, with daily prayers for the Lord's blessing.

Your Sister in Christ, T. L.—Washington

To dear Brother Hoskins:

Greetings in Jesus precious name! (1 John 3:1,2.) Enclosed herewith find money order toward payment of twelve month's subscription to WATCHERS OF THE MORNING, of which I have received safely up to May issue. Words fail me to describe the comfort, help and blessing I have received by these wonderful articles and the wise counsel contained therein. Truly the Truth is beautiful. You appear to have the vision wonderful; God is using you as His willing Servant to feed His Flock by His wonderful grace, and the Holy Spirit moves you to write, as the true prophets of old were given their vision. I know you do not desire self-praise, Brother; you know in your heart that all praise is due to the above statement I have written. I could not choose one subject more than another that you have given us, including the contributed articles. Some help me more clearly than others, but I can always take up a WATCHERS and find something to inspire and encourage my faith.

I noticed about three letters from Australia during the year: if I could obtain the addresses of these, I may write; they may need some encouragement by the way. Praying for you always and your dear helpers with you, I am your sincere Sister in Christ Jesus by His grace,

Mrs. A. M.—Australia

My dear Brother Hoskins:

Loving Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We give heartfelt thanks and praise to Him for all His tender mercies and manifestations of loving care under all conditions in these trying and so eventful days of our pilgrimage, and can truly say, within the past three months we have known the heights and the depths in our Christian walk; and with humble sincerity we praise Him for each experience through which He has caused us to pass. And yet, as you must know, dear Brother, in our ever-nearer approach to "Mount Zion," more trials, more testings—though even of a different character, for each one must be a rounded-out character and Christ-like—thanks to our Heavenly Father—He whom we serve becomes nearer and dearer, the ever present help in time of need, and, as today's Text so beautifully expresses it, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love Him and are the called according to His purpose." This all my prayer shall be, "More love, O Christ, to Thee."

We are settled in our new place of abode, and in this

experience we found even as the Master said, "His yoke is easy, His burden is light." Yet one is so apt to anticipate these changes with all they entail as a burden dreaded, and then with a feeling of shame to have allowed even such thoughts to come into the mind—for again and again "He proves, yet spares us," and never fails to give the necessary grace and strength.

Need I tell you, Brother, how you are ever in our thoughts and prayers that He may continue to grant you wisdom and courage in the very precious ministry to which He has assigned you "to strengthen the things that remain" and to "stir up our pure minds to remembrance." How dear the pages of WATCHERS and the Voices of Comfort!—always coming at the time of needed grace and strength.—Phil. 1:2-6.

Lovingly your Sister by Divine grace, M. W.—Canada

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer! I feel so very weary tonight as our Oklahoma weather is so very warm, but I feel I am impressed to tell you how much I have enjoyed the April WATCHERS. "The Spiritual Feast of the Eagle Saints," I think is a most beautiful picture of the Body-members. I have read it over and over again. I have also saved a little to be used in the Lord's work, which I feel that you should have at this time. As much as I dearly love to receive your letters, I don't want to be a burden to you, for I know how busy you must be. So, dear Brother, I will see that I have the right address and I know that the dear Lord will see you get this letter. I look forward to getting WATCHERS, and thank my dear Heavenly Father for keeping me in line with the real truth. Could it be possible that I might be an Eagle Saint?—"Christ in you the hope of Glory." Oh! let us pray! Much Christian love,

Sister J. B. K.—Oklahoma

Dear Brother Hoskins:

Greetings in our dear Redeemer's name! Please find enclosed my subscription for WATCHERS OF THE MORNING. I am still getting great help and encouragement from the Journal as each copy comes along. The one with the article on the Memorial, came the day before it was due to be celebrated, so I had that amongst other seasonable items, which was very helpful in remembering our dear Lord, as He has invited us to do. I trust, dear Brother, you are keeping reasonably well, that you may be able to give us the very helpful articles contained in WATCHERS which so many are finding of such value at this time. With Christian love to you and your co-laborers and all the dear Brethren everywhere,

Your Sister in Him by grace, Mrs. L. M. C.—Australia

Dear Brother Hoskins:

I am unable to put into words how much I value WATCHERS. It always rings true to the way we were taught. In 1912 I first read the "Studies," and I knew *then* that the Lord had directed Brother Russell in finding the Plan of the Ages, and that he pointed it out to us. So who would *dare* to change one word of it?—but alas, many have done so! I believe WATCHERS is the Lord's Messenger—angel of Psa. 91, and I thank the dear Lord for the privilege of receiving it and for the love that is within my heart, for the Truth, our dear Heavenly Father, His dear Son, and all the dear Brethren. I remember you and all the co-laborers with you in my prayers. I enclose \$2.00 for one year, renewal of my subscription; the other, use wherever needed.

Your Sister in the Lord, Mrs. L. G.—Oklahoma