

# NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

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## Chapter 1

VERSE 1.—*Revelation, Apokalupsis*, Apocalypse, from *apo*, away, and *kalupto*, I cover or conceal. The word is applied to the “manifestation” of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19), and to the personal “coming” (1 Cor. 1:7), and “appearing” (1 Pet. 1:7), of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apocalypse was revealed in A.D. 96, about the end of the reign of Domitian, as stated by Irenæus. John was then a very old man. He was banished, as he says, to Patmos, and probably condemned to labour in the mines.

There are some who seek to establish a much earlier date for the book, viz., before the fall of Jerusalem, in A.D. 70. They conceive that the temple-vision of chapter 11., necessitates the contemporary existence of the Temple in Jerusalem. But the things seen in chapter 11. do not refer to a literal temple and altar, and even if they did, it might be remarked that Ezekiel had a vision of a temple in Jerusalem twelve or thirteen years after the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar.

The Preterist school of interpretation that favours this earlier date would make Nero the Antichrist, and limit the scope of the whole prophecy by the fall of the Jewish State in A.D. 70. This would make the Lord Jesus here “show his servants” very little indeed.

The Futurists, on the other hand, would make the greater part of the book relate to the time of the end, a personal individual Antichrist yet to be revealed, who shall only afflict the saints for a little time (three-and-a-half years literally) before the end. This view, which is associated with a literal treatment of many of the symbols, is equally untenable.

The Presentist interpretation, that makes the visions cover all the interval between the giving of the Revelation and the return of Christ, and the Millennial Reign upon earth of the saints with him, is the only one that conforms to scriptural precedent (Daniel’s visions as interpreted here and there by the angel), and will bear serious examination.

Verse 1. “*His servants.*” Literally, “bond-servants,” whom he has “bought with a price,” even his own blood. “He that hath an ear” is invited to hear, and to join their ranks.

“*Things which must shortly come to pass.*” That is subsequently to A.D. 96. Compare ch. 4:1, “things which must be *hereafter.*” A most important thing to remember; for lack of which many anachronisms and absurdities have been propounded in interpretations put forth.

“*Signified it.*” That is revealed it by many signs and symbols which He deems to be intelligible and enlightening to the “bond-servants” aforesaid, as to “*scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*” (Matt. 13:52), who bring out of their treasures (the Scriptures) things new and old. “The Gospel of the Kingdom of God,” which the Lord Jesus preached, is the only “key” to the Apocalypse; even “the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ,” as preached by the apostles. Apart from an intimate knowledge of these things, based upon “Moses and the Prophets” it is not intelligible. The Apocalypse does not harmonise with popular “Christianity,” and cannot be interpreted in harmony with it.

Verse 3. “*Blessed is he that readeth . . .*” There could not be greater encouragement to earnest seekers after the truths revealed, than is contained in this verse. Also note the postscripts to each of the seven epistles to the seven churches: “He that hath an ear let him hear.”

The main subject of the Apocalypse, like that of Daniel’s prophecy, and those of the other prophets, is the history of the saints in their tribulations in the world, and the signs whereby they should know their times, and their true relation to the powers that be, and should be assured of their ultimate triumph, and the time of its approach with the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ according to his promise.

Verse 4. “*The seven churches.*” *Ecclesias*, from *ek*, out of, and *klesis*, a call, the communities called out by the gospel from among Jews and Gentiles. There were many other churches, but these in their number corresponded to the seven-branched candlestick of the tabernacle, and sufficed for the complete illustration of the principles to be revealed.

“Asia”—The Roman province of Asia, comprising the western part of what is now known as Asia Minor, and having Ephesus for its capital. Compare Acts 2:9.

“*Him which is and which was and which is to come.*” Compare Isa. 41:4; 44:6. The Father’s words through Jesus. Compare 5:8. *Eureka*, vol. 1, chapter 1, section 2.: “The Mystery of Godliness apocalypsed in symbol” should by all means be studied in connection with the “hard sayings” of Jesus in this chapter.

Verse 7. “*Behold he cometh with clouds.*” Clouds of witnesses (Heb. 12:1); of saints caught away to meet him (1 Thess. 4:17); compare Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30. Contrast Ezek. 38:9.

Verse 8. “Alpha and Omega.” See above (verse 4).

Verse 9. “*In the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.*” That is, in the royal dignity of a king and priest elect, and in the patient waiting for the time revealed in the Apocalypse when the saints shall “reign upon the earth” (ch. 5:10), “with Christ a thousand years” (ch. 20:4), when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord” (ch. 11:15).

Ignatius, who died A.D. 107, uses the exact words of this verse (en hupomonē Jesou Christou, in the patience of Jesus Christ) in his epistle to the Romans. It is judged to be an allusion to the Apocalypse.

Verse 10. “*I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day.*” Literally, “I became in spirit.” Compare ch. 4:2, and Ezek. 1:3; 3:12: “In the spirit I found myself present on the day of the Lord.”—*The N.T. in Modern Speech, Weymouth*. “The Lord’s day”—not Sunday, but “the day of the Lord,” “the day of Christ” (2 Thess. 2:2), “the day in which God will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31).

“*Heard behind me,*” compare “things behind” (Phil. 3:13). All that John was about to see would be “behind” when the day of the Lord had really come.

Verse 11. “*Write in a book and send it unto the seven churches.*” A scroll of parchment or papyrus. As it circulated round the churches named, copies would doubtless be made by them, and thus the publication began for the sake of those who have ears to hear.

Verse 12. “*Seven golden candlesticks.*” That is, as the Lord explained, “the seven churches” (5:20). “Ye are the light of the world . . . on a candlestick . . . giving light to all that are in the house” (Matt. 5:15, 16). Many of the apocalyptic visions are based upon the temple and its courts, altars and furniture, for Christ’s bond-servants are “the temple of the living God” (2 Cor. 6:16).

Verse 13. “*In the midst . . . one like unto the Son of Man.*” Not actually the Lord Jesus Christ himself, but a symbolic vision representing the “one body” of Christ multitudinous, the “perfect man” (Eph. 4:13), “the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ.” The voice was “as the sound of many waters,” and waters in the vision represent multitudes (17:15).

“*Clothed.*” The first clothing was a covering for sin (Gen. 3:21). The clothing of the priesthood was symbolic of righteousness and a change from the mortal to the divine nature (compare Zech. 3:3–10). Christ’s “servants” “put on Christ” in baptism, and if they walk as he walked, they will be “clothed upon” with their “house which is from heaven” that mortality may be swallowed up of life (2 Cor. 5:2, 4). Compare Rev. 19:8.

“*Girt.*” Compare the girdle of the ephod (Ex. 28:8). Also Isa. 11:5. “Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” Gold is the symbol of faith, tried as it were by fire (1 Pet. 1:7). Also see Lam. 4:1–2.

Verse 14. “*His hairs were white like wool, white as snow.*” The hair represents a multitude who are one with the head. The Lamb of God has washed this multitude from their sins in his own blood. See Isa. 1:18; contrast Isa. 7:20; also see Ezek. 5:1–6; Jer. 7:29; Dan. 7:9.

“*His eyes as a flame of fire.*” “Our God is a consuming fire.” The eyes represent the saints in the execution of the judgments written. Compare the wheels of Ezekiel ch. 1; the stone of Zech. 3:9, and the living creatures of Rev. 4.

Verse 15. “*His feet*” like incandescent brass. “Beautiful feet” walk through the earth with the gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15; Isa. 52:7). Wrathful feet tread the winepress of the wrath of God—“tread down the

wicked”—and break in pieces the nations (see Rev. 19:15; Isa. 63:3; Mal. 4:3; Mic. 4:13). For the significance of brass in relation to flesh and the altar of sacrifice, see the Tabernacle in the Wilderness.

“*His voice as the sound of many waters,*” showing that the symbolic “one like unto the Son of Man” represents a multitude. “The wicked are like the troubled sea.” The purified nations are like “a sea of glass” (Rev. 15:2). “The waters . . . are peoples” (ch. 17:15). But *these* waters are *saved* peoples “redeemed from the earth” (ch. 14:2, 3).

Verse 16. “*In his right hand seven stars,*” explained to represent the “angels” of the ecclesias, that is, the men sent of God to guide and direct them.

“*Out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword.*” Another evidence that it is not the Lord Jesus personally that John sees. A real person would have had the sword in the hand like “the captain of the Lord’s host” before Jericho (Josh. 5:13). The word of the Lord will command the sword of judgment in the day of his coming. “He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked” (Isa. 11:4). Compare Rev. 19:15.

“*His countenance as the sun.*” Not his face — his *opsis*, “whole appearance” (Rotherham), “glance” (Weymouth), “general external aspect of the whole figure” (Dr. Thomas). Compare the Transfiguration, and the words of Jesus, “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matt. 13:43). He is “the Sun of Righteousness,” and they are to be “like him.” His brightness was above that of the sun when he revealed himself to Saul of Tarsus. His aspect was “very terrible.” Sun-scorching is a figure of tribulation, whether for the saints or for their enemies (ch. 7:16; 16:8, 9).

Verse 17. “*I fell at his feet as dead.*” Like Ezekiel (ch. 1:28); and Daniel (ch. 8:17, 18; 10:8, 9), John was as it were the subject of a symbolic death and resurrection.

“*Fear not.*” Words of encouragement that have been addressed to the prophets; to the disciples by Christ, and to the women at the sepulchre of Christ by the angel. They will yet be addressed to every true and faithful “servant.”

Verse 18. “*I am he.*” See note on verse 8.

“*The keys of hell and of death,*” that is, of *hades* (the grave) and of death. “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” Compare Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 15:51–55.

Verse 19. *Things which are, and things which shall be hereafter.*” The first comprehend the then existing condition of the ecclesias as written in the seven epistles. The other things are introduced with the vision of the divine throne. See ch. 4:1—“things which must be hereafter.”

Verse 20. “*The mystery.*” An explanatory word of interpretation of far-reaching value. The stars are the “angels,” and the candlesticks are the ecclesias. “Angel” here, as will appear later, is a noun of multitude, and does not signify one individual. It covers the inspired elderships of the ecclesias who were “sent of God,” as the apostles were, for the work of preaching the gospel and edifying the ecclesia.

It has been well remarked that the opening vision, by its incorporation of elements of the temple worship, would well prepare John for the visions of altars, temple, court, and so on, that were to come. The whole prophecy deals with the temple and city of God in the sense in which these symbolise the whole family of God in Christ.

## **Chapter 2**

### **CHRIST’S EPISTLES**

THE Lord Jesus Christ dictates seven epistles to the seven representative churches or ecclesias in Asia, each epistle being introduced by the reference to the attributes of the Speaker, which bore directly on the circumstances of the church addressed, each also being prefaced by the proclamation, “I KNOW THY WORKS”; each epistle also containing commendation of the good and reprobation of the evil occurrent, and each likewise promising great salvation “TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH.” Each likewise contains the gracious invitation and proclamation, “HE THAT HATH AN EAR LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH TO THE CHURCHES.”

#### **TO EPHESUS**

Verse 1. “The angel,” *i.e.*, the inspired eldership of the ecclesia, ordained and sent forth by the Lord Jesus Christ. That “angel” covers a plurality appears from verses 8, 10.

“*He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.*” Ephesus was the leading city: hence this comprehensive introduction. Compare also the threat to “*remove thy candlestick.*” It has long ago been carried into effect.

Verse 2. Intolerance of false apostles approved by Christ.

Verse 6. *The deeds of the “Nicolaitanes.”* The immoralities of the licentious Gnosticism that were akin to those of the heathen worship current. “*The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes*” is associated with Balaam’s doctrine in verse 14. The name is said to be equivalent to “vanquishers of the people,” from *nikos* victory, and *laos* people.

Verse 7. “*The tree of life . . . the paradise of God.*” Compare Gen. 2:9; 3:22; also the Lord’s saying, “I am the vine: ye are the branches” (John 15.). He is the tree of life, and the Paradise is the Kingdom of God in the Holy Land (Ezek. 36:33).

#### **TO SMYRNA**

Verse 8. “*The first and the last, which was dead and is alive.*” Compare this with the exhortation and promise of verses 10, 11: “Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life,” and, “shall not be hurt of the *second* death.”

Verse 9. “*Blasphemy.*” Taking the Name of God in vain, in the wide sense of professing Christ and practising iniquity. It is blasphemy to profess to forgive sins without authority (Matt. 9:3); or to dishonour masters by unfaithful service (1 Tim. 6:1); or to profane the Name by indiscreet and unchaste behaviour (Tit. 2:5). A real Christian is a “Jew inwardly” (Rom. 2:29). A false professor says he is a Jew and is not. “*Satan*” is “the Adversary.” “*Synagogue*” is simply congregation, as opposed to Christ’s *ecclesia*.

Verse 10. “*The devil . . . some of you.*” The plural form here: “some of you,” shows that “angel” is a noun of multitude, as above indicated. The devil who cast the saints into prison was the civic authority (1 Pet. 5:8, 9; 2 Tim. 4:16–18).

“*Tribulation ten days.*” The persecution under Trajan A.D. 98–117. Pliny, the proconsul in Bithynia, writes his celebrated report on the Christians to Trajan who approves his policy (102). The principle of “a day for a year” is here first introduced into this prophecy. (Compare Num. 14. and Ezek. 4.)

D. M., with exemplary brevity, asks several questions, the first being: “Does the ten days’ tribulation of Rev. 2:10 refer to the persecution under Trajan or Diocletian?”

ANSWER.—Under Trajan. This was the first persecution after the Revelation was given, and the memorials thereof are the celebrated letter of Pliny to Trajan, and the emperor’s reply, which show the extent of the Christian “contagion,” as Pliny called it, and the means taken to subdue it. See *Eureka*, vol. i., p. 253. This persecution lasted *ten years*, until the death of Trajan in A.D. 117. The Diocletian was the last persecution. In *Notes on the Apocalypse*, p. 16, it was a mistake on our part to apply Rev. 2:10 to A.D. 303–313.

Verse 11. “*The second death.*” Judicial death because of transgression, and inflicted after condemnation at the judgment seat of Christ. (Compare ch. 20:6, 14; 21:8.)

#### **TO PERGAMOS**

Verse 12. “*The sharp sword.*” (Compare verse 16, “*the sword of my mouth.*”)

Verse 18. “*Satan’s seat,*” better “*throne.*” Pergamos, (whence the term parchment, see Dictionaries), was a kingdom as well as a city, and the latter was the great centre of the old Babylonian sorcery and idolatry. Attalus III., King of Pergamos in 138 B.C., when he died, left his dominion to Rome by will. And the headquarters of the Roman government in Asia were at Pergamos when this epistle was written.

Verses 14–15. Under the influence of the evil surroundings, the Apostacy was strong in Pergamos, and it was correspondingly difficult for “faithful martyrs” (witnesses) to hold fast the name and faith of Christ there. See remarks on Nicolaitanes under verse 6. Antipas (5:13) was, according to tradition, “bishop of Pergamos.” The name means “Against all,” and is fitly symbolical of the general character of Christ’s witnesses against the world.

Verse 16. “*The sword of my mouth.*” “The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword.” The sword can slay the witnesses; but nothing more. Christ can and will bring forth unrepentant sinners from *sheol*, and after judgment “destroy both body and soul in Gehenna” (Matt. 10:28).

Verse 17. “*Hidden manna.*” Christ is “that bread of life” (John 6.). “The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” To eat of the hidden manna is to partake of eternal life with Christ at his coming (Col. 3:3, 4).

“*A white stone.*”—The symbol of acquittal in judicial trial, and of victory in the games. Compare the black balling of the clubs.

“*A new name.*”—The Name of Jesus borne by the immortal constituents thereof.

### **TO THYATIRA**

Verse 18. Compare the conversion of Lydia (Acts 16.). The ecclesia at Thyatira was probably founded by her.

*Eyes like flame and feet like brass.* Compare the promise of 5:26–27 of power over the nations, and rule with a rod of iron.

Verse 20. “*Jezebel.*” The history of the alien marriage of Ahab and the dreadful consequences thereof must be studied as a type here. The fate of Jezebel is that of the class typified later in this book by “the great whore that sitteth upon many waters” (ch. 17.).

Verse 24. “*The depths of the Satan as they speak.*” This expression shows the Satan to be a noun of multitude, like “angel.” Weymouth paraphrases verse 24 thus:—The “deep things,” as they call them (the deep things of Satan!). The philosophical corruptions of the truth are “the depths”; chiefly speculations on the immortality of the soul and the nature of Christ.

Verse 26. “*Power over the nations*”—not a reward in some distant “heaven.”

Verse 28. “*The morning star,*” *i.e.*, Christ himself (see ch. 22:16). The promise is of an everlasting abiding place in the “one body,” when the “perfect man” is revealed (Eph. 4:13).

## **Chapter 3**

### **TO SARDIS**

Verse 1. “*The seven spirits and the seven stars.*” The omniscience and omnipotence of Christ. A fitting introduction to the sad revelation of a lifeless ecclesia.

A name to live—but dead. Even so, Christ intervened for the sake of the “few” and exhorted all to be watchful and repent. “Works perfect before God” is what the Holder of the seven spirits and seven stars desires.

Verse 3. “*Come on thee as a thief.*” The expression is almost exactly reproduced under the “sixth vial” (ch. 16:15). “Behold I come as a thief.” “Christendom,” so called, is in a Sardian state at his coming. But “a few names” will be found “worthy.”

Verse 4. “*A few names even in Sardis.*” The deadness of the church must not discourage the “worthy.” “*Not defiled their garments.*” Compare Jude 8, 9, 10, 23. Believers put on Christ as a white robe of righteousness in baptism, by which they are purged from their sins. If they “turn from the holy commandment” and walk in disobedience and uncleanness they defile their garments.

Verse 5. “*Clothed in white raiment.*” See above; also chapter 19:8, 14. “Not blot out his name out of the book of life. . . Confess his name.” “Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:2, 3). Those only who have “put off the

old man” will be so honoured. The rest will be “blotted out,” a dreadful fate, truly, but quite irreconcilable with eternity of conscious suffering. Compare also Matt. 10:32, 33.

#### **TO PHILADELPHIA**

Verse 7. “He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David. . . .” The attributes of the Speaker harmonise beautifully with the providential “open door” proclaimed for this church.

“*The key of David,*” the phrase is taken from Isa. 22:22: “The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.” And this in turn goes back on the “everlasting covenant” (2 Sam. 7., 23.) in which God promised to David the everlasting stability of his throne and kingdom in the hands of the Son of God and Son of David. David “is both dead and buried” and “not ascended into heaven” (Acts 2:29, 34; 13:36, 37). So that the hymns and sermons of popular theology are all wrong. But David spoke of the resurrection of Christ, and he indeed was not “left in hell” (*hades*, the grave), but “saw no corruption.” He has “the keys of hades and of death” (ch. 1:18), so that the gates of hades cannot prevail against his church (Matt. 16:18). But he will open these gates and liberate David and all the “prisoners of hope” (Zech. 9:12), and raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and restore it as in the days of old, so that all the nations may seek unto it (Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:16, 17).

Verse 9. “*The Synagogue of Satan.*” See ch. 2:5:9. In the day of judgment the Adversary will be like Saul before Samuel (1 Sam. 19:18-24). And the less objectionable sort will be like Job’s friends before Job (Job 42:7-9).

Verse 10. “*Because . . . the hour of temptation.*” Christ is able to protect faithful brethren. The hour of temptation *after the ecclesia had for a time kept the faith*, is found in the Decian persecution about the middle of the third century, A.D. Cyprian speaks of “The Lapsed” and of the TRIAL that the Lord brought upon the church.

Verse 11. “*Behold I come quickly,*” i.e., to this judgment trial, not to the subversion of the kingdoms of men at the end of the age. “A thousand years are as one day” with the Lord. He calls the whole time of his absence, (now nearly nineteen hundred years), “a little while” (John 16:16).

Verse 12. “*A pillar in the temple.*” “James, Peter, and John” were “pillars” (Gal. 2:9). But they went out in death. “Go no more out” means an immortal abiding place in the temple of God. “*The name of my God . . . the name of the city . . . New Jerusalem . . . my new name.*” Symbols not of topographical import, but of an immortal place in the family of God, represented in ch. 21:9 as “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

#### **TO LAODICEA**

Verse 14. “*The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*” Most effective is this introduction by way of example and rebuke to the luke-warm professors of Laodicea who were “neither cold nor hot.” Of Christ it was written: “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up” (Psa. 69:9; John 2:17). *Amen* is Hebrew for faithfulness, and means “So be it.” In Isa. 65:13-16, where other “Laodiceans” are rebuked, Christ is called “the God of Truth,” *Elohai Ahmen*, and the glory of the city and of the temple is revealed in the context. Compare also 2 Cor. 1:19-20.

Verse 18. “*I counsel thee.*” Extraordinary patience and forbearance of the Lord. “*Gold tried in the fire,*” the symbol of a tried and precious faith (1 Pet. 1:7) produced by the Word of God, the assemblies of the saints and prayer (Heb. 10:25). “*White raiment,*” the righteous actions of saints produced by the foregoing. “*Eyesalve,*” the enlightening effect of the word of God applied to “the eyes of your understanding” by persevering “anointing” or rubbing in (Eph. 1:18; Psa. 119:130).

Verse 20. “*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*” “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh” (Heb. 12:24). “*If any man hear and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me.*” The impress of the mind by the word of Christ in reading or preaching is the hearing and opening the door, which is perfected in obedience in baptism “into Christ,” in which “any man” puts on Christ and abides in him and Christ in him.

Verse 21. “*My throne . . . my Father his throne.*” Christ is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high only until the time come for him to establish *his* throne upon earth. Not heaven, but “thrones of the house of David” upon earth is the promise to the victor (Psa. 122:5; Rev. 5:10).

## Chapter 4

### “THE THRONE OF DAVID”

“THE Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David” (Lu. 1:32). This chapter represents “The Throne covenanted to the Son of David, established in the Hour of Judgment.”

Verse 1. “A door opened in heaven.” Compare the “door of faith” (Acts 14:27); “a great door” (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12). Christ is “the door” (John 10:9), and “the way” unto the Father and eternal life in the kingdom of God. He has entered into his rest, and “has the keys of hades and of death.” He will raise David and all the children of God and open the door into the Kingdom (“Open to me the gates of righteousness”—Psa. 118:19, 20). Even now “he that hath the key of David” sets before his faithful people “an open door” for testimony concerning the gospel of the Kingdom.

*Heaven.* The heaven of Israel of which Moses speaks in Deut. 32:1; 33:26; also Isaiah in ch. 65:17, 18. Not heaven “God’s throne.” “David is not ascended into the heavens” (Acts 2:34). “No man hath” (John 3:13), save Christ (Psa. 110:1; Acts 2:34, 35), who is only there “until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by all the holy prophets” (Acts 3:21).

“*The first voice.*” That is Christ, see ch. 1:10.

“*Come up hither.*” John in vision is exalted by Christ to the “throne in heaven” that is, to the throne “in the regeneration” (Matt. 19:28), that the Lord had promised him some sixty-three years before.

“*I will shew thee things which must be HEREAFTER.*” After A.D. 96. See notes on chapter I. A most important note of time governing all right interpretation.

Verse 2. “*In spirit.*” See note on ch. 1:10.

“*A throne in heaven.*” The Throne of David “in the regeneration.” Compare “at that time” (Jer. 3:17); and see Ezek. 43:7. Also compare the vision of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21.).

“*One sat upon the throne.*” “The King” (Isa. 6.) compare Matt 25:34. The Lord Jesus upon his throne. Compare the promise “to him that overcometh” in the epistle to Laodicea (ch. 3:21).

Verse 3. “*Like a jasper and a sardine stone.*” “The stone of Israel” (Gen. 49:24); “a stone of stumbling” (Isa. 8:14); “a precious corner-stone” (Isa. 28:16). Two stones representing two natures, spirit and flesh. *Jasper*, “The name includes many kinds of crystalline quartz.” *Sardine*, Hebrew. *Odem*, Greek. *Sardios*, “Our red cornelian,” or flesh-coloured stone. The Hebrew consonants are the same as in the name Adam. Jesus is first Deity manifested in flesh, and then Deity manifested in spirit. Compare the stones of the High Priest’s shoulder-pieces and breastplate (Ex. 28.).

“*A rainbow like unto an emerald.*” The symbol of the covenant (compare Gen. 9:12–17); also see Ezekiel’s vision of the throne and the cherubim, and the glory of the Lord (ch. 1:28). The day of Christ is “the day of rain” and break-up of the drought, like the typical event in the days of Elijah and Ahab, after the slaughter of the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. “He shall come down like rain upon *the mown grass*, as showers that water the earth” (Psa. 72:6). “All flesh is grass”; judgment storm, succeeded by sunshine; rain-doctrine (Deut. 32:2), and emerald-like fertility is the import of the beautiful symbol.

Verse 4. “*Four-and-twenty seats, and four-and-twenty elders.*” More correctly, *thrones*. “There (in Jerusalem the exalted) are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David” (Psa. 122:5). Twenty-four, in harmony with David’s ordering of the sons of Aaron and of the singers (1 Chron. 24., 25.).

“*Clothed in white raiment.*” Immortality bestowed on account of righteousness. Compare ch. 7:9, 10, 14: 19:8; “clothed with salvation” (Psa. 132:16).

“*Crowns of gold.*” Crown (*Stephanos*) coronal wreath as opposed to *diadema*, the imperial fillet of pearls. The Stephan symbolises the coronation of those who “overcome.” Compare ch. 2:10; 3:11. Also 14:14 and 3:21. Gold represents a tried and precious faith (1 Pet. 1:7). “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 Jno. 5:4).

Verse 5. “*Lightnings and thunderings.*” The judgments of God upon the nations, by means of which their thrones are cast down and the throne of David established. Compare Psa. 18:13–15. Also Lu. 10:18;



17:24. James and John were Boanerges, sons of Thunder (Mar. 3:17). John will “prophecy again” in the days of the mighty angel of the rainbow and of the “seven thunders” (ch. 10:1, 4, 11).

“*Voices.*” Intelligence, speech, especially decrees, royal commandments. Compare Ezek. 1:24; also the “great voice” of Babylon that God destroyed (Jer. 51:55); and “the voice of the seventh angel” (Rev. 10:7) before which “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ” (11:15).

“*Seven lamps of fire, the seven spirits of God.*” Compare Zechariah’s vision of the golden candlestick with its “seven lamps” (ch. 4.). In Rev. 5:6 the “seven horns and seven eyes” of the Lamb are said to be “the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” By divine omnipotence and omniscience revealed in Christ individual and multitudinous the throne of David is to be established.

Verse 6. “*A sea of glass.*” Waters in ch. 17:15 represent “peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues.” These are “a troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (Isa. 57:20). After the judgments the remaining peoples are like “a sea of glass, having been mingled with fire” (Rev. 15:2), upon which stand the victors over the beast.

“*Four beasts,*” or rather as in the R. V., “living creatures.” The word is *Zōon*, not *therion*, a wild beast, which latter word is used of the mortal antagonistic powers spoken of in the book. “Four,” because of the four-square encampment of Israel.

“*Eyes.*” Discerners like Elisha (2 Kings 5:26) and the Lord Jesus (John 1:48). “The eyes of the Lord which run to and fro through the whole earth” (Zech. 4:10).

Verse 7. “*Lion, calf, man eagle.*” The faces of the cherubim (Ezek. 1:10), which were symbols of the body of Christ, who is the antitypical mercy-seat upon which the faces look. The lion is “Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (ch. 5:5). The calf is a clean animal, for sacrifice, chews the cud, and has “straight feet” (Ezek. 1:7). The man points to the Son of Man; and the eagle to the saints spoiling the spoilers and taking the prey. Compare Isa. 11:14; Rev. 8:13. Contrast the Roman spoiler (Deut. 28:40; Matt. 24:38).

Verse 8. “*Six wings.*” This feature identifies the living creatures or cherubim with the seraphim or burning and glorious ones of Isaiah’s vision of “the King, the Lord of Hosts” (Isa. 6.); as also does their doxology: “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts.”

Verses 9, 10. The living creatures and elders are united in their praise and worship, and thus are seen to be but different symbols of the saints.

Verse 11. The fundamental reason of the worship of God by men and angels: “for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

## **Chapter 5**

### **“THE GLORY OF YAHWEH FILLS THE EARTH AS THE RESULT OF THE SCROLL BEING UNROLLED AND THE SEALS LOOSED.”**

Verse 1. “*A book.*” A scroll, compare Ezek. 2:9, 10; Zech. 5:2, 3.

“*Written within and on the back.*” Revealing the judgments of God on behalf of those “within” (1 Cor. 5:12; Rev. 11:1), upon those “without,” whether apostate professors of the outer court (Rev. 11:2), “dogs” (Rev. 22:15), or the nations of the earth in general.

“*Sealed with seven seals.*” Completely hidden from human knowledge. Compare Dan. 12.; Isa. 29:11; Rev. 22:10. The Revelation is the unfolding of the details of the visions and prophecies of Daniel and the prophets.

Verse 2. “*Worthy.*” The divine revelation is not for everybody irrespective of character. “None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:10).

Verses 2, 4. “*No man . . . worthy.*” Not even Enoch or Elijah; not even the beloved disciple himself; nor Noah, Daniel, or Job, Moses or Samuel.

“*I wept much.*” The frame of mind of “the wise.” Compare Daniel’s trouble (Dan. 7:28; 8:27; 10:2–3).

Verse 5. “*The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David.*” Christ, the manifestation of the Father in the Spirit. Hence the “Root of David.” Before David, as “before Abraham.” Not Trinitarianism, and not Humanitarianism, or Mere-manism. Compare ch. 22:16.

Verse 6. “*Lo . . . a Lamb as it had been slain.*” The Lion-phase is based upon the Lamb-phase, the conquering career of Christ upon sacrifice (Isa. 53:13).

Verse 7. “*He came and took the book.*” See Dan. 7:13–14, and the parable of the nobleman which the Lord based upon it. Lu. 19:12–27. Also compare Rev. 1:1: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him.”

Verse 8. The four living creatures and the four-and-twenty elders are here explained to be “the saints.” “Harps.” See ch. 14:1–2; 15:2; “Golden vials full of incense.” See ch. 8:3 and the judgments that followed “the prayers of all saints.” “All things are for your sakes” (2 Cor. 4:15). “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas. 5:16).

Verse 9. “*A new song.*” A song of deliverance by immortals (compare ch. 14:3), that could not be sung by any others.

“*Thou hast redeemed us,*” “living-creatures,” “elders,” “saints.”

“*Out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation.*” The design of the gospel is not universalism, now becoming so popular; but the visitation of the nations “to take out of them a people” for God’s Name (Acts 15:14). “If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?” (1 Pet. 4:18). “Without are dogs” (Rev. 22:15). “The fearful and unbelieving . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

Verse 10. “*Kings and priests . . . shall reign on earth.*” “The order of Melchizedek.” (See Gen. 14., Psa. 110., Heb. 5., 6., 7.) This is what Earth wants above all things: “pastors after God’s own heart.” This is the “honour of all the saints.” Popular Christianity says of the redeemed that they *do* reign in *heaven*; thus contradicting “the Revelation of Jesus Christ.” The saints do not ascend the throne until Christ comes (Rev. 16:15); and “rewards” them (Rev. 22:12). Then they are seen enthroned (Rev. 20:4); having obtained their portion in “the first resurrection.” A religious system that sends “immortal souls” to heaven, before and independently of resurrection and judgment, is not Bible Christianity but, so-to-speak, Christianised Paganism.

## Chapter 6

### *THE FIRST SIX SEALS.—THE WRATH OF THE LAMB, AND THE END OF A WORLD*

THIS chapter reveals the history of the Roman Empire in relation to Christ’s people during the “early days of Christianity” after the apostolic age—namely, from A.D. 96 to A.D. 324, when the Paganism of Rome was suppressed in favour of nominal Christianity.

FIRST SEAL. Verses 1, 2.—“*The Lamb opened.*” Christ is the director of all human affairs, from heaven by the angels of his power, until the time for his return to earth.

“*Thunder.*” Revolution. The assassination of Domitian. “*The four living creatures.*” The Lamb with the four living ones constitute “the church militant”—Dr. Thomas. “*Come and see.*” The voice of the ecclesia concerning “the signs of the times” manifested in the political firmament.

“*A white horse.*” The horse was a symbol of the people of Israel in prophetic speech. (Isa. 63:13): God “led them . . . as an horse in the wilderness.” Also see Zech. 10:3: “Judah his goodly horse in the battle.” Compare also the vision of Zech. 6. The horse was the symbol of the Roman people, dedicated to Mars, their god of war, as is evident from coins extant, and from literary references.

The colour naturally indicates the condition of the body politics. White signifies righteousness and peace, and such was the condition of the Empire from A.D. 96 to 180 or thereabouts, the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, to the accession of Commodus.

*The rider with the “bow.”* The body of Christ “preaching peace by Jesus Christ.” Judah God’s “bow,” Ephraim His arrow (Zech. 9:13). “Thy bow . . . the oaths of the tribes” (Hab. 3:9). The mouth a bow, and “bitter words” the “arrows” of the wicked (Psa. 64:3). David’s “lamentation” a “bow” for the children of

Judah (2 Sam. 1:17, 18). Contrast the bowmen of lies and the valiant for the truth upon the earth (Jer. 9:3). These last are the class in the vision of Rev. 6:2.

“A crown”—*stephanos*, not *diadema*, the coronal wreath of victory, and not the inherited symbol of imperialism which Diocletian afterwards adopted from the East. Compare 1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 4:4, 10. The body of Christ was to conquer in the strife, first in the political subversion of the Paganism of the Empire, and ultimately in the attainment of eternal life and the abolition of the kingdoms of men for ever.

SECOND SEAL. Verses 3, 4.—“A red horse.” The colour indicates sin and blood-shed, and the context declares it. The rider “takes peace from the earth,” for “they kill one another.”

“A great sword,” *machaira*, dagger rather than sword—an era of assassination. “The earth,” *i.e.*, the Roman Empire.

The history of the Roman Empire, A.D. 180–211, illustrates the prophecy. Commodus was poisoned and strangled, Pertinax, by whom he was succeeded, was slain with the sword by the soldiers by whom he had been elected. Julian, who bought the Imperial crown for about £3,000,000, was slain by the soldiers after enjoying (or enduring) it for sixty - six days. Septimus Severus died in York. Caracalla and Geta, his sons, succeed him. Geta is assassinated by his brother, who in turn is slain by his successor, Macrinus. He was slain in a mutiny; and Elagabalus, who succeeded him, was also slain for his enormities. Alexander Severus, who next followed on the throne, was likewise assassinated, and so on unto the

THIRD SEAL. Verses 5, 6.—“A black horse,” indicating lamentation and *mourning* and woe. *The balance-holder who rides him*, the symbol of the Roman Magistracy, as of “Justice” in our own times. “A voice,” proclamation reducing wheat and barley to famine prices, but exempting oil and wine.

The exactions of Caracalla and Geta and Elagabalus reduced the Empire to great distress. Verres in Sicily exacted more than double the price of the wheat from the growers. Barley went up to over *seven times* the price at which it stood in Athens in the days of Socrates (Dr. Young). “A shilling for a penny loaf, and a shilling for three dough cakes,” is given as a fair paraphrase applicable to our own times.

Alexander Severus, on his accession, reduced the taxes to *one-thirtieth part* of what they had previously been. He was murdered in 235.

THE FOURTH SEAL. Verses 7, 8.—“A pale horse,” *chloros*, pale green, death colour. *Death and Hades* the rider. During fifty years there were 39 persons claiming to be emperors, *all of whom died by violence*. “Hades” is the grave, the invisible, not any particular tomb or grave, but the grave in general, and is so translated in many places in the New Testament. Compare the A.V. with the R.V. on “Hell.”

“*The Fourth Part of the Earth.*” The Italian Prefecture. The fourth living creature was “like a flying eagle”—a bird of prey, a fitting “voice” to proclaim the devouring scourges of this seal.

“*The Sword.*” Maximin, who succeeded Alexander Severus, was assassinated in 235. Then six emperors were slain by the sword in a few months, and so on through a long list of victims.

“*Hunger.*” Famine induced by the long oppression swept away thousands.

“*Death.*” Pestilence raged from 250 to 265, and at one time 5,000 per day died in Rome. Half the human race was supposed to have been destroyed.

“*The beasts of the earth.*” Figure of the barbarian invasions of the Goths and the Persians, who, like the Romans before against Israel, came “swift as the eagle flieth.”

FIFTH SEAL. Verses 9–11.—No living creature appears. The unity of the one body was destroyed by apostacy; and the Spirit was withdrawn.

“*The Altar.*” Christ is both “temple” (Jno. 2:19), and “altar” (Heb. 13:10–12), *in whom* the faithful worship (Rev. 11:1). The Jesus-altar was dedicated with blood when he “poured out his soul (life and blood), unto death.”

“*Under the Altar.*” “The dead in Christ,” “slain souls,” whose blood had been poured out in sacrifice like their Lord’s, because like him they held fast the word and the testimony in faith and obedience. Many who professed Christ did otherwise, as Cyprian testifies concerning “The Lapsed,” who gave up the scriptures and execrated Christ to save their worthless lives. They were called “Traditors.”

The slain souls, in a figure, cried for vengeance. They were not, and are not “immortal souls” with Christ in heaven. Had this been so they would have been symbolised as *alive* and *in* the altar, and not as *slain* and *under* it.

“*They cried.*” “The *voice* of thy brother’s *blood* crieth unto me *from the ground*” (Gen. 4:10). So God said to Cain concerning the slain soul of Abel his brother. This was a cry for vengeance upon Cain. So in this symbolic prophecy.

“*How long, O Lord?*” “The day of vengeance” is when Christ comes.

“*White robes.*” An intimation of their acceptance and exaltation to the divine nature in the day of judgment because of their righteousness. See ch. 19:8.

“*Rest yet a little season.*” “Sleep in the dust of the earth” until the resurrection morning, when all the true and faithful witnesses shall be avenged and glorified together. They have not, as yet, been “made perfect.”

The fifth seal covers the “Ten days’ tribulation” of Rev. 2:10. A.D. 303–313. The Diocletian persecution is the main subject of the vision. The catacombs of Rome bear testimony to it to this day in inscriptions on the tombs of martyrs.

SIXTH SEAL. Verses 12–17.—“*A great earthquake,*” a mighty political revolution. “*Sun . . . black,*” utter eclipse of the royalty. Compare Joseph’s dream (Gen. 37.); also the going down of Zion’s sun (Isa. 60:20; Jer. 15:9, &c.). “*Moon became as blood,*” sanguinary suppression of the priesthood. See Matt. 24:29; Amos 8:9, &c. “*Stars . . . fell.*” Overthrow of princes and rulers (Dan. 8:9–11; Matt. 24:29, &c.).

“*The heaven departed as a scroll.*” The entire Pagan system, Emperors, Priests, and Princes, and all their power vanished. Compare 2 Pet. 3:10–12, concerning the vanishing of the Jewish heavens before the Romans in A.D. 70, and the divine promise of “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Also see Isa. 34:4: 1:3: 51:6.

*Mountains and islands removed.* Compare the fall of Babylon (Jer. 51:24–26).

*The great day of the Lamb’s wrath.* Not “the last day” of his own discourses, but the first great signal triumph of his Name over the Roman Pagan World, and the type of the much greater day of wrath that is coming (2 Thess. 1:6–10). The sixth seal covers the revolutionary period, A.D. 312–324, at the opening of which Paganism was in the ascendant, and at the close the name of Christ, in the person of Constantine, the so-called “First Christian Emperor,” whose achievements are so extravagantly applauded by Eusebius.

There are four places in the Apocalypse where earthquakes are introduced: *First*, here in ch. 6., A.D. 312–24. The overthrow of Paganism.—*Second*, in ch. 8:5, A.D. 360. “An earthquake.” The Julian attempt to overthrow the Name of Christ, and falsify his prophecy by rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. — *Third*, ch. 11:13. “A great earthquake.” The Great French Revolution of 1789–95. The judgment of the Catholic Apostacy and the rise of The People to power. — *Fourth*, ch. 16:18. “A GREAT earthquake, *such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.*” A.D. 19 . . . (?) in which “Great Babylon” and “the cities of the nations” are all finally overthrown to make room for the Kingdom of God.

Constantine’s victories, whereby the Pagan Dragon was cast out of the heaven, are the subject of a further series of visions in ch. 12.

## **Chapter 7**

### ***THE SEALING AND THE SEALED***

THIS chapter contains a symbolic vision of the operation of “the word” which is “the hope of Israel,” and of the results thereof in the day of Christ.

Verse 1.—“*After these things.*” That is, after A.D. 324, the time of Constantine’s triumph over Paganism in the name of Christ.

“*Four angels.*” The angels of heaven, to whom, under the Lamb, the present world is put in subjection (Heb. 2:5). The calm is peace. Contrast the state of the “earth” and “sea” under the first and second trumpets (ch. 8:7, 8).

Verse 2.—“*Another angel.*” A human agency with a mission (see note on ch. 2:10). Also note well the “WE” of verse 3. Elliott makes this angel Christ, and others say Constantine. But, as in the letters to the churches, the angel is the body of Christ, or some members thereof.

“*Ascending from the east.*” Compare R.V., “ascend from the sunrising”; Dr. Thomas, “having ascended.” Geographically, Christianity came out of the East, “beginning at Jerusalem.” Mystically, it came out of the sun-rising in the sense of being promulgated by the risen Christ, the Sun of righteousness.

“*The seal of the living God.*” The word of God impressed upon the understanding and affections, and marking the children of God. Contrast “the mark of the beast” (ch. 13:16, 17). And see Job 33:16; John 6:27; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

“*Cried with a loud voice.*” Compare verse 10. It represents the prayers of the saints for peace to proclaim the word, with the effect of sealing the servants of God.

Verse 3.—“*Sealed . . . in their foreheads.*” The forehead is the symbol of the understanding. Understanding and obedience is life (John 17:3; 12:50). Ignorance and disobedience is death (Eph. 1:18; 2:12; 4:18). Compare the High Priest’s forehead (Ex. 28:36–38; also, Jer. 3:3; Ezek. 3:8, 9; and Rev. 9:4; 13:16; 14:1, 9; 17:5; 20:4; 22:4).

Verse 4.—“*The number sealed.*” The 144,000 is symbolic of the “great multitude” (5:9) of the redeemed—the square of twelve multiplied by a thousand.

“*All the tribes of the children of Israel.*” “Salvation is of the Jews.” The gospel is “the hope of Israel.” “The Israel of God” comprehends the whole body of Christ, whether of Jewish or Gentile extraction. It is not Israel after the flesh that is signified, but the redeemed multitude “out of all nations” (5:9). The enumeration of the tribes is peculiar. Dan and Ephraim are omitted, while Joseph and Levi are inserted in their places. See remarks on this in *Eureka*, vol. 2., p. 321.

Verse 9.—“*After this.*” Long after, namely, in “the day of Christ.” The vision that now follows represents the final result of the sealing. The multitude is seen “on earth”; the “white robes” denote their immortality; and the “palms” denote victory, and associate the scene with the feast of tabernacles.

Verse 10.—“*They cried with a loud voice . . . Salvation!*” Contrast verse 3. The time for prayer for peaceful opportunity to preach the gospel is past. They are now with the Lamb in power and glory. Compare ch. 14. The angels, elders, and living creatures all join in the worship. Compare ch. 5:13, 14.

Verse 13.—“*What are these? . . . Whence came they?*” The question does not suppose the vision to be a representation of a then existing reality in heaven above, as popular theology interprets it, but rather an exhibition of what “shall be” (see verses 15–17) “after” the sealing.

Verse 14.—“*Sir, thou knowest.*” An allusion to the angelic estate reached after suffering and promised to mortals by Christ here and elsewhere (Lu. 20:36), as the result of being made perfect through suffering as he was (Heb. 2:10).

“*Great tribulation.*” The Diocletian and other persecutions, for example. “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12).

“*Washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.*” Having been forgiven their past sins when obeying the truth by baptism into his name; and having walked faithfully thereafter, and been forgiven their further imperfections for his sake.

“*Hunger . . . thirst . . . sun scorching . . . heat.*” “Hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Tribulation and persecution because of the word. See Christ’s own words (Matt. 5:6; 13:6, 21).

*The Lamb enthroned.* Having returned from heaven to sit upon the throne of his father David, which the Lord God of Israel hath given him.

## **Chapter 8**

### ***THE SEVENTH SEAL.—FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS***

THE Seventh Seal contains the Seven Trumpets, the Seven Vials, and the Seven Thunders of the Little Open Scroll, and extends from the Constantinian epoch in A.D. 324 to the Opening of the Millennium in the 20th century.

Verse 1.—“*Silence in heaven about the space of half-an-hour.*” Contrast the commotion in heaven under the sixth seal. The silence here is what Gibbon calls “the general peace during the last fourteen years of his (Constantine’s) reign.” It was the calm before the storm of invading barbarism, before which, at length, the Roman Empire fell.

Verse 2.—“*Seven angels . . . seven trumpets.*” Compare the fall of Jericho, which is manifestly to be taken as an allegory of the fall of the “Great City” of the Apocalypse.

Verse 3.—“*Another angel.*” Symbolic of the body of Christ, whose prayers ascend to the Father in his Name, as the incense from the golden altar in the Mosaic economy.

Verse 5.—“*The angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar.*” The judgments of God poured out upon the house of Constantine for the sake of the saints.

“*Voices, thunderings, lightnings and earthquake*”—the rival proclamations of Emperors and soldiery; the wars with Persia, the Allemanni, Franks, &c.; the civil war between Constans and Constantine; the revolt of the Roman legions at Paris, by which Julian “the Apostate” was elevated to the throne A.D. 360. He reformed the court, tried to falsify Christ by attempting to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, but was prevented by an outbreak of fire from the ruins, and died at last in battle, saying, “Thou, Galilean, hast conquered.”

#### **THE FIRST TRUMPET: ALARIC AND THE GOTHs**

The use of the trumpet in symbol for representing judgments to come upon peoples is frequent in the prophets. See Jer. 4:5; Hos. 8:1; Joel 2:1. A more direct responsibility of the Roman peoples is argued by this figure following that of the seals.

Verse 7.—“*Hail and fire mingled with blood.*” A mighty and strong destroyer. See Isa. 28:2. At the close of the fourth century A.D. (395–400) the Huns and Goths were on the Danube, and the Goths having crossed the river, the Emperor Arcadius made ALARIC master of Illyricum. His people made him King of the Visigoths.

“*Cast upon the earth.*” After some years of preparation, Alaric invades the West.

“*The third part of trees and all green grass burnt up.*”

The chief part of the empire, and even Rome itself, was spoiled. “Trees,” see Daniel 4. and Jotham’s parable. “Grass”—“All flesh is grass.” Rome was subjected to three sieges, A.D. 408–410. Alaric ravaged the south of Italy, and died the same year (410).

#### **THE SECOND TRUMPET: GENSERIC AND THE VANDALS**

Verse 8.—“*A great mountain burning with fire.*” Babylon, under Nebuchadnezzar, was a great “destroying mountain” against Jerusalem and “all the earth” (Jer. 51:25). GENSERIC and the Vandals (A.D. 429–477) were such to Rome.

“*Cast into the sea.*” Contrast “the earth” (5:7). The exploits of Genseric were chiefly maritime. As the result of discord between the Roman Generals, Boniface invited Genseric to an alliance. Genseric traversed Spain, crossed the straits of Gibraltar, and invaded Africa; delivered the Donatists; took Hippo and Carthage; destroyed the Roman fleet; and took Rome itself in A.D. 455. He ravaged all the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea; and true to the apocalyptic figure of a burning mountain, destroyed by means of fire ships, an enormous fleet brought against him by the East. He died A.D. 477. His operations, says Gibbon, “were confined to the limits of the Western Empire.” Thus “*the third part of the sea became blood,*” the third of the living souls therein died, and the third part of ships was destroyed.

#### **THE THIRD TRUMPET: ATTLA AND THE HUNS**

Verse 10.—“*A great star from heaven burning as it were a lamp.*” A blazing meteor. Contrast “the star of Jacob” (Num. 24:17). “*Fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*” The courses of the Danube and Rhine, and the Alpine lake and river country.

Verse 11.—“*Name . . . Wormwood.*” Greek *Apsinthos*, the name of a river in the Illyrian “third” of the Empire whence Attila arose to scourge Europe (A.D. 433–453). He passed along the Rhine and through Gaul; was checked at Chalons, with great slaughter; besieged and took Aquileia and other cities: was the indirect cause of the founding of Venice, and died 453.

### ***THE FOURTH TRUMPET: ECLIPSE OF ROME—THE GOTHIC KINGDOM IN ITALY***

Verse 12.—*The third part of sun, moon, and stars smitten and darkened.* Compare the experience of Egypt at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar (Ezek. 32:6–8).

Odoacer, king of the Heruli (from Germany—Scythians) takes Rome from Romulus Augustulus, and becomes king of Italy in A.D. 476. Romulus is compelled to resign and to request the transfer of the throne to Constantinople, and that Odoacer be made Emperor of the West. Odoacer reigned 14 years, to 493, and was then assassinated. He was followed by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, and the Gothic kingdom continued “a short time,” or about sixty years.

Verse 13.—*An angel (R.V., eagle) cries Woe, Woe, Woe,* because of the three trumpets which are yet to sound. For an eagle’s proclamation compare ch. 6:7 and 4:7. “Whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” The last three trumpets would produce long and dreadful carnage.

“*The midst of heaven,*” or mid-heaven. Compare the gospel proclamation of ch. 14:6. The saints, like Ezekiel of old, proclaimed woe against the Apostasy, and will yet do so, and “execute the judgments written.”

## **Chapter 9**

### ***THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS—THE SARACENS AND THE TURKS—FALL OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE***

The first two “woes” cover the long period of the Mahometan era, from the HEGIRA, 622, to the fall of Constantinople, 1453, and mainly concern the East.

#### ***THE FIFTH TRUMPET: MAHOMET AND THE SARACENS***

Verse 1.—“*A star fallen from heaven*” (R.V.). Mahomet, who proclaimed the unity of God and himself his prophet (609). In four years he had made fourteen proselytes. Flees to Medina from Mecca in 622.—THE HEGIRA (Flight), the beginning of the Mahometan era.

“*Unto the earth.*” The Roman earth. It was his mission to “torment” the unsealed idolaters of the Eastern Empire.

“*The key.*” Power to establish a royal dynasty out of the undistinguished multitudes of Arabs. Compare “the Key of David” (Isa. 22:22; Rev. 3:7), and Christ as the holder thereof in resurrection and restoration. Contrast the Papal “keys.” The Koran speaks of “the key of God.” The key was also a symbol used by the Moslems in Spain, being sculptured on the archway of the Alhambra. The Moslem doctors call the sword “the key of heaven and hell” (Sale’s Introduction to the Koran).

“*The bottomless pit*” (“pit of the abyss,” R.V.). “Arabia physically and politically.” Compare Isa. 51:1; Zech. 9:11. Mahomet’s career was a kind of political resurrection for Arabia. The war against Medina (625), which settled his supremacy in Arabia, is called “The war of the Ditch, or Nations,” from the Ditch that surrounded the city and the nations or peoples that took part in the siege. An *abyss* is a geographical or political deep, or *grave*. (Compare Rom. 10:7—R.V.) The Jordan valley and the *Dead Sea* are an abyss in the Land through which Mahomet came to power.

Verse 2.—“*He opened the abyss.*” Let loose the Arabians on the Empire. Decided upon the invasion of the West. Invaded Palestine 630, and died 632. Abubeker succeeded—“Successor of the Prophet, and Caliph and Commander of the Faithful”—and proclaimed a holy war.

“*Smoke . . . as a furnace.*” The war against the “unsealed.” Compare the fate of Sodom (Gen. 19. and Rev. 11.). “Furnace,” compare Egypt (Deut. 4:20).

“*Sun and air darkened.*” The Roman Imperialism eclipsed. Damascus was taken (634), JERUSALEM (637), also Aleppo and Antioch, and Heraclius fled into Spain 639.

Verse 3.—“*Out of the smoke Locusts.*” In Hebrew, Locust and Arab are radically the same—*arbeh, arbi, arabah*. The locust is a natural Arabian symbol.

“*Power as scorpions.*” The scorpion is also an Arabian symbol. The “Ascent of Akkrabbin” on the south of the Dead Sea is “The Ascent of Scorpions,” as it were, from the Abyss. The Saracen Fire was used in instruments of war called scorpions. This was the precursor of guns and gunpowder.

Verse 4.—“*Not hurt grass . . . nor tree . . . but only those men which have not the seal of God in their forehead.*” Abubeker’s proclamation was: “Destroy no palm trees; burn no corn; cut down no fruit trees; (smite only) the men with shaven crowns, who are the Synagogue of Satan.” See the Koran against Mariolatry. Within 100 years of 622, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, North Africa, and Spain were brought under the Moslem dominion.

Verse 5.—“*Not kill them, but torment them five months.*” Not kill the Empire with political death; not entirely overthrow the Eastern Empire. Constantinople was twice besieged (668–675; 716–718) by the Saracens, but not taken. Five months = 150 years. (Five months is the literal period of locust activity.) The period is repeated in verse 10, whence 300 years is indicated as the duration of this “first woe.” From 632, the year of the death of Mahomet, and of the accession of Abubeker, the first Caliph, to 932, the fall of the secular power of the Caliph in Bagdad is the time indicated.

Verse 6.—“*Seek death and not find it,*”; *i.e.*, desire political death and peaceful incorporation with the conquering power.

Verse 7.—“*Like unto horses.*” The Moslem victories were largely dependent on their splendid cavalry. Three horse tails on a pole were the standard of the pachas in time past. “*Crowns of gold,*” yellow turbans. “*Faces as the faces of men.*” Bearded, in contrast with the shaven Romans.

Verse 8.—“*Hair as the hair of women.*” Contrast the Roman custom.

Verse 11.—“*A King . . . the angel of the abyss.*” The Caliph, the King and High Priest of Islam.

“*Abaddon, Apollyon.*” Hebrew and Greek words, each signifying “Destroyer.” The Caliphs were the destroyers of the lands of the Hebrews and Greeks for three hundred years because of the “unsealed foreheads” of their inhabitants.

**SIXTH TRUMPET: THE TURKS**

Verse 13.—“*A voice (one voice, R.V. marg.) from the four horns of the golden altar.*” The voice of God in Christ in answer to the prayers of the saints.

Verse 14.—“*Loose the four angels which are bound at the great river Euphrates.*” Let the Turks arise and cross the river, and afflict, and at last overthrow, the Eastern Empire in the course of the conquering career of their four great dynasties—Seljukians, Moguls, the Tartars, and the Ottomans.

Ishmael the Seljukian (997–1028); Dynasty of the Shepherd Kings (1038). TOGRUL BEG, grandson of Seljuk, removes to Bagdad, and marries the Caliph’s daughter (1062); dies, and is succeeded by ALP ARSLAN, who “passed the Euphrates at the head of Turkish cavalry” (Gibbon) (1063).

Verse 15.—“*Prepared for an hour and a day and a month and a year.*” On the scale of a year for a day, equal to 391 years 1 month, as follows:—

An hour		1 month
A day	1	year
A month	30	years
A year	360	”
-----		
	391	years,
		1 month,

from April 27th, 1062, to May 29th, 1453, when Constantinople fell before Mohammed II.

“*For to slay the third part of men.*” Contrast the Saracenic “torment,” which was “not to kill” (verse 5). The Turks were to slay Eastern Rome with political death. Alp Arslan advanced his dominions to Antioch and the Black Sea (1068–1071).

Verse 16.—“*Horsemen two hundred thousand thousand.*” 200,000,000! Innumerable cavalry was the great feature of the Turkish operations. Ishmael the Seljukian offered to help Mahmoud with 200,000 horse. In 1098–9 the Crusaders’ 100,000 horse were met by Soliman’s 300,000. These are typical incidents in the career of “the four angels.”

Verse 17.—“*Breastplates as of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone.*” The fire of horse artillery.



*“The heads of the horses as lions.”* The roaring of the guns.

Verse 19.—*“Their power is in their mouth and in their tails.”* A battery going into action is at the tails of the team. When in action the guns have been swung round so that the tails become the heads, from the mouths of which projectiles issue with fire, smoke, and brimstone. The analogy of the striking of a serpent is very apt.

Alp Arslan was assassinated (1072), MALEK SHAH succeeded, and reigned 20 years. He was the first Turk called the Commander of the Faithful. His hunting train alone comprised 47,000 horses. He invaded the Roman provinces (1074), and died (1092). Out of disputes among his descendants at length arose four dynasties of Persia, Kerman, Syria, and ROUM.

The First Crusade (1096). Jerusalem taken (1099, the Latin Kingdom). Conquered by Saladin (1187). Expulsion of the Latins (1295). Close of the age of the Crusades.

With the incursions of the second, third and fourth angels are associated the names of ZINGIS KHAN (variously spelled Genghis, &c.), TIMOUR (or Tamerlane, as corrupted), AMURATH, and MOHAMMED II., under whom Constantinople fell in 1453.

Verse 20.—*“The rest repented not.”* The survivors and the Western Empire were unwarned by these judgments. Idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornications, thefts were still the ecclesiastical features of Western Rome. The worship of saints and images; the awful slaughter of “heretics” in the Inquisition; the great fraud of Purgatory; the immoralities of a celibate priesthood, and a people led by such as they; and the bare-faced sale of “indulgences,” all illustrate the fulfilment of the prophecy.

## Chapter 10

### THE ANGEL OF THE RAINBOW

CHRIST and the Saints take the world in hand.

Verse 1.—*“Another mighty angel.”* Not the Lord Jesus himself only as some suppose; but “the body of Christ” as well, and all made “equal unto the angels” as he has promised (Lu. 20:36).

*“From heaven.”* The Lord returns from heaven, where, says Paul, our “life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 2:3, 4).

*“Clothed with a cloud.”* “So great a cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1). Compare the “white cloud” upon which the Son of Man sits (Rev. 14:14).

*“A rainbow upon his head.”* Compare the vision of the throne in ch. 4:3. The rainbow is “the token of the covenant” (Gen. 9:12–17) and is associated with Ezekiel’s visions of the Cherubim (Ezek. 1:28), which represent the same spiritual manifestation of “the glory of the Lord” as this angel of the rainbow.

*“His face as the sun.”* Christ is “the Sun of Righteousness.” His people will be “like him” (1 John 3:2). *“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”* (Matt. 13:43).

*“His feet as pillars of fire.”* “The Lord Jesus revealed from heaven with his mighty angels: in flaming fire taking vengeance” (2 Thess. 1:7).

Verse 2.—*“In his hand a little book (scroll) open.”* Contrast the great scroll sealed with seven seals (ch. 5.). Christ and the saints execute “the judgments written.” “A short work will the Lord make upon the earth” (Rom. 9:28). There is nothing sealed to this angel when he receives the little scroll.

*“His right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth.”* Dominion over sea and land. Contrast the Papal boast on coins: *“Sedet super Universam.”* “She sits upon the Universe,” *i.e.*, the Roman Catholic Church. As to “the position of the angel, and how it is acquired” see the notable section in *Eureka*, vol. 2., pp. 544–567.

Verse 3.—*“He cried . . . as when a lion roareth.”* “The Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (ch. 5:5). “The Lord shall roar out of Zion” (Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2).

*“Seven thunders uttered their voices.”* “Boanerges. . . the sons of thunder” (Mar. 3:17), and all of their class execute the judgment of God upon the world with “voices” of divine command and power.

Verse 4.—“*Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*” The thunders are the wars of the Lord in the day of judgment. Some of Daniel’s visions were *written*, but sealed so that none of the wicked should understand, though the wise should understand in the time of the end (Dan. 12:9–10). There is much speculation among the nations concerning the great war that is to come; but the precise details of God’s plan of campaign are not even written, though the main features of the war are on record in the prophets. “The utterances of the thunders will be written upon the historic page by the valiant and mighty deeds of all the saints. This is the only record of them the world will be permitted to inspect” (Dr. Thomas).

Verse 6.—“*Time no longer.*” R.V. marg., “or, delay.” The “long time” of the Lord’s absence “in a far country” is ended; the “times of the Gentiles” are fulfilled; “the set time to favour Zion” is come.

Verse 7.—“*In the days of the voice of the seventh angel.*” See ch. 11:14–15. These “days” began with the end of “the second woe” in the Great French Revolution of 1789–94.

“*When he shall begin to sound.*” “When he shall sound” (Dr. Thomas). “When he is about to sound” (R.V., &c.). It is not a point of time that is in question, but a period of well over a century, covering “the third woe.”

“*The mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*” R.V., “According to the good tidings which he hath declared” (compare *Eureka*, Vol. II., p. 579). The kingdom of God is established upon earth according to the gospel which Jesus preached: and of which all the prophets have spoken.

Verse 8.—“*Take the little book.*” Compare Ezek. 2:8; Jer. 15:16.

Verse 9.—“*He said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*” Bitterness implies fierce anger, and judgment, and destruction (Ezek. 3:14; Deut. 32:24). Sweetness as honey describes the truth and righteousness of the word, and the great reward therein in store for the people of God (Psa. 19:10, 11).

Verse 11.—“*Prophesy again.*” John, with the other apostles, *prophesied* before kings in proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom; and, therefore, suffered imprisonment and banishment. In the resurrection, they will proclaim the hour of judgment (Rev. 14:7); “prophesy and smite” (Ezek. 21:14); “turn waters into blood, and smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will” (Rev. 11:6). Power will then be on their side, instead of that of their oppressors.

Elliott, in his *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, expounds this chapter with reference to “THE REFORMATION” in the sixteenth century, and Luther’s quarrel with the Pope, whose Bulls are the “loud voice” of verse 3! But the truth reveals a much greater and more drastic “reformation” in which the Lord Jesus and the apostles are revealed again upon the earth.

## Chapter 11

### THE TWO WITNESSES.—THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

CHAPTER XI. gives the Western history of the Sixth Trumpet, or “second woe” (ch. 8:13; 9:12; 11:14); and then in few words introduces the Seventh Trumpet and its effect in the resurrection of the dead, the Judgment and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Verse 1.—“*A reed like a rod.*” Symbol of chastisement (Mic. 5:1; 1 Cor. 4:21; Prov. 13:24); contrast the “golden reed” of ch. 21:15.

“*The angel stood.*” The angel of the rainbow: connect with ch. 10:11: “*Rise,*” Awake (egeirai). “Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.” The same verb is used concerning the resurrection of Christ. “*Measure,*” for affliction (rod). Compare Lam. 2:7–8; contrast Zech. 2:1; Rev. 21:15.

“*The temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.*” The Christ temple (Jno. 2:19); the Christian community. See 1 Tim. 3:15; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 13:10.

Verse 2.—“*The Court which is without.*” The Court of the Gentiles, symbolic of those merely nominal “Christians” who were not truly of the One Body in faith and obedience. “Leave out”: R.V., “leave

without” (Greek, “cast out,” A.V. marg.). Compare those “that are without” (1 Cor. 5:13); and the scroll, “written within and on the back” (Rev. 5:1).

“*The holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months.*” The true “citizens of Zion” should be down-trodden by the Gentile apostacy. Forty-two months are three-and-a-half years, which was the time of the actual down-treading of the JESUS “temple” in the Holy City and land of Israel. Forty-two months (ch. 13:5) is the measure of the supremacy of the beast of the sea, who makes war with and overcomes the saints. On the scale of a year for a day, it is 1,260 years—from the establishment of the Papacy, A.D. 606–610, to its fall, 1866–1870, this last year being the date of the fall of the Temporal Power.

Verse 3.—“*And I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy.*” Omit “*power*” (R.V.). “I will authorize” (Weymouth). They were to be on the losing side (“in sackcloth”). To prophesy is to proclaim the truth with “tormenting” effect (see note on ch. 10:11). “Two”: see Deut. 19:15; Eph. 2:15; Ro. 11:17, 24; Zech. 4:3, 12–14. “Witnesses,” see Heb. 12:1; also Balaam, Judas, Ananias, Simon Magus, &c. The witnesses include the true and faithful members of the one body who would not take the sword; and their revolutionary allies who had no scruples. They are collectively “the woman” and “the earth” (ch. 12.). The Donatists, Waldenses, Huguenots, &c., in their history illustrate the prophecy of the two witnesses.

“*A thousand, two hundred and three score days.*” The same duration of time but not the same period as the 42 months of verse 2, because the witnesses are slain at the end of this 1,260 (verse 7), whereas their down-treading (as “the holy city”) ceases at the end of the 42 months. The 1,260 begin with the Donatist “prophecy” against the Constantinian apostacy, A.D. 312, and end with the massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572. Compare Note on verse 2.

“*Clothed in sackcloth.*” The garb of mourning and woe.

Verse 4.—“*Two olive trees . . . two candlesticks.*” Wild and good olives (Rom. 11. and Zech. 4.). Two candlesticks, not one. Contrast Zech. 4:11–14. “*The God of the earth,*” or “Lord” (R.V., &c.). “Our Lord God the Pope”! Contrast “the Lord of the whole earth,” *i.e.*, CHRIST (Zech. 4:14). Also contrast “the God of heaven” of 5:13 of this chapter 11.

Verse 5.—“*Fire . . . out of their mouth.*” The wars of “the witnesses” against their Catholic persecutors.

Verse 6.—“*Shut heaven that it rain not.*” Compare Elijah and the drought, and the slaughter of the priests of Baal (1 Kings 17:18.; also Deut. 11:17). In symbol, it means the wrath of God upon unrighteousness, and the taking away of peace from the earth.

“*Turn waters to blood.*” “Many waters” are “peoples” (Rev. 17:1–15). Compare notes on ch. 9. The Third Trumpet. War and bloodshed is indicated. “*Smite the earth with plagues.*” See the reference to “these plagues” (ch. 9:20), and compare notes on the Sixth Trumpet.

Verse 7.—“*When they shall have finished their testimony.*” “The trampling of the Holy City was one thing, and its prophesying in sackcloth another. These two series of events were not to be parallel in the whole of their courses; so to prevent confusion the two periods of equal duration were stated in different terms” (Dr. Thomas, *Eureka* 2., p. 632. See notes on verses 2 and 3). The finishing of the testimony came in 1572 with the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when from 30,000 to 100,000 persons were slain in France, and the “war” of extermination began.

“*The beast that ascendeth out of the abyss*” (R.V.). This is the first mention in the Apocalypse of “the beast.” It presupposes an acquaintance with Daniel’s prophecy. See Dan. 7. on the “fourth beast” and the “ten horns” and the “little horn,” that “made war with the saints and prevailed against them.” Some have supposed the “two witnesses” to be two individuals. The comparison of Daniel’s prophecy with the Apocalypse shows the error of this interpretation.

“*Overcome them and kill them.*” The toleration edict of Nantes issued by Henry IV., 1598, ended the first phase of the war upon the witnesses. This edict was *revoked* by Louis XIV. in 1685; and in the persecution of the Protestants by means of the dreadful Dragonades, or billeting of Dragoons upon them with license to proceed to any methods of “conversion,” the witnesses were finally killed, and after thousands had been massacred, some 300,000 survivors fled the country (France) to Switzerland, England, America, and other countries, carrying germs of the truth with them.

Verse 8. “*Their dead bodies.*” (R.V. marg. Gk. *carcase.*) Compare with the “carcase” of fallen Israel (Deut. 28:26; Matt. 24:28).

“*The street of the Great City.*” The Great City is “Babylon” (ch. 14:8; 16:19), *i.e.*, Rome (17:5, 18). By the edict of Caracalla the city was decreed to be considered co-extensive with the Empire. *The street.* The *plateia*, or *broadway*=France, the first and chief Catholic country. Some seek to make Jerusalem “the great city,” and they point to Isa. 1:9; and to the fact that the siege of Jerusalem lasted three-and-a-half years. But Rome, and not Jerusalem, was the great enemy of the “witnesses” during the 1,260 years of their prophecy.

“*Sodom . . . Egypt.*” Indicating the character of a city and a *country*: Sodom for its pride, idleness, and abominations, and Egypt for its bondage and darkness.

“*Where also our Lord was crucified.*” Our Lord was crucified in Jerusalem; but Judea was then a Roman province, and he was crucified by a Roman Governor. The analogy between his death and resurrection and that of his “witnesses” is striking and effective for enlightenment and comfort.

Verse 9.—*The peoples look upon their dead bodies.* Compare R.V. The Protestant States, Holland, Britain, Protestant Germany, and America afforded them shelter and protection.

“*Three days-and-an-half.*” Compare the three days and three nights death state of the Lord Jesus. In 1687 Peter Jurieu, a French Protestant pastor, in his “Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies,” located the death of the witnesses in the then current persecution (Revocation of edict of Nantes, 1685). And in 1793, Bicheno, a Baptist pastor of Newbury, perceived their resurrection and ascension to power in the then current Great French Revolution. The interval between 1685 and 1790 is 105 years, and Bicheno suggested that, to suit the symbol, the days were expanded to “months” (see verse 2), and that they should be calculated at 3½ times 30 years, which is 105 years, as above. See *Eureka 2*. p. 657.

Verse 10.—*The dwellers in the earth rejoice over them.* Rome rejoiced over the slaughter of the witnesses. Pope Gregory XIII., of calendar reform celebrity, caused a jubilee medal to be struck, commemorating the massacre of the Huguenots.

Verse 11.—“*After three days and an half, the spirit of life from God entered into them.*” The Convocation of the States General was proclaimed in 1789. From that time dates “The Revival of the Witnessing for Gospel Truth” (Dr. Thomas); and the revival of Protestantism as against the Roman “beast.” “The spirit of life from God” symbolises both these *revivals*, and in its political aspect is what the Revolutionists called “THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY.” The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804. The Baptists arose in England, and the “Campbellites” in America; and out of the controversies of the times at length came THE TRUTH and CHRISTADELPHIANS (*Eureka 2*:659–672).

Verse 12.—“*A great voice, saying, Come up hither!*” The Royal Decree of Louis XVI., convoking the States-General (1789). “*Ascended up to heaven in a cloud.*” Ascended to place and power in the political heaven in multitudes. “*Their enemies beheld them.*” Their Royal, clerical, and aristocratic adversaries regarded their elevation with dismay.

Verse 13.—“*The same hour . . . a great earthquake.*” The great French Revolution (1789–1794).

“*The tenth part of the city fell.*” That is, France. Compare “the street” or *broadway* of the great city (verse 8). The Royalty was abolished, the King and Queen and multitudes of nobles beheaded, and the Catholic religion abolished.

“*In the earthquake were slain of names of men seven thousand.*” The complete abolition of all titles, even king (1790–1791). Jurieu perceived this in 1687, over a hundred years before the event.

“*The remnant were affrighted.*” “THE REIGN OF TERROR” (1793–4) that followed the beheading of the king.

“*And gave glory to the God of heaven.*” The Catholic religion being abolished, the Worship of the goddess of Reason followed, Nov. 10, 1793. And in May, 1794, Robespierre presided at a festival in which the French people proclaimed its acknowledgment of the Supreme Being and of the Immortality of the Soul. Thiers, in his history, pauses to remark upon this “singularly grand and beautiful event . . . unparalleled in the history of the world.”

Robespierre and many others were beheaded in July, 1794, and the Great Revolution ended the same year.

Verse 14.—*The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.* This verse defines the judgments just rehearsed, and indicates that they are concurrent with those of the sixth trumpet (ch. 9:12–21). The third woe dates from 1794 in its beginning. An interval of some 130 years separated the first and second woes; but no such interval was to separate the second and third. The second woe, in the rise and decline of the Turks, has occupied some 800 years. No such long duration was to attach to the third woe. We are now (1908) only 114 years into the third woe.

Verse 15.—*The seventh angel sounded.* Compare ch. 10:7. What follows is a brief rehearsal of the final effect of the seventh trumpet in “finishing the mystery of God” as revealed in the prophets.

“*Great voices in heaven.*” Voices of the “*twenty-four elders*” (5:16), the saints having ascended to the heaven of political power upon earth. The Holy City is no more measured with a rod for affliction (ch. 11:1) but with the angel’s golden reed for life and power eternal (ch. 21:15).

*The kingdoms of this world become Christ’s.* This is his inheritance; see Psalm 2.

Verse 18.—*The nations were angry.* The frog-spirits have made them so (ch. 16:13). Since the Great French Revolution, the careers of the First and Third Napoleons have embittered the nations greatly, and now the “anger” is worldwide.

“*Thy wrath is come.*” The purpose of God is to judge the world for its wickedness by Christ and the Saints.

“*And the time of the dead that they should be judged.*” Men are not judged when they die, or before the resurrection. Jesus says they shall come forth from the grave to judgment (Jno. 5:21–29). The judgment will be upon earth, and will take time, how long we know not. It will begin with Christ’s return to the earth. This is imminent, but exactly when it will be we know not. It will be “in such an hour as ye think not.” Therefore we must “Watch” always.

“*Reward.*” The inheritance of the kingdom of God upon the earth in eternal life. Not the departure of immortal souls to heaven. “The prophets” are not yet enjoying the “reward.” David is not in heaven (Acts 2:34), but will awake in the time of the dead. Daniel is not “safe in the promised land,” but he will “awake to everlasting life” in “the time of the end” (Dan. 11:40: 12:2, 13).

Verse 19.—*The temple of God opened in heaven.* The Christ temple revealed in glory in power over the earth; no more measured off for affliction.

“*The ark of his covenant.*” The Lord Jesus, who is the ark as well as the altar; the mercy seat upon which the faces of the Cherubim look continually, the throne of God in Israel.

“*Lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquake, and great hail.*” The judgments by which the present kingdoms of men are overthrown to make way for the kingdom of God. The thunderings are the “seven thunders” of the angel of the rainbow (ch. 10:3), and of the seventh vial (ch. 16:18).

Thus the “True and faithful Witness,” with his associate “witnesses,” will be finally avenged, and “ascend to heaven in a cloud,” to the astonishment and terror of “their enemies.”

## Chapter 12

### THE WOMAN, THE DRAGON, AND THE MAN CHILD

CHAPTER XII. supplies the details of the sixth seal (ch. 6:12–17), and tells in other symbols how the great day of the Lamb’s wrath came upon Pagan Rome in the fourth century, A.D.

Verse 1.—*A great sign in heaven.* In the Roman heaven. See notes in ch. 6:12–17.

“*A woman,*” Christ’s woman, see verse 17; and compare Paul’s figure of the “chaste virgin” (2 Cor. 11:2); and the allegory of husband and wife, in respect of “Christ and the Church” (Eph. 5:23; also Rev. 19:7: 21:9).

“*Clothed with the sun.*” Advanced to Imperial Royalty.

“*The Moon under her feet.*” The Pagan Priesthood subdued.

“*A crown of twelve stars.*” The twelve Cæsars. Augustus to Nerva.

Verse 2.—“*With child.*” Contained within the pale of her community a being to be manifested, who should effectuate her deliverance. Compare Isa. 26:17, 18; 66:7, 8. The period of human gestation is 280 days. From A.D. 32 to 313 is 280 years, at the end of which the edict of Constantine and Licinius gave freedom to Christianity.

“*Travailing.*” Compare the Lord’s own figure, John 16:21, 22; also Isa. 65:7, 8; Mic. 4:9, 10; 5:3; Gal. 4:19. The persecutions, especially that of Diocletian, 303–313, illustrate the travail.

Verse 3.—“*Another sign in heaven.*” The Roman heaven: see above.

“*A great red dragon.*” The prototype of the dragon is the crocodile (Ezek. 29:3). The dragon became a Roman symbol, and was used as a military ensign.

“*Seven heads.*” Explained by the angel in ch. 17:9, 10, with relation to the “seven mountains” and “seven Kings” of Rome. Seven-hilled Rome is proverbial. The mountains are Mts. Cœlius, Viminal, Aventine, Esquiline, Quirinal, Capitoline, Palatine. And the kings or forms of government are: 1, Regal; 2, Consular; 3, Dictatorial; 4, Decemviral; 5, Tribunitial; 6, Imperial; 7, Gothic Kingly. Tacitus mentions the first five.

“*Ten horns.*” Ten kings that should arise—afterwards particularised.

“*Seven horns upon his heads.*” Showing that the vision relates particularly to Roman headship, before the decline and fall of the Empire. Contrast ch. 13:1, where the crowns are “upon his horns.”

Verse 4.—“*His tail . . . the stars.*” The tail of the crocodile is used to sweep its prey into the water. Rezin and Pekah are styled “two tails” in Isa. 7:4; see also Isa. 11:15, “the prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail.” In the eastern “third” of the Empire in the beginning of the fourth century Maximin was the champion of Jupiter and the gods.

“*The dragon stood before the woman . . . to devour her child.*” The attitude of Galerius and Maxentius towards Christianity and Constantine, its champion.

Verse 5.—“*A man-child.*” CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, son of Constantius, Emperor of the West, who died at York. The army appointed him emperor. Galerius accepted the nomination as a matter of necessity, but Maxentius, who survived him, opposed Constantine, who marched upon Rome and defeated Maxentius, who was drowned in the Tiber. Constantine had espoused the cause of the Christians, and is said to have had a vision of the cross in the sky, and hence to have adopted the Labarum, or sacred monogram of Christ, as his standard, which he thus carried to victory, A.D. 313.

“*To rule all nations.*” Hence to be sole emperor. In 308 there were no less than six emperors in office. In 324, by the defeat of Licinius in the battle of Adrianople, Constantine alone remained and “ruled all.”

“*Caught up to God, and to His throne.*” Not the ascension of Christ, as often said, for that was long past; whereas this was one of the things to come to pass “hereafter”—i.e., after A.D. 96 (see note on ch. 4:1). The same objection, of course, applies to the Roman Catholic interpretation of the “woman” as the Virgin Mary. Solomon was exalted to the throne of God in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 29:23) “The powers that be are ordained of God.” Hence Constantine “ordained of God” as Roman Emperor is thus symbolised.

Verse 6.—“*The woman fled into the wilderness.*” The Anti-Catholic party, including the true and faithful brethren, and all whom the State party denounced as heretics were excommunicated and exiled (see 5:14).

“*1,260 days.*” A.D. 312–1572, the date of the massacre of St. Bartholomew (see note, ch. 11:3).

Verse 7.—“*War in heaven.*” The war between Constantine and Licinius, in which the latter was defeated and slain, A.D. 324.

“*Michael and his angels.*” Constantine and his forces fighting in the name of Christ, who is the real Mi-cha-el, One like God (see Dan. 12.).

“*The Dragon and his angels.*” Licinius and his forces fighting in the name of the gods of Paganism, as against the Christians.

Verse 9.—*Dragon cast out of heaven.* Expulsion of Paganism (emperor, priests, and supporters) from all place and authority in the Roman heaven. Not the Miltonic conception, for see note on verse 5 as to time; and Bible usage of “dragon,” “serpent,” “devil,” “Satan,” as to substance.

Verse 10.—*“A loud voice in heaven.”* The great rejoicings of the Christians at the extraordinary “salvation” that had come to them. Eusebius’ History (Book 10:100:4. “Panegyric on the Splendour of our Times”) shows how they mistook the shadow for the substance. “The kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ” in the actual sense, is yet future; but Constantine’s victories and the termination of the bloody persecutions, and the ascension of the Christians to power and honour, were a splendid type of what is coming.

Verse 11.—*“Overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word.”* The true and faithful witnesses.

Verse 12.—*“Rejoice, ye heavens.”* Compare Isa. 65:18; Rev. 18:20.

*Woe to earth and sea. The Devil is come down to you.* The remains of the persecuting power in the outlying parts of the empire.

Verse 14.—*“Two wings of a great eagle.”* The extremities of the Roman Empire. *“The wilderness.”* Exile from place and power. Geographically, Northern Africa first, and many other countries afterwards in the course of the 1,260 years. The wilderness wanderings of the woman are illustrated in the experiences of the Donatists, Novatians, Paulicians, Waldenses, Albigenses, &c.

Verse 15.—*“Water as a flood.”* The persecuting hosts sent against the heretics. See the interesting allusion of a Donatist writer, quoted in *Eureka*, vol. 3., p. 124.

Verse 16.—*“The Earth helped the woman.”* The Circumcellions of Africa, the peasants of Paphlagonia, and other revolutionary sympathisers with the oppressed “woman.” See note ch. 11:3.

Verse 17.—*“The Dragon was wroth with the woman.”* The Paganised Christendom that had dethroned the old dragon, took on his doctrines and spirit, and so is covered by the same symbol.

*“Make war with the remnant of her seed.”* See the war of “the beast” against the “two witnesses,” ch. 11:7 (notes).

*“Who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”* This is the class of “true and faithful witnesses,” like their Lord. They are always at war, and the enemy to this day is “the Dragon,” though shorn of all his temporal power to torment and kill as of old. The dragon is not finally put down until the saints are enthroned in the kingdom of God (ch. 20:2–6).

## **Chapter 13**

### ***THE BEASTS OF THE SEA AND OF THE EARTH; THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST, ITS MARK AND NUMBER***

CHAPTER XIII. draws a symbolic picture of the varying phases of the Roman Beast’s career during the 1,260 years of its supremacy. The vision is really supplementary to Daniel’s vision of the Fourth Beast (Dan. 7.). In Daniel the Dominion of the Fourth Beast is at last taken by the Son of Man and the saints. So in John’s visions, the dominion of these beasts is taken by the Lamb upon Mount Zion (ch. 14.) and the hundred and forty-four thousand “redeemed from the earth” that are with him.

Verse 1.—*“And I saw a beast.”* Compare R.V. and other modern versions, which begin the chapter with these words and refer the preceding sentence to “the dragon” of ch. 12. thus: “and he stood upon the sand of the sea.”

The beast is that already introduced in ch. 11:7, where it is said to “ascend out of the abyss.” It is Daniel’s Fourth Beast in its later phases, and is identified with the Dragon of Rev. 12:3, 17, by its features and works; also, for a like reason, with the scarlet-coloured beast of Rev. 17:3, 8.

*“Rise up out of the sea.”* Compare Daniel’s vision (ch. 7.) with the passages cited in the last paragraph. The meaning is “arose out of the wars and tumults among the peoples.”

“*Seven heads and ten horns.*” As to the seven heads see note on ch. 11:3. The ten horns are the “ten kings” (ch. 17:12) that arose consequent upon the fall of the Roman Empire. They are enumerated by Dr. Thomas as follows: 1, Huns; 2, Vandals; 3, Visigoths; 4, Burgundians; 5, Gepidæ; 6, Lombards; 7, Franks; 8, Suevi; 9, Alans; 10, Bavarians. There are other enumerations, some including Britain. Dr. Thomas gives reasons against this (*Eureka*, 3., p. 173). The list must, of course, vary during the course of the 1,260 years of the Beast’s supremacy.

“*And upon his horns ten crowns.*” Note that this indicates a later date than the dragon-vision of ch. 12. Contrast 12:3 with 13:1.

“*Upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*” The Papal Name. Christ is “the Name of the Lord.” The Pope is Antichrist. Christ was accused of blasphemy when he forgave sins (Matt. 9:3). The Pope apes Christ, but cannot cure disease. Christ was accused of blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God (John 10:36). The Pope says he is God—“Our Lord God the Pope”! but he dies and turns to corruption, and does not ascend to heaven. As to “blasphemy,” see further 1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:5; Rev. 2:9.

Verse 2.—“*Like a leopard . . . bear . . . lion.*” Compare Daniel’s visions (ch. 7.). A Babylonian original is indicated.

“*The Dragon gave him his power and seat (throne, R.V.) and great authority.*” See notes, ch. 12:2, 17. Constantinople became the Dragon capital. By the decree of Justinian (535), and finally by the decree of Phocas (607), the Bishop of Rome became universal Pope, with “great authority.”

Verse 3.—“*One of his heads wounded to death.*” “Heads,” see note, ch. 12:3. The “one” was the Imperial; and it was mortally wounded by the sword of Odoacer, King of the Heruli, who took Rome in 476, and became the Gothic King of Italy. He was followed by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, the Arian King of Italy, who reigned over the Popes for thirty-three years (493–526). In 553, after many years of war and desolation for Rome, the Gothic kingdom (the “seventh head”) was overthrown and the Roman Senate abolished, and the dominion passed to the Eastern Empire.

“*And his deadly wound was healed.*” The reviving of the old Roman Imperialism in a new form. The Pope crowned Charlemagne in Rome, as Roman Emperor, A.D. 800.

“*All the world (earth) wondered after the beast.*” All the kings and princes.

Verse 4.—“*And they worshipped.*” Acknowledged, praised and supported the new Imperialism.

Verse 5.—“*A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.*” The Roman decrees, &c., of the Popes. Compare the “great voice” of Babylon (Jer. 51:55). “Blasphemies.” See note, verse 1. The Pope is called “Holy Father, vice Christ, The Pantheon is a parody of the temple of God; and the papal “saints” and “angels” are a caricature of “the angels of heaven” and of Christ’s true people made “equal unto the angels.”

“*To continue forty and two months.*” “Authority to continue” (R.V.), *i.e.*, power to practice, “liberty of action” (Weymouth). His license to overcome the saints was not to extend beyond this time. “*Forty two months.*” Compare note on ch. 11:2. From the decree of Justinian, 535, forty-two months, or 1,260 days (years) reach to 1795 and the French invasion of Napoleon I. From the decree of Phocas, 607, the same time brings us to 1867 and the overthrow of Austria by Prussia, followed by the fall of the Temporal Power of the Papacy, 1870.

Verse 7.—“*Make war with the saints, and overcome them.*” See Dan. 7:21, and note Rev. 11:7, and the whole chapter concerning the slaying of the witnesses.

Verse 8.—“*All . . . shall worship . . . whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” No toleration of the beast by Christ and his true people. No life for the worshippers at the Roman shrine. Difficult and dangerous thesis to proclaim and maintain during the Beast’s supremacy. Difficult also for the natural man to perceive. Hence the characteristic saying of Christ: “*If any man have an ear, let him hear.*” And also the special encouragement of verse 10: “He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity. He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

Verse 11.—“*Another beast . . . out of the earth.*” The Germanic Empire. “One pope, one emperor, seven independent, and three vassal kingdoms, south and west of the Rhine and Danube, represented by



John's two beasts, is the politico-ecclesiastical and apocalyptic constitution of Modern Europe, from A.D. 800 to A.D. 1793" (*Eureka*, 3., p. 294). Compare note on verse 3.—"Rome was revered by the Latins as the Metropolis of the World, and THE THRONE OF THE POPE AND EMPEROR, who from the Eternal City derived their title, their honours, and the right or exercise of temporal dominion."—*Gibbon*.

"Two horns like a lamb." The Pope and Emperor, each professing Christ, and wielding a nominally Christian power. The Pope has an annual festival on Jan. 21st, in which two lambs are blessed, and from their fleeces are manufactured two holy mantles called palli which the Pope presents to his archbishop.

"But he spake as a dragon." It was a case of a dragon in "sheep's clothing," the old Roman Imperialism in Christian guise. See illustrations of dragonic character in Pope Gregory's treatment of Henry IV. at Canossa (1077), or Celestine III. kicking the crown off the head of Henry VI. in token of his power to make and unmake kings.

"And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight"—R.V. See note on verse 3. The beast of the earth was not a distinct and separate dominion; but a combination of revived Roman Imperialism (Pope), and secular horn (Emperor).

Verse 13.—*He doeth great wonders . . . maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth.*" The wars of Charlemagne who, in "thirty-three campaigns," subdued Germany to Romanism, are illustrations of these "wonders."

Verse 14.—*Deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth.*" "Leads them astray" (Weymouth, 100. *Eureka*, 3., p. 326) so that they are bewitched enough to "make an image to the beast"; or, in literal language, to establish and worship the Pope-god of the earth, who is the reproduction of the Pagan Emperors in their assumption of divine honours. "The noonday of Papal dominion extends from the pontificate of Innocent III., inclusively, to that of Boniface VIII.; or, in other words, through the thirteenth century. Rome inspired during this age all the terror of her ancient name. She was once more the Mistress of the World, and kings were her vassals" (Hallam, *Eureka*, 3:339).

Verse 15.—The speech of the Image—the anti-"heretical" decrees. The killing of those who would not worship—the anti-"heretical" wars and massacres. See notes ch. 11.

Verse 16.—*He causeth all . . . to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads.* "The sign of the cross" imprinted on the foreheads of helpless infants in so-called baptism; on the right hands of priests in ordination; erected upon churches and buildings; used as a military badge in the *Crusades*, &c.; affixed to documents and books with the *Imprimatur*; and worn as an ornament, particularly by priests, and nowadays more and more commonly by professedly Protestant ecclesiastics. This mark is an abomination to Jews and real Protestants, who are "Jews inwardly."

CHRIST'S MARK is "the seal of the living God in the forehead" (Rev. 7:2, 3), which is the mystical symbol of the mind of God impressed upon the human understanding and affections in faith and obedience, resulting at last in their partaking of "the Name of the Lord" in exaltation to the divine nature. Compare the literal and figurative in the divine economy in Ex. 28:38; Jer. 3:3; Ezek. 3:8, 9: 9:4; Rev. 7:2, 3: 9:4; 14:1, 9: 17:5; 20:4; 22:4.

Verse 17.—*No man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark of the beast, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*" Papal excommunication of heretics, especially the prohibition of all save marked worshippers from the "buying and selling" of the very profitable Roman merchandise detailed in ch. 18:12, 13. The clerical purgatory, indulgences, etc., etc., are primarily interdicted, but in practice the beast literally ruined the Protestants, and killed them outright.

Verse 18.—*Here is wisdom.*" "Here is scope for ingenuity" (Weymouth). "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 enigma has been solved and understood from the very earliest times. In the apostolic age it was well understood (by sad experience) that Rome was the enemy. Hence Paul's familiar, though guarded, allusion in 2 Thess. 2:5. "Now ye know what withholdeth," or restrains the manifestation of "THAT MAN OF SIN" (verse 3). It was not an individual, but a DESPOTISM.

The number is χξξ = 666, and the well-known solution of the problem, on record at least from the days of Irenæus downwards, or within about 70 years of the date of the Revelation itself, is Λατεινος, thus:—

a—α	1
t—τ	300
e—ε	5
i—ι	10
n—ν	50
o—ο	70
s—ς	200
—	—

LATEINOS

666

Other solutions have been proposed; some childishly inappropriate. This is entirely satisfactory, and has been current among Christians from the apostolic age. There is no escape from the utter reprobation of the whole Roman system by the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 14

### THE LAMB ON MOUNT ZION, AND HIS SEALED AND REDEEMED FIRSTFRUITS (144,000)

IN this chapter, by an admirable contrast between the wild beasts of the Gentiles and the Lamb of God, “the patience and the faith of the saints” is sustained by the exhibition of their approaching immortal and righteous dominion in the kingdom of God.

Verse 1.—“*A Lamb . . . upon Mount Zion.*” The Lord Jesus Christ enthroned in Jerusalem in the kingdom of God.

“*An hundred and forty-four thousand.*” Compare notes on ch. 7., verses 3 and 4. They are “the Israel of God.” Twelve squared and multiplied a thousandfold is their mystical number. Some think it is the literal number; but see ch. 7:9. “*His Father’s name written in their forehead.*” R.V., “his name, and the name of his Father.” It is *one* name, though thus expressed (compare note ch. 3:12), and means “written in the book of life”—an immortal place in the kingdom of God. Contrast the “names of blasphemy,” of which the wild beast (ch. 17.) is “full.” Also the mark on the foreheads of the worshippers of the beast.

Verse 2.—“*A voice from heaven . . . as many waters.*” The new Zion-heaven (Isa. 65:17, 18). Contrast notes on ch. 12:9, 10. *Waters.* The Christ-multitude; compare ch. 1:15; contrast ch. 17:1, 15. *Harpers.* No longer hanging the harp on the Babylonian willows. The saints themselves are, as it were, the harps of God; just as David’s tongue was “the pen of a ready writer.”

Verse 3.—“*A new song.*” A song of deliverance, compare ch. 5:9, 10: a song that could only be sung by *the redeemed*. Not even angels could appropriate the terms of the passage just cited. Compare David’s song of deliverance (2 Sam. 22.; Psa. 18.) and the prophetic psalms concerning Messiah himself (Ps. 22:25, &c.).

Verse 4.—“*Not defiled with women.*” Not associated with “the mother of harlots” (ch. 17:5) and her daughters—the apostate churches of Christendom from Rome downwards. Many of the redeemed are themselves women, which necessitates the symbolic interpretation. But the literal is not to be excluded (1 Cor. 6:9, 10). “*They are virgins.*” Whether men or women they are incorporated in “the Bride” to be “presented as a chaste virgin to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:2). “*Follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*” “Follow me” (John 21:19: 13:36–38). “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him” (2 Tim. 2:12). “*The firstfruits.*” Christ is the individual “firstfruits” in his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20, 23). “Afterwards, they that are Christ’s at his coming” are in turn the “firstfruits” at *their* resurrection (Rev. 20:5, 6). Then, at “the end” of the millennial, reign comes the final ingathering of the “redeemed from the earth” and the harvest of God upon earth is completely garnered.

Verse 5.—“*And in their mouth was found no lie; they are without blemish*” (R.V.) Contrast “whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” (ch. 22:15; 21:8). And compare the “glorious church” of Christ (Eph. 5:27). They are “forgiven their iniquity” because they “loved much,” “held fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,” and “overcame.”

Verse 6.—“*Another angel.*” A new class of divine ambassadors—the apostle John among the number. See ch. 10., “The Angel of the Rainbow,” especially note on verse 11. The saints under Christ now take the world in hand.

“*The everlasting gospel*”—more correctly, (R.V., &c.), “*an eternal gospel to proclaim*” (*aionion*) i.e., glad tidings pertaining only to that particular age—“MILLENNIAL GOOD NEWS” (Dr. Thomas).

Verse 7.—“*Saying . . . Fear God . . . judgment is come.*” This proclamation can only be made in “the hour of judgment.” In the nature of things it could not be “everlasting.” It follows upon the smiting of Gog and his confederates (Ezek. 38., 39.), and the taking of Jerusalem by the Lord Jesus and the saints.

Verse 8.—“*Another angel . . . saying Babylon is fallen.*” This indicates that the fate of Gog does not warn Rome and Christendom to submit to Christ. Therefore the Great City is subdued by war for neglecting the gospel, just as Jerusalem was in A.D. 70.

Verse 9.—“*A third angel . . . If any man worship the Beast.*— The Roman system survives, though Rome is swallowed up in the abyss like Sodom. Hence this warning proclamation.

Verse 10.—“*Tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.*” A symbol of the judicial punishment to come upon the *worshippers* defined. Not the theological “hell” of Christendom; for this torment is for the class defined, and not for the wicked of all ages; it is to be upon earth in the presence of Christ, and not “the Devil’s hell,” so called. It is to be revealed in the “hour of judgment,” and has not been in operation ever since the days of Adam, and before. See 2 Thess. 1:7; Heb. 10:27; Mal. 4:1.

Verse 11.—“*The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.*” A figure, not of “eternal torments,” but a fate like to that of the Sodomites, “who are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude, verse 7), though Sodom was “overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her” (Lam. 4:6). “The wages of sin is death.” “Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be.”

Verse 12.—“*Here is the patience of the saints.*” That is to say: This is the crisis for which the saints wait patiently in faith and obedience, sure that God will avenge His own elect upon “the Beast” that killed them. Compare notes ch. 13:8, 10.

Verse 13.—“*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth . . . their works do follow them.*” That is, the dead are blessed in this “time of the dead” (ch. 11:18), when they are judged and rewarded. “Blessed . . . from this time onward” (Weymouth), they are not blessed when they ARE DEAD. This is “strong delusion.” “Their works follow with them” (R.V.). “What they have done goes with them” (Weymouth). The meaning of this appears from 1 Tim. 5:24, 25. “Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they *follow after*. Likewise also the *good works* of some men are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.” Because of “their works” they are “rewarded” at this time with blessedness in life eternal (Rev. 22:12–14).

Verse 14.—“*A white cloud.*” A “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1); righteous and immortal. They are symbolised as “clothed in white raiment,” “walking with Christ in white” (Rev. 3:4, 5); clothed upon him as “a cloud” (10:1; 19:8). “*Upon the cloud . . . the Son of Man.*” Christ over the saints. “*A sharp sickle.*” He is reaper not only of the “wheat-harvest” of God, that is, “the children of the kingdom”; but also of the tares of the worldfield sown by the enemy, the devil; that is, “the children of the wicked one” (Matt. 13:24–30, 37–43). This section is evidently based by the Lord upon his parable of “the tares of the field,” which he explained to the disciples at their request. It is evident that his explanation: “The reapers are the angels,” has an application far wider than we should at first suppose.

Verse 15.—“*Another angel came out of the temple.*” Out of the *nave*, or most holy. “Out of the sanctuary” (Weymouth). This angel’s cry shows that the earth is unrepentant, notwithstanding the destruction of God and the fall of Babylon.

Verse 16.—In response to the angel’s cry, the Son of Man reaps the harvest of the earth, carrying war and pestilence far and wide, as the prophets declare (Jer. 25:31–33), executing long deferred divine vengeance, in which “the righteous shall rejoice” (Psa. 58:10).

Verse 17.—“*Another angel came out of the temple (nave), which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*” The sanctuary *in heaven* indicates the body of Christ enthroned in the kingdom of God. Contrast

the heaven of the Roman order with the “new heavens and new earth” of Jerusalem, “wherein dwelleth righteousness” (Isa. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:13).

Also contrast the experiences of “the temple (nave) of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” symbolised in ch. 11:1, when they were measured off for affliction and death.

Verse 18.—“*And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire.*” Further fiery retribution and “burning of the tares” for their past policy in laying low Christ’s brethren “under the altar.” See notes on ch. 6:9–11; ch. 11., &c. “*Gather the clusters of the vine of the earth.*” Vintage in the natural order comes after wheat harvest. This in Palestine comes about July, and vintage about September. Compare Isa. 18:5, 6; Ezek. 39:17–22; Joel 3:11–17.

Verse 20.—“*The wine-press was trodden without the city.*” That is, without the Holy City. Zion, and not Babylon, is the only city now untrodden. Contrast ch. 11:2. “The holy city shall they (the Gentiles) tread under foot.” Also see Lam. 1:15. “The Lord hath trodden the Virgin, the daughter of Judah as in a wine press.” Zion’s downtreading is now at an end. The Lord Jesus “suffered without the gate” (Heb. 13:12); and his people have long gone forth to him “without the camp, bearing his reproach.” Now the tables are turned; and “without are dogs” (Rev. 22:15). “*Blood unto the horse bridles.*” “Oceans of blood” as the common phrase has it, exceeding all past bloodshed upon earth. “*A thousand and six hundred furlongs.*” That is two hundred miles. It is a measure of length and not of area. (R.V., “As far as a thousand,” &c.; “For a distance of,” &c. Weymouth.) It is approximately the length of the land of Palestine, which is the central land in which God’s judgments will be most severely manifested against the nations assembled against Jerusalem. “I will call for a sword against him through all my mountains” (Ezek. 38:21). This is quite an old interpretation. Dr. Thomas suggests that it is a symbolic measure of time and signifies 40 years, which number is arrived at by extracting the square root of 1,600. But there does not appear to be any scriptural precedent for this. The theme of the whole chapter is “the Lord roaring out of Zion” (Joel 3:16, 17; Jer. 25:30–33), and the measurement of the blood-stream from the winepress seems naturally to be connected with that of the land of Israel.

## Chapter 15

### THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES — THE SEA OF GLASS, AND THE SO G OF VICTORY

THE chapter depicts the results to be reached by the outpouring of “the seven last plagues.”

Verse 1.—“The seven last plagues.” That is, the last judgments by which “this present evil world” is abolished and the Kingdom of God established. The Sixth Seal (ch. 6.) revealed the wrath of the Lamb upon the Pagan Roman World, and the Seventh Seal (ch. 8.) is preceded by a description of the Lamb enthroned, surrounded by the redeemed (ch. 7.); for this is what the events of the Seventh Seal were to lead to. The Sixth Trumpet (ch. 9.) revealed the overthrow of the Eastern Empire by the avenging Turks, and the Seventh Trumpet (ch. 11:15) is preceded by the vision of the Angel of the Rainbow and the thundering proclamations of the resurrected prophets, John among them (ch. 10.); and is declared to produce this result, namely, that “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (11:15). So here the whole Seven Vials are preceded by a vision of the results to be accomplished by them.

Verse 2.—“*A Sea of Glass.*” See note on ch. 4:6. This glassy calm of the sea of nations is not reached till all the judgment storms of the vials are exhausted. Compare the following note on verse 8.

“*Mingled with fire.*” “The Lord Jesus . . . in flaming fire taking vengeance” (2 Thess. 1:7–8). “Our God is a consuming fire”—the judgments of the vials. Compare 16:8.

*The victors over the beast standing on the sea.* Not literally so when John saw them, nor ever since. Not till the throne of David be re-established upon earth, and the immortal saints revealed. See ch. 4:6, and notes on the same.

“*Harp of God.*” As described in the vision of the Lamb upon Mount Zion (ch. 14:2).

Verse 3.—“*The Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb.*” Compare Heb. 3:5–6; Jno. 5:45–47; and see Moses’ Song of “salvation” in Ex. 15. in thanksgiving and praise for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Compare also Rev. 11:8.

Verse 4.—“*All nations shall come and worship.*” In the days of Moses, Egypt only was judged. Now “all nations” are convinced by God’s “judgments made manifest.”

Verse 5.—“*After that I looked, and behold the temple, (nave), . . . was opened.*” That is, after I had seen these things, I saw thus and so; not that the opening of the nave was really to precede the outpouring of the vials. Verse 8 expressly forbids such a construction. And ch. 11:19 tells us definitely that the nave is opened in connection with the revelation of Christ, and resurrection, judgment, and reward. And ch. 16:15 tells us that Christ comes under the sixth vial.

Verse 6.—“*Seven angels came out . . . clothed in pure and white linen, and . . . girded with golden girdles.*” Compare ch. 8:2. The angels in the outpouring of the vials represented the work afterwards to be done by the saints made “equal unto the angels,” and “executing the judgments written.”

Verse 7.—“*One of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials.*” See chs. 4., 5., 6., and ch. 8:4. The four beasts, or living creatures, are symbols of the saints, and the vision indicates that all things are for the elect’s sake.

“*Seven golden vials of the wrath of God.*” Figure of the judgments upon the nations of Roman “Christendom” for their treatment of the truth and of the saints. Explanation of the existing chaotic time of trouble upon earth.

Verse 8.—“*And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power.*” Compare 2 Thess. 1:7–10. The wrath of God against His enemies.

“*And no man was able to enter into the temple (nave) till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*” An intimation that the kingdom of God will not be established until after the judgments of the vials, including those of which the resurrected and glorified saints will themselves be the executors.

## Chapter 16

### THE SEVEN VIALS OF THE WRATH OF GOD

THE details of the “seven last plagues” of ch. 15., are here symbolised by the “seven vials,” under the sixth of which Christ returns to the earth “as a thief.”

The symbolism of the vials should be compared with that of the trumpets (ch. 8.) as to “earth,” “sea,” “rivers and fountains,” “sun,” “the great river Euphrates.” The harmony is striking, and the historical outworking in exposition most convincing.

Verse 2.—“*The first angel poured out his vial upon the earth.*” Compare note ch. 8. verse 7. The “sore” upon the worshippers of the Beast, represents the sore judgments upon the Roman Catholic system that date from the time of the Great French Revolution and the uprising of Napoleon the Great, who overran the whole European “earth” in his campaigns. The judgments of the vials begin with France at the expiration of 1260 years from the decree of Justinian in 533.  $533 + 1260 = 1793$ , the year when Louis XVI. was beheaded—“the Reign of Terror.” See notes, ch. 11.

Verse 3.—“*The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea.*” Compare note, ch. 8:5:8. The maritime power of “the Beast” was destroyed in the wars that followed the Great French Revolution. In the war ending in 1802, the British destroyed 541 ships; and 569 in the war ending 1814. Nelson and Trafalgar are still living memories of the second vial.

“*The blood of a dead man.*” The expression is extremely appropriate, and in a sense anticipates the “discovery” of the circulation of the blood by William Harvey in 1628. The commerce of the worshippers of the Beast—France, Spain, Portugal—was reduced to stagnation upon the sea.

Verse 4.—“*The third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters.*” Compare note, ch. 8:10, 11. The Rhine, Danube, and Italian lake country, where Attila had been “the scourge of God” in the fifth century now became the arena of God’s judgments in the Italian campaigns of Napoleon. Pope Pius VI. was deposed in 1798. The persecutions of verse 6 are referable to the Papal attacks upon the Piedmontese Waldenses, Hussites, &c. Like the blood of Abel, their blood cried for vengeance upon the Beast and his worshippers (compare notes on ch. 6:9–11).

Verse 8.—“*The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given him to scorch men with fire.*” The Sun is the Ruler of the Day, and stands for Kings and Emperors. Napoleon the Great, in his campaigns, made and unmade kings, and “scorched men with fire” of battle continually. In 1805 Vienna was taken; and in 1806 the Austrian Emperor was shorn of his title of Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, which was as the eclipse of the sun of the Papal system.

Verse 10.—“*The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat (or rather throne) of the Beast.*” The Throne of the Beast is Rome, the See of Rome, where the Pope ostensibly occupies the “Chair of St. Peter.” The secular element of the Holy Roman Empire was a later development. The judgments upon the throne of the Beast cover a number of years. In 1789 Pope Pius VI. was arrested by the French and taken prisoner to France, where he died in 1799. Pius VII. succeeded in 1800. He crowned Napoleon King of Italy, and afterwards excommunicated him. In 1809 Napoleon arrested him, and had him brought to Avignon, abolished the temporal power, and reduced Rome itself to the rank of second city in the empire. Afterwards (in 1814), “Catholicity having forsaken him, four heretical kings (Russia, Prussia, England, and Sweden) bore the Pope back to Rome” (De Pradt, quoted in *Eureka*, vol. iii., p. 518). This is an interesting indication of family relationship to the “mother” (Rev. 17:5).

Verse 11.—“*They blasphemed the God of heaven.*” Both as misinterpreting these judgments, and as worshipping the Virgin Mary, “saints” and relics, &c., in the vain notion that that would stay the hand of the avenger.

Napoleon the Great, in the outpouring of these judgments, is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in the day of judgment that is to be revealed. See *Eureka*, vol. iii., pp. 521–525.

Verse 12.—“*The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates.*” Compare notes ch. 8:13, 14. The Turkish Power now possesses the great river, and fits the symbol, just as did the Assyrians of old (Isa. 8:7). The Assyrian flood overflowed Immanuel’s land (Ibid 5:8). The Turkish flood is dried up to make way for Immanuel and his “hosts.” This interpretation has been current for centuries; wherever there has been anything approaching a knowledge of the gospel of the kingdom of God.

The whole of the nineteenth century has witnessed the drying up. In 1820 Greece revolted; in 1827 the Turkish fleet was destroyed in the battle of Navarino; in 1830 Greece was recognised as an independent kingdom. In 1826 occurred the massacre of Janizaries; in 1828 war with Russia, and consequent autonomy of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia; in 1829, French invasion of Algiers, which was afterwards annexed by France in 1842; in 1832, revolt of Mehemet Ali; in 1853 the Crimean War; in 1877, the Russo-Turkish war; in 1882, the British occupation of Egypt; in 1883, the French annexation of Tunis; in 1897, the Greco-Turkish war. The loss of territory and subjects in all these things has been enormous, and the Turk, or his Head the Sultan, has become familiarly known as “the Sick Man of Europe.”

“*The way of the kings of the East*”; literally, “the kings from the sunrising.” That is, the “kings and priests” of Rev. ch. 5:10; who shall “reign on the earth.” Compare Matt. 19:28, and Dan. 2. and 7.—the saints with the Jews under them as the foremost nation of the earth “in the regeneration.” “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun (as Christ) in the kingdom of the Father” (Matt. 13:43).

Verse 13.—“*Three unclean spirits like frogs.*” Three frogs were the old arms of France, as shown by coins extant, and the banner of Clovis. French “spirits” are therefore signified.

f“*Mouths*” are the capital cities of the powers represented by the beasts. Babylon of old was the mouth of a “dragon” (Jer. 51:34), whence emanated “the great voice” (verse 55). The “little horn” of Dan. 7:8 had “a mouth speaking great things,” “very great things” (verse 20). This was the symbol of the Papal roarings from Rome. French diplomacy was to provoke three wars from the three “mouths” specified.

“*The Mouth of the Dragon.*”—CONSTANTINOPLE became the Dragon capital in A.D. 330, and in the Crimean War of 1853–56, French diplomacy, in the hands of Louis Napoleon, stirred up the Sultan to declare war against Russia.

“*The Mouth of the Beast.*”—VIENNA the secular capital of the two-horned beast (ch. 13:11, see note). Provoked by Louis Napoleon, Austria declared war against France and Sardinia in 1859, and suffered further defeat and humiliation.

“*The Mouth of the False Prophet.*”—ROME. The Pope, under French influence, made war upon the revolutionaries, but the Temporal Power finally fell in 1870.

These three wars were anticipated by Dr. Thomas in 1850, and came to pass exactly according to the interpretation put on record.

Verse 14.—“*The spirits of devils, working miracles.*” “Devils” should be “demons”; and demons, in the mythology of the ancients, were mediating spirits between the gods and men. Hence the political intervention symbolised. “Miracles,” *semeia*, signs, marvels, not of the supernatural order, but like the great “wonders” (ch. 13:13) which the Beast did.

“*The kings of the earth and of the whole world.*” The “spirits” were to operate in provoking universal war preparations. This has been the notable work of French diplomacy throughout the whole of the nineteenth century; especially in the career of Louis Napoleon.

“*The battle (war) of that great day of God Almighty.*” That is the well-known and terrible “day of the Lord” spoken of by all the prophets—e.g., Ezek. 38., 39.; Joel 3.

Verse 15.—“*BEHOLD I COME AS A THIEF. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.*” Christ comes under the pouring out of the sixth vial, and therefore his coming must be very near. “The war of the great day” cannot be waged in his absence. “*Watcheth*”=“perseverance and supplication” (Eph. 6:18); good servants doing their absent master’s work faithfully (Mar. 13:34–37). “*Keepeth his garments*”=“keepeth himself unspotted from the world” (Jas. 1:27; contrast Jude 8:10–23). “*Walk naked*”=“had not on a wedding garment” (Matt. 22:11; see also 2 Cor. 5:3; Eph. 4:24; Rev. 3:4: 19:8).

Verse 16.—“*Armageddon,*” i.e., the city and mountain of Megiddo [Brother C.C. Walker is wrong about this... he ignores the phrase “called in the Hebrew tongue” which is critical to the right interpretation. See Eureka]. The plain of Esdraelon and the mountains of Israel are indicated as the “place” so called “in the Hebrew tongue.” See note on ch. 14:20, on “the wine-press trodden without the city.” Also note above on verse 14. The Old Testament history of Armageddon or Megiddo reveals typical judgments—Sisera (Judges 5:19); Gideon’s “day of Midian” (Judges 7.; like a “thief in the night”) Isa. 9:4; Psa. 83.; Saul, 1 Sam. 31.; Elijah, 1 Kings 18.; Josiah, 2 Chron. 36:20–27; Lam. 4:20; Zech. 12:11.

Verse 17.—“*The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air.*” The air is everywhere. The whole area of all the other vials, and very much more, will be affected by the judgments of the seventh vial.

“*A great voice out of the temple from the throne.*” Christ and the saints are now enthroned in Zion.

Verse 18.—“*Voices, thunders and lightnings . . . and a great earthquake.*” “The judgments written.” Compare notes ch. 10. “The Angel of the Rainbow.” Great earthquakes, literal and political, will mark the course of the seventh vial. See Rev. 18:21–24; Zech. 14:4.

Verse 19.—“*The Great City divided into three parts.*” Some notable new division of the Old World:—Perhaps Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—or Catholic, Protestant, and Moslem—we can only speculate. History will reveal it.

“*The cities of the nations fell.*” The secular and ecclesiastical power of all nations is overthrown, like Babylon of old, and Jerusalem in turn.

“*Great Babylon*”=Rome. Those who, with Russell, make Babylon signify Jerusalem in A.D. 70, are preparing themselves for a great surprise, if they survive long enough.

Verse 20.—“*Islands fled . . . mountains were not found.*” British and Continental “Powers” of all kinds are utterly abolished.

Verse 21.—“*Great hail.*” The Assyrian of old was “as a tempest of hail, a destroying storm” against Israel (Isa. 28:2). Christ and the saints are the storm against “Babylon.” Upon whomsoever this “Stone” shall fall it will grind him to powder (Matt. 21:44).

“*Men blasphemed.*” Showing that the world does not then as yet understand the true nature of the times. These will be better appreciated by the next generation. The greater part of the contemporary generation will doubtless be destroyed.

## Chapter 17

### “THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT WHORE”

ONE of the seven angels of the vials (the seventh angel doubtless), shows John the judgment of modern "Babylon the Great." When the judgment does actually come, John himself will take part in it.

Verse 1.—"*Many waters,*" *i.e.*, "Peoples, etc.;" see verse 15, and compare Jer. 51:13. And as to harlot-cities, compare Jerusalem and Samaria (Ezek. 16., 23.).

Verse 2.—"*Wine of her fornication,*" the false doctrines that deceive the nations and make them "mad" (Rev. 18:23; Jer. 51:7). For an analysis see *Eureka*, vol. iii., p. 620. And contrast the "wine and milk" of the gospel of the kingdom of God that Jesus preached.

Verse 3.—"*He carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness.*" Europe was largely a literal "wilderness" when John was in Patmos. But he was, as it were, carried forward in point of time, and shewn that the States of Europe would be a spiritual "wilderness" in the time of the end.

"*A woman*"—the Great City, Babylon, *i.e.*, Rome—Papal Rome of the latter days—the days of the "ten kings"—and of the fall of Babylon. It cannot be restricted to Pagan Rome. Contrast "the Bride" (ch. 21:9).

"*A scarlet coloured beast.*" Scarlet is the sin-colour, blood-colour (Isa. 1:18). The beast (wild beast) is that of ch. 13. in a later phase of its life. This is evident from the "eighth" head or king, spoken of in Rev. 17:11.

"*Names of blasphemy, &c.*" See notes on ch. 13:1.

"*Seven heads and ten horns.*" A note of time that excludes Pagan Rome from the identification. See notes on ch. 13:1.

Verse 4.—*The woman's apparel.* "*Purple*" (compare "Scarlet") indicates royalty. Contrast the "decking with pearls, gold and precious stones," with Paul's command to godly women (1 Tim. 9:10). And contrast the apparel of the Bride (Rev. 19:7–8).

"*A golden cup.*" Compare Jer. 51:7. "On a medal struck in 1825, in the reign of Leo XII., the Roman state is represented by a woman holding a cross in the left hand, and a cup in the right hand, extended, with the inscription, *Sedet super universam*, She sits upon the universe."

Verse 5.—"*Upon her forehead a name.*" An allusion to the ancient practice (Jer. 3:3). Contrast the "sealed foreheads" of the multitudinous Bride. See notes ch. 7:3: 14:1.

"MYSTERY, BABYLON," &c., or "*a mystery, BABYLON,*" &c. But the very word "Mystery" was once written upon the Papal tiara, and was removed by Julius III., because it attracted the awkward comments of Protestants.

"*Mother of Harlots.*" "Rome, Mother, and Mistress," as the Council of Trent puts it. "*Abominations of the Earth.*" All related systems not in harmony with "the truth."

Verse 6.—"*Drunken with the blood of the saints.*" The Papal persecutions and massacres of Protestants and heretics. See notes, ch. 11. v. 7: 13:15. "*Great admiration.*" R.V., "with a great wonder."

Verse 8.—"*Was, and is not, and shall ascend.*" A clue is given to this enigma in verse 10. "There are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come." See notes on the "seven heads" (ch. 12:3); and the revival of the wounded head (ch. 13:3).

"*They shall wonder whose names were not written in the book of life.*" See notes on ch. 13:8. Only the unwritten worship at the shrine of Rome and her progeny.

Verse 9.—"*Seven mountains.*" Seven-hilled Rome is proverbial, and praised in the Latin poets. See notes (ch. 12:3).

Verse 11.—*The eighth head that goeth into perdition.* The eighth head was the revived Imperialism (see notes, ch. 13:3). Hence it would appear that there will be some reaction in the German Empire in favour of the Papacy. There are symptoms of this from time to time. Protestantism is in a very poor way.

Verse 12.—"*The ten horns.*" Compare notes, ch. 13., v. 1. But these horns of ch. 17. are the ten kings of the latter days, who "receive power as kings one hour with the beast" and "make war with the Lamb." God gives the Powers time and scope to manifest their true affinities.



Verse 14.—“*The Lamb shall overcome them . . . they that are with him.*” This shows that the scene is post-adventual. The prophets and apostles are then *with Christ* as “kings and lords.” Christ promised that they should “have power over the nations, and rule them with a rod of iron, and break them to shivers like a potter’s vessel” (ch. 2:26, 27).

Verse 15.—“*Waters,*” *i.e.*, peoples. *Sedet super universam.* See v. 4 above.

Verse 16.—“*The ten horns shall hate the whore.*” The anti-Roman policy of the European Powers (especially France) in the Nineteenth Century. The spoliation of the Papacy, so terribly illustrated in the career of Napoleon the Great.

Verse 18.—“*That Great City which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.*” ROME is the only city which the angel could so describe to John. To make it Jerusalem, as some do, is to stultify the whole of the context, and to do violence to chronology and history. Rome has reigned over kings for ages, while Jerusalem has been “trodden down of the Gentiles.”

## Chapter 18

### THE FALL OF THE GREAT CITY, BABYLON

VERSE 1.—“*After these things,*” *i.e.*, after the ten horns had hated the harlot and made her desolate; but not after the war of these ten horns with the Lamb. See ch. 17:12, 16, 14. “*Another angel.*” Representing the Lord Jesus and the saints, whose especial mission it is to lay the great city low. “*Coming down from heaven*” (R.V.). Referring to the literal coming down of the Lord Jesus, and the descent of the “one body” upon Babylon. “*The earth was lightened with his glory.*” Compare his saying, “I am the light of the world,” and also Lu. 2:32. Compare also Notes on Rev. 7:2, and those on “The Angel of the Rainbow,” chapter 10.

Verse 2.—“*He cried mightily.*” Compare Paul’s allusions, 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7; and see Rev. 14:8, where the same words, “Babylon is fallen,” are spoken by “another angel,” the same agency being symbolised in both places, namely, Christ and the saints.

Verse 4.—“*Another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people.*” A warning proclamation, as in the days of Lot’s coming out of Sodom, or Israel’s exodus from Egypt, or the return from Babylon (Jer. 51:6). There are many thousands of Jews in Rome. “My people” includes these, and whosoever among “the sons of the stranger” will “glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Pet. 2:12). Kimchi, a Jewish Rabbi, said of Rome: “This is the hope of the nation—when Rome shall be desolated then shall be the redemption of Israel.”

Verse 7.—“*She saith, I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*” Rome survives the judgments of the first six vials, and though shorn of the Temporal Power, the Papacy revives in influence in the time of the end (Rev. 17:12, 13). About a month after the accession of Pius IX. (said *The Tablet*) the Abbess of Minsk spent a whole night at Rome in prayer for the Catholic Church, and while so occupied a voice (none other than that of the Saviour) addressed her thus: “Fear not, my daughter! I have not left my church a widow; I have chosen for her a Pontiff after my own heart.”—*Eureka* 3., p. 633. This was the Pope who proclaimed the dogma of the Infallibility, and then immediately witnessed the fall of the Temporal Power. Rome was in a sense made a widow then; for the Pope suffered a kind of political death, and his city was wedded to “the Usurper,” and became the capital of a united Italy. It was only the earnest of what is yet to come. Compare Babylon (Isa. 47:7–9); and contrast Jerusalem in the age to come (Isa. 54:4–8; 62:4, 5); and with her own experience (Lam. 1:1).

Verse 8.—“*Her plagues come in one day.*” Not literally in a day; but suddenly after the example of Babylon of old. But the final crisis may be like Sodom, which is also a type of Rome (Rev. 11:8).

Verse 9.—“*And the kings of the earth shall bewail her.*” The kings of the earth survive the destruction of Rome, but there is no longer any worship of the Beast (ch. 13:16, 17) permitted, or indeed possible.

Verse 11.—“*The merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn.*” That is, the merchants specially related to the mark, name, and number of the Beast (ch. 13:17), the soul-merchants and traffickers in masses, indulgences, and similar abominations. Contrast the Spirit’s free and bountiful offer of “wine and milk without money and without price” (Isa. 55.), and the example of the apostle Paul in ministering “the sure mercies of David” (1 Cor. 9.). “*No man buyeth their merchandise any more.*” The rulers and peoples

are undeceived as to the value of Romish cheats of all sorts, and will have no more Papal titles, blessings, masses, indulgences, &c., &c., at any price. (See Zech. 13:2, 4.)

Verse 12.—“*The merchandise*” (*lit. cargoes*). Rome is enriched with every imaginable form of wealth by reason of her sorceries. The “wreck of the Roman ship” ruins everything. As in the case of Tyre, “her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord” (Isa. 23:18); that is, all the wealth of the world shall concentrate, no longer in “Great Babylon,” but in Zion—“The wealth of the Gentiles shall come unto thee”—“For brass I will bring gold” (Isa. 60:5, 17).

Verse 20.—“*Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets.*” Shows that Rome, the literal city, is meant—Rome of the Cæsars slew the apostles.

Verse 21.—“*A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea.*” The figure of the overthrow of the city. The context is more emphatic than the prophetic denunciation of ancient Babylon in Jer. 51:11, and nothing short of engulfment in the abyss appears to satisfy all its terms. Sodom is the type as well as Babylon, and Sodom was “overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her” (Lam. 4:6), and is “set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 7). In this connection the earthquakes and volcanoes of the Italian peninsula are very suggestive. The fate of Korah, Dathan and Abiram is another typical illustration of the judgment of God. But the Roman system survives the destruction of the city. See Notes, Rev. 14:8–11.

## Chapter 19

### THE REJOICING IN HEAVEN—THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB—THE WAR OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY

Verse 1.—“*After these things.*” An intimation that the vision about to be described signified what was to happen after the fall of Rome.

“*Much people in heaven.*” That is Christ and the saints in the kingdom of God in Jerusalem. Compare Isa. 65:17, 18; Rev. 7:9–17: 14:1–5; and contrast notes on Rev. 12:1.

*Alleluia*, or Hallelu-Yah, Praise ye Yah, the reason being the vengeance taken upon “the great whore.” “The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance.” “Vengeance is mine, saith Yahweh, I will repay.” The ethics of some clerical critics leave no room for this; but no amount of unbelief will in the slightest degree impede the vengeance of God upon Great Babylon.

Verse 3.—“*Her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*” Not literal “eternal torments,” but irremediable destruction, remembered throughout the ages like the fate of Sodom. See notes on ch. 14:10, 11: 18:21.

Verse 4.—“*The four-and-twenty elders and four beasts (living creatures).*” Unmistakable symbols of the redeemed with Christ. See notes, ch. 4. The throne of David re-established in Jerusalem under Christ is evidently signified by this vision.

Verse 5.—“*A voice out of the throne.*” Showing that the throne is then established as above, and as it goes on to declare (5:6).

Verse 7.—“*The marriage of the Lamb.*” The union in “one spirit” (in the divine nature) of Christ and his people, according to the earliest type of marriage in Eden, when God gave Eve to Adam out of his own wounded side, after his “deep sleep.” And also according to Christ’s own parable of “the marriage of the king’s son” (Matt. 22.). The language of this vision is based upon that parable.

“*His wife (bride) hath made herself ready.*” As to the “making ready,” see the “wedding garment” of the guests in the parable above-named, and the exhortation of Jesus in Rev. 16:15 (see notes); also 2 Cor. 5:3; Eph. 4:24; Rev. 3:4. Compare also the “clothing” of “the king’s daughter” in Psa. 45:13–14. To be “ready” is to abide in Christ in well-doing unto the end.

Verse 8.—“*Arrayed in fine linen . . . the righteous acts of the saints*” (R. V.). The obedience of those who, having “put on Christ” in baptism, and thus “washed away their sins,” have “not defiled their garments” by presumptuous transgression even in a dead ecclesia (Rev. 3:1), is rewarded by change of nature from the earthly to the heavenly in the day of Christ. The “wedding garment” of his parable is not baptism, but patiently preserved righteousness.

Verse 10.—“*I fell at his feet to worship.*” The angel would not receive homage of the apostle. “John and the angel in the scene personate the brethren of Christ. They were the fellow-servants, brethren, and prophets, who keep the sayings of the apocalyptic prophecy—who keep in memory the sayings, and who keep them in the sense of executing the judgments of the seventh vial. The angel’s refusal of John’s adoration was a direct rebuke of those professors who, in the days of the apostles, were beguiling themselves and others of their reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels (Col. 2:18)—a rebuke which would make the apocalypse itself quite distasteful to them.”—*Eureka*, vol. iii., p. 645.

Verse 11.—“*Heaven opened.*” The Israelitish heaven. “*A White Horse.*” The Hebrew Horse as opposed to the Roman symbolised in ch. 6:2. See Zech. 10:3; Hab. 3:8, 15. “*Faithful and True.*” The name which the Lord Jesus applies to himself in ch. 3:14.

Verse 17.—“*An angel standing in the sun.*” A symbol of the one body exalted to the divine nature in the kingdom of God. Compare notes on ch. 12:1: “The woman clothed with the sun.” The time comes when the righteous “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father” (Matt. 13:43).

“*The supper of the great God.*” The terrible “sacrifice” that God will make of the nations that make war upon Christ. Compare Ezek. 39:17–22.

Verse 20.—“*The lake of fire.*” Not the “hell” of pulpit theology of bygone days, but the symbol of the nations and their countries in the “eternal fire” of God’s judgments at Christ’s coming. See Isa. 30:27, 28; Ezek. 39:6; Matt. 25:31–46; 2 Thess. 1:8. Literal fire is by no means to be excluded. The artillery of the nations will provide plenty of that. See also the fate of Sodom (Gen. 19:24); Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:2); Elijah’s opponents (2 Kings 1:10–12). Compare also ch. 14:10, and the special threatening against the worshippers of the beast.

## Chapter 20

### THE BINDING OF THE DRAGON—THE MILLENNIAL THRONES—THE POST-MILLENNIAL REVOLT OF NATIONS — THE FINAL RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT

VERSE 1.—“*An angel came down from heaven.*” The body of Christ multitudinous “made equal unto the angels.” “*The key of the abyss.*” Power to bring down to the grave all the power of the Adversary. Compare notes on ch. 9:1, 2, where the opening of the abyss is foretold.

Verse 2.—“*The Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan.*” Not the superhuman fiend of an obsolescent theology, but Human antagonism to God, first inspired by the Serpent’s lie in Eden, and in the Apocalypse particularly symbolised by the Roman symbol of the Dragon. See notes on ch. 12.: “The Woman, the Dragon, and the Man-child.” “Devil” radically means false accuser, and “Satan” means Adversary. “*Bound him a thousand years.*” Suppressed all human revolt during the Millennial reign of Christ and the saints.

Verse 3.—“*Cast him into the abyss.*” Contrast the Saracenic emanation *from* the abyss (ch. 9:2). That was the uprising of an invading scourge; this is the suppression of a similar but greater movement. “*Loosed for a little season.*” See verse 7.

Verse 4.—“*I saw thrones.*” “Thrones of the house of David” (Psa. 122:5). “Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones” (Matt. 19:28). Note that the apostle is here looking only upon the accepted kings and priests to whom “judgment was given.” The rejected are not in this vision at all. “*The souls of them that were beheaded.*” Not the “immortal souls,” but the resurrected persons whose blood had been poured out in the persecutions of the Dragon-power. The reference is directly to the imagery of the fifth seal. See notes on ch. 6:9–11. “*Which had not worshipped the Beast.*” See notes, ch. 13:8. “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.”

Verse 5.—“*But the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished.*” That is, “the rest” of the class seen in the vision, the rest of the righteous who shall die during the millennium. They are, in fact, the post-millennial harvest of which Christ and his brethren are the first-fruits (1 Cor. 15:23, 28; Rev. 14:1–5). “Lived not” in this verse is qualified by “lived” in the preceding verse, eternal life being signified in both places.

“*This is the first resurrection.*” First, that is, in relation to the post-millennial resurrection, which is second, and final.

Verse 6.—“*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.*” “They who share in the first resurrection” (Weymouth). This does not mean that all who stand up from the graves at Christ’s second coming will be “blessed and holy,” for the contrary is expressly affirmed by Christ. John is not looking at the *bema*, or judgment seat of Christ, but at a subsequent manifestation—the “thrones” of the Kingdom of God. All who thus reign are blessed and holy indeed.

Verse 7.—“*When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed.*” See notes on verse 3 above. Also compare Paul’s words, “Then cometh the end” (1 Cor. 15:24–27).

Verse 8.—“*Gog and Magog.*” These must not be confounded with the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38. – 39. A careful comparison of Ezekiel with the Apocalypse as to time, place, and circumstance will show that similar crises are indicated but 1,000 years apart in point of time. Compare Dr. Thomas’ excellent exposition in *Elpis Israel*, section entitled “Gog and Magog.” The Ezekiel crisis is pre-millennial, and is the occasion of the Lord’s making himself known to many nations. The powers of this verse 8 are post-millennial, and have known the Lord for a thousand years.

Verse 10.—“*The lake of fire and brimstone.*” The arena of the post-millennial judgments upon the nations. See note on ch. 19:20. “Where the beast and false prophet *are.*” The italicised “*are*” of the A.V. seems to imply the eternity of the beast and false prophet, which is not the divine idea at all. “Where the beast and false prophet *were*” (Weymouth). Also compare R.V. As to the eternity of the “torment” see note ch. 14:11, “Sodom suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

Verse 11.—“*A great white throne.*” The post-millennial throne of God upon earth when Christ “hath put all enemies under his feet.”

Verse 14.—“*The second death.*” The extermination in wrathful judgment of the living and resurrected sinners at “the end.” Abolition of death itself.

## Chapter 21

### THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH THE TRUE “CITY OF GOD”

Verse 1.—“*A new heaven and a new earth.*” A new state of divine society (Deut. 32:1; Isa. 65:17; Dan. 12:3). “*The first heaven and the first earth were passed away.*” The millennial order, in which, though Christ reigned, death still obtained, was superseded by the perfect state. “*There was no more sea.*” No more sin and death stricken “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:15; Isa. 57:20). “A full end” is made of all nations but Israel (Jer. 30:11). Some suppose a literal interpretation to be associated with the foregoing, but there does not appear to be such intention in the prophecy.

Verse 2.—“*The Holy City.*” Contrast the unholy “Great City” of Rev. 17., 18., “the Bride” with “the Great Whore that sitteth upon many waters.” See also Isa. 62. on the marriage of Jerusalem to the Lord. “*Coming down from God out of heaven.*” It is not that the saints “go to heaven,” but that heaven *comes to them* with Christ’s return, and his causing the will of God to be done on earth “as it is in heaven.” Great Babylon is “of the earth, earthy;” but the “builder and maker” of new Jerusalem is God (Heb. 11:10). See notes on ch. 3:12. “*Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*” The holy city of this chapter is a figure of the Christ community, rather than of their material abode in the earth. Literal Jerusalem, and “the Bride,” are often confused in current interpretations. As to “prepared,” see notes on ch. 19:7, “the bride hath *made herself ready.*”

Verse 3.—“*The tabernacle of God with men.*” Christ is “the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). When the world is completely reconciled to God, and all the survivors of the race are immortally “in Christ,” the tabernacle of God will be “with men” in the perfect sense, and Paradise regained.

Verse 6.—“*It is done.*” Not that the purpose of God was literally accomplished when John saw the vision, but when all things are gathered together in Christ, who is the Head, the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,” the purpose of God upon earth will have been accomplished. (Compare the language of Ezek. 39:8).

Verse 10.—“*A great and high mountain.*” Contrast “the wilderness,” into which John was “carried away in the spirit,” when he was shown the rival “Great City.” “The Stone” of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision

(Dan. 2:35), which smites “the image,” or the “Great City,” becomes “a great mountain,” and “fills the whole earth.” This is the “great and high mountain” of John’s vision.

Verse 11.—“*The glory of God.*” The mental, moral, and physical glory of Christ “perfected” and multiplied in his disciples, according to his promise (John 17:22). “*Her light . . . like a jasper stone.*” Christ is “the light of the world.” Compare notes on ch. 4:3, the vision of the throne of David.

Verse 12.—“*A wall great and high.*” The wall of a city is its containing boundary and its defence. The figure is of frequent occurrence in the scripture. David and his men were “a wall” (1 Sam. 25:16). The Bride is “a wall” (Song 8:10). Jeremiah was “a defenced city and brazen walls” *against* Judah and Jerusalem, and so ordained by God (Jer. 1:18). But hereafter God will be unto Jerusalem “a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her” (Zech. 2:5).

“*Twelve gates*” (“twelve pearls,” 5:21). Gates are entrances into the city, and in ancient times were the places of authority in which the king sat. Of this there are memorials in the modern phrases “Sublime Porte,” and the Japanese *Mi-kado*, lit. Exalted Gate (Cent. Dic.). A wise man, finding the truth, finds “one pearl of great price” (Matt. 13:45, 46), and buys it at any price. He enters the fold through Christ, “the door” (John 10:9); and enduring unto the end enters the holy city through Christ, “the Resurrection and the Life.” “*Twelve*” is the arithmetical basis of the hope of Israel.

Verse 14.—“*Twelve foundations . . . names of the twelve apostles.*” See Eph. 2:20.

Verse 15.—“*He that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city*” (“*the measure of a man, that is, of the angel,*” verse 17). Contrast “the holy city” and “temple of God” and “altar” in ch. 11., when John himself is commanded to measure with “a reed like a rod.” See notes, ch. 11:1, 2. The golden reed angelic measurement here signified the one body perfected through suffering (1 Pet. 1:7; Heb. 2:10), and exalted to equality with the angels (Lu. 20:36). Compare also the vision of Ezekiel, ch. 40:3, 5, &c.

Verse 16. — The cubic dimensions: “12,000 furlongs.” In ch. 14., the 144,000 “with the Lamb” is a symbolic number based upon the square of twelve (two dimensions). Here the third dimension is introduced, and a greater and perfect number.

Verse 19.—“*Foundations garnished with all manner of precious stones.*” See 1 Cor. 3:12; Isa. 54:11; Mal. 3:17. The precious stones of the foundations display all the colours of the rainbow, all the lights of the High Priest’s breastplate, which blend into one white light.

Verse 22.—“*No temple therein.*” The holy city is the temple, and the temple is the city. Compare the vision of Ezekiel. A separate temple would have implied sacrifice, and the continued existence of sin and death, and still imperfect reconciliation to God.

Verse 23.—“*No need of the sun or moon.*” God being all in all, extraneous light and glory is inconceivable. Contrast “the Sun” of the Roman system (ch. 12.) with which “the woman” was “clothed;” and “the Moon” that was put “under her feet.” See notes, ch. 12:1.

Verse 24.—“*And the nations shall walk in the light of it.*” R.V. omits “of them which are saved.” All are saved then. “Many nations shall be joined unto the Lord.” The millennial glory of Jerusalem gives place to a more perfect glory still, in which nothing that defileth exists at all.

## Chapter 22

### THE RIVER OF LIFE—THE TREE OF LIFE—THE SPIRIT’S INVITATION—“COME, LORD JESUS”

Verse 1.—“*A pure river of water of life . . . out of the throne.*” “Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah saw living waters flowing out from Jarusalem” (Ezek. 48.; Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8). The waters that Ezekiel saw “came out of a holy place inaccessible to flesh and blood, and had healing properties.” They healed the waters of the Dead Sea. This was a combination of literal and symbolic import. The rivers out of the literal temple in Jerusalem that literally go forth and heal the Dead Sea, represent the mystical “water of life” in Christ that heals the Dead Sea of nations (Jno. 7:38). There is “life” in “the throne of God,” but none in “the throne of the Beast,” which, when this vision is realised, has long been abolished from the earth.

Verse 2.—“*The tree of life,*” see note on ch. 2:7, and Christ’s promise therein. He is “the tree of life” symbolized from the beginning by the tree of life in the garden of Eden. His body of “many members” is

represented by the “very many trees” of the Ezekiel Paradise (Ezek. 47:7), which literally “beautify the place of God’s sanctuary” (Is. 60:13). He and they are the substance of the symbol in this place.

*Leaves and fruit.* Contrast the vision of the tree of Babylon (Dan. 4.) and compare the language of Psa. 1:3.

Verse 9.—The angel will not be worshipped. See note on ch. 19:10.

Verse 10.—“*Seal not.*” Contrast Dan. 12:4, 9. “For the time is at hand.” That is, not the time of the second coming of Christ, but the time of the translation of the prophecy into history, a process which has occupied over 1,800 years. Compare ch. 1:3. The time measures of the Apocalypse really necessitate this construction; but if Christ’s people have in all ages been wont to believe that his second coming was nearer than it actually was, it has been well for them; for Christ is always *practically* as near as death is, a truth that has unhappily been perverted.

Verse 12.—Christ’s reward comes with him, and is to be according as a man’s work shall be.

Verse 14.—They only are the “blessed” who “do his commandments.”

Verse 17.—“*Come!*”—Isa. 2:18; 55:1–13; John 7:37; 6:35; 4:10–14; Matt 11:28–30; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:29; 9:5, 20; 10:3, 6, 34–48; 13:16–41; 17:16–34; 26:13–23; 1 Thess. 1:7–10.

Verse 20.—“*Surely I come quickly.*” And now it is over 1,800 years since this emphatic assurance was put on record. That, however, is less than two days on the thousand-years-to-a-day scale (2 Pet. 3:8), and “the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” It is truly “a little while” (John 16:16–28) since the Lord was seen by his disciples; how much less the ephemeral mortal life of any of them, which is all they know of the “little while.” In either sense he “comes quickly.”

“*Come, Lord Jesus.*” The response of the apostle John, of the author of *Eureka* (vol. iii. p. 707), and of all who do God’s commandments in Christ, for whose sake this Revelation was given.