

# **The Last Prophecy - Horae Apocalypticae**

## **Reformation Quincentennial Edition**

**Being an Updated Version of the  
Abridgment of E. B. Elliot's Original Work.**



Meticulously Transcribed, Including Greek, Latin  
& Footnotes with Original Exhibits and updated by:  
Nicklas Arthur

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I pledge allegiance to  
THE KING OF KINGS  
and to His Kingdom come  
on earth as it is in Heaven  
one Holy Nation under  
the Heavenly Father  
with Grace, Mercy  
and Justice for all.





## CONTENTS

Lecture I. St. John in Patmos. ....	13
Lecture II. View of Scenery as it Appeared to St. John. ....	23
Lecture III. The First Seal .....	29
Lecture IV. Second, Third, and Fourth Seals. ....	33
Lecture V. The Fifth Seal. ....	42
Lecture VI. The Sixth Seal .....	47
Lecture VII. The Sealing Vision. ....	52
Lecture VIII. The Palm Bearing Vision. ....	61
Lecture IX. The Seventh Seal. ....	67
Lecture X. The First Four Trumpets. ....	73
Lecture XI. Forewarning of Coming Woe. ....	80
Lecture XII. The Fifth Trumpet .....	85
Lecture XIII. The Sixth Trumpet .....	93
Lecture XIV. The Unrepentant State of Western Christendom..	100
Lecture XV. Intervention of the Covenant Angel. ....	108

Lecture XVI. Intervention of the Covenant Angel.....	116
Lecture XVII. The Angel's Oath. ....	124
Lecture XVIII. The Covenant Angel's Commission. ....	128
Lecture XIX. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses.....	138
Lecture XX. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses. ....	147
Lecture XXI. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses.....	154
Lecture XXII. The Witnesses Ascent, a Great Earthquake. ....	160
Lecture XXIII. The British Church amongst the Witnesses. ....	167
Lecture XXIV. The Great Red Dragon. ....	174
Lecture XXV. The Beast from the Sea, Etc. ....	180
Lecture XXVI. The Song of the 144,000.....	189
Lecture XXVII. The Seventh Trumpet. – The Vials. ....	194
Lecture XXVIII. The Temple Opened, the Everlasting Gospel.	204
Lecture XXIX. The Three Frogs Era. ....	209
Lecture XXX. Concluding Visions. ....	212
APPENDIX I. ....	217
APPENDIX II. ....	224





## EDITORS PREFACE

God's chosen people have an Enemy that wants to keep them in ignorance and confusion. This Enemy has many agents mingled in the congregation of the righteous.

*He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? (29) But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. (30) Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. Mat 13:28-30*

Most of these agents and their followers are unwitting participants in the enemy's age old trans-generational conspiracy to pollute the meaning of God's word, especially those eschatological passages which clearly outline the revelation of history in advance: biblical prophecy is the finger print of God to authenticate the Bible as His word. The Enemy must at all cost conceal and deflect the identification of timing, major players and events with as much misdirection, confusion and outright obfuscation as possible. He has done a very thorough job.

The arrogance and pride of the current generation as opposed to former generations cause many to write off interpretations that came beforehand. The fact is that *a Holy Spirit Interpretation has always been available alongside the many counterfeits*. To ignore past works such as the Commentaries of Matthew Henry or E. B. Elliot's *Horae Apocalypticae* as obsolete simply because they are centuries old is utter folly. When surveying any interpretive work we should watch for tells, such as conjecture over a purely express representation of any text. All conjecture is at best speculation when admitted as such or blindness when accepted as truth regardless, at worst it is intentional deception or self-delusion.

The use of conjecture is prominent in modern interpretation: One example is the topic of the Resurrection which the plain reading of the text states that it happens at the Last Trump after the dead in Christ are first raised and those who are alive and remain are changed, then both groups are caught up *together* in the same event. However a new doctrine called The Rapture has developed by mere conjecture to over throw the plain reading by inserting logical arguments such as the pre-wrath doctrine into the debate then answering that by unrelated scripture.

Another example of conjecture is the Gap Doctrine inserted into the Daniels Seventy Weeks Prophecy by comparing it to an unrelated prophecy. The proponent will say, "Remember when Jesus stood in the synagogue and proclaimed, "today is this prophecy fulfilled in your ears" if you open up where he was reading you'll notice that the rest of that prophecy would not be fulfilled for thousands of years, thus being a precedent for inserting a gap." However the comparison is faulty in that the proffered example has no expressed time line for the things listed in it, but Daniel's Seventy Weeks has a definite time frame of 490 years for certain things listed therein to be fulfilled. Only by conjecture does one depart from the literal view to insert a gap before the final week.

*Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD; (3) Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! Ezekiel 13:2-3*

Writing from Babylon during the siege at Jerusalem, Ezekiel decries the Wall of False Prophets being built with untempered mortar causing the leaders to continue in their folly believing prophecy out of context while they secured in prison Jeremiah for speaking the truth. Even Jesus, the Prophet of Prophets could not vanquish the false prophecy of the Religious Establishment of his day. As did Jeremiah, Jesus told them the truth:

*For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:43-44 and;*

*... there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke 21:23-24*

Jesus verified the end of Daniel's prophecy for the demise and total desolation of national Israel (*seventy weeks are determined*). This was not popular prophecy, this is not what the Religious Establishment wanted to sell to the Hebrew Nation of Jesus day anymore than Jeremiah in his day could make the case for total surrender to Babylon. Unpopular prophecy is simply unacceptable, there is little or no money or fame for

the truth in the Secular or Religious Establishment Media, not then nor even today.

The first job of any serious investigator into Bible Eschatology is to lay down every notion of what they have been taught, read or believe about the subject and look solely to the Word of God for all revelation and resulting conclusions about its prophetic passages. And I mean “lay it all down.” If you bring any pretext, presupposition or preference into your investigation it is like starting a long journey with a compass that is just a few degrees off, and the end result will be right where the enemy wants to lead you. As well intentioned as many are, that is exactly where most seekers end up in bible eschatology.

E. B. Elliot in his original work exhibited an unbiased interpretation up to the time in which he lived, a method of interpretation, derived from the very method demonstrated in the bible itself, admitted in the text itself his ill ease at speculating about those things which were yet future and not plainly seen at the close of his great work about 1860. Though the bulk of Mr. Elliot’s work still stands the test of time, time has unveiled a more likely or true interpretation for some points on which even he speculated by trying to fit them into the past. The nature of the Historicist method of interpretation is such that the line of fulfilled prophecy is continually moving with the passage of time. The interpretation of which necessarily requires a certain amount of speculation which must be settled and verified before accepted as true. As well intentioned as many are, the passage of time will overthrow the best of expositors on some points of which time would reveal to be mere speculation by the revelation of a more fitting and true fulfillment.

The editors of this revised version humbly admit the primary credit to E. B. Elliot and those who went before us in this great work. With great trepidation we have sought to bring up to date the last several chapters hereof with the same method of which we hope E, B. Elliot would approve if he were present. Editor’s Note, 2018 Quin. Ed.

*Recommendation  
by The Author of The  
"Horae Apocalypticae"*

*Having been requested by the writer of this Abridgment of the Horae Apocalypticae to revise it preparatory to the issuing of a Second Edition, I have done so.*

*I can recommend it as faithful, correct, and well calculated, I think, to bring usefully before the minds of the young, for whom it was chiefly intended, those lessons in Church History, as well as in Prophecy, contained in the Horae Apocalypticae. The former — I mean the history of the Christian Church — is that which, now-a-days more especially, must be considered an essential in education.*

*E. B. Elliott. 1862*

## *Lecture I. St. John in Patmos.*

### **View of the Infant Church The Seven Churches of Asia Minor. A.D. 96.**

**What is the Church?** Where was the Church of England before Luther? Where was the Church in the Middle Ages? These are the sort of questions by which some may be perplexed, and, for want of a little knowledge of the history of former times, may be silenced.

I propose therefore to give a course of lectures on Church History, connecting it with the prophecies of St. John in the Book of Revelation, and so with early Roman history. I begin from the Apostles' time: and hope to outline the principal events (such at least as may suit my purpose) down to the present day.

One object I wish to bear specially in view, to prove that the Reformation in England was not a schism; that Popery was not the first religion of England, but rather a system forced upon her, grafted on to our ancient Apostolic Church, and only pruned away by the Reformers. Would that not a fiber of doubtful origin had been left!

In the Acts of the Apostles we have the history of the Churches which they founded, as Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia, Colosse, etc. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."

The Churches were congregations of faithful men gathered together, whether in public buildings,<sup>1</sup> in the open air,<sup>2</sup> or in private houses.<sup>3</sup> Amongst these, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were faithfully administered, and men ordained as pastors, bishops, elders, and deacons. To these ordinations various allusions are made in the Epistles. Mention is also made of several persecutions of the infant Church raised by Pagans, and of errors which early infected the congregation.

It was during one of these early persecutions that St. John, the only surviving Apostle, was banished by Domitian, the reigning Roman emperor, to Patmos, an island in the Archipelago, now called Patino. There it pleased God to reveal to him the future destinies of the Church in a series of visions. This series is called the Apocalypse, or Revelation. It is upon these visions I propose to comment.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 3:1.

<sup>2</sup>1 Col. 4:15.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 16:13.

**Read here the First Three Chapters of the Revelation, KJV.**

*(Rev 1:1) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: (2) Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. (3) Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. (4) John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; (5) And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (7) Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. (8) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (9) I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. (10) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, (11) Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. (12) And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; (13) And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. (14) His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; (15) And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. (16) And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. (17) And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: (18) I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. (19) Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; (20) The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.*

*The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

*(Rev 2:1) Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; (2) I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: (3) And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. (4) Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. (5) Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. (6) But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. (7) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (8) And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; (9) I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. (10) Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (11) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. (12) And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; (13) I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. (14) But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. (15) So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. (16) Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (17) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. (18) And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; (19) I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. (20) Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because*

*thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. (21) And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. (22) Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. (23) And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. (24) But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. (25) But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. (26) And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: (27) And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. (28) And I will give him the morning star. (29) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

*(Rev 3:1) And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. (2) Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. (3) Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. (4) Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. (5) He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. (6) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (7) And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; (8) I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door; and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (9) Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. (10) Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (11) Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. (12) Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven*



*from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. (13) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (14) And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; (15) I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. (16) So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. (17) Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: (18) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. (19) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. (21) To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (22) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

**St. John opens with a passage** from his own history, and designates himself as the writer of this book. As if he said, “I, John, who was the companion of the Lord Jesus, who heard his words, saw his miracles, was witness of his transfiguration, shared in his privations and beheld his sufferings, I, who leaned on his breast at his last supper, stood by his cross of agony, received from him the legacy of his afflicted mother, heard his parting word and dying groan, I, who saw him at the grave, and conversed with him after his resurrection, I, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that I saw, I have again seen him, and declare unto you from him that *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein.* I, John, who also am now become your brother and companion in tribulation, was in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Sixty years had well nigh run their course since this beloved disciple had seen at the Mount of Olives a cloud receive the Lord from the sight of his disciples, – since he and they had heard the angelic question, “Why stand ye here gazing up to heaven?” and heard the promise, “That same Jesus, whom ye saw go into heaven, shall so come in like manner from heaven.” Year by year had they and the Church looked and longed for the accomplishment of this promise. Other prophecies had been fulfilled; those especially which related to Jerusalem. The Jews had neglected every warning. In vain there were great sights seen, and earthquakes felt, famine and pestilence doing their work, wars and rumors of wars desolating their country, false Christs, wonders in heaven above, and signs

on the earth below, – signs even in the sanctuary, if to force on them consideration of the prophecies to them. Even just after Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and James in his Epistle, had sent a last remonstrance to them, the war began; then the siege, and with it those horrors foretold by the Savior.<sup>1</sup>

The Christians suffered not. Following the plain command, when they saw “the abomination that was to make desolate,” spoken of by Daniel,<sup>2</sup> –with the Roman army approach, they fled, and so escaped destruction. The history of this siege is given by Josephus, himself a Jew, and authenticated by the emperors Vespasian and Titus. The memorial of its truth is still standing at Rome, namely, the arch of Titus, on which is sculptured the table of shew bread, the book of the law, and the seven branched candlestick. This told, and tells at Rome, the story of the conquest. But where was Jerusalem's temple? Not a vestige to give response. Where the beautiful city, its towers and fortresses? Desolate and destroyed! Blood stained ruins and rubbish alone remained.

What then had taken Jerusalem's place? What the places of her altar and her temple?

It has been said by Jesus, “The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed, which is indeed the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches.”<sup>3</sup>

From a small and despised beginning a better dispensation had been striking its roots far and wide; with a temple whose worship is spiritual, and whose High Priest and sacrifice is Christ himself, the Lamb of God; whose members are God's elect children of grace, gathered by degrees out of the world; – now, perhaps despised, persecuted and scattered; but at the appointed time to form a company, a glorious body, some to come with their Lord, some to meet him at his coming.

Mighty were the efforts made by Satan to stop the progress of this religion, but in vain. Persecution hindered it not; “the blood of the martyrs proved the seed of the Church;” and however severely treated, the cause seemed still to strengthen.

Let us observe what was the state of this increasing body, when from the rocky summit of his “island prison” the Apostle, with a mixture of joy, sorrow, and anxiety, had looked round on the coast of Asia, and then on the shores of Thrace and Greece, with their gulfs, their islands, and their bays.

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 24. 5 – 28.

<sup>2</sup>Dan. 12. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 13. 31.

His eye would rest on the sites of Christian Churches; first, those of Asia Minor, where Timothy had labored and fallen asleep, and the faithful Antipas had been martyred, and where Polycarp still lived a witness for Christ: – these under St. John's own superintendence. Then, the Macedonian and Greek Churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. He knew that in the far west on one side, and on the south and east towards the other, there arose from Christian congregations the incense of prayer and praise to the Lamb of God. There was a little band gathered fondly round the ruins of Jerusalem, where the aged Simeon presided. One at Antioch, with its faithful bishop, Ignatius. There were the Churches of Alexandria and Egypt, founded by St. Mark of Cyprus, where labored Barnabas; and that of Crete, “set in order by Titus.” His mind's eye would catch the break of light in Spain, Gaul, and even in the British Isles. It would turn to Rome, that Church where Paul and many others had sealed their testimony by martyrdom, and where the heaven had reached even to the palace of royalty; for some of the household, and even of Caesar's relatives, had there professed the Christian faith. Clement, whose name St. Paul mentions as in “the book of life,” fearless of persecution, presided over its Church. Another Clement, cousin to the emperor, had just been executed for conscience sake; and his wife, Domitilla, in a desolate island now endured exile.

Persecution, however, was not the worst enemy the Apostle knew to be at work to injure the rising Church. Corruption had begun within: some had erred from the faith, and false tradition had been mixed with the pure word of God. The Gnostics, a sect of whom one division denied the humanity, and another the divinity of Jesus. These had sprung up like a noxious weed in the congregations; and in one way or other Christ Jesus had been superseded in his character of man's only Mediator, Atonement, and Righteousness. The enemy had already largely sowed the tares amongst the wheat.

St. John knew that one notable enemy would arise, mentioned by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Thessalonians as “*the man of sin*” to “*be revealed*.” St. John calls him Antichrist. I say notable, because his profession was unlike that of other impostors, who said, “I am Christ.” The word Antichrist is a word expressing a Vice-Christ; indeed, made to express it: one who, acting as usurper in the professing Church, would in effect supersede Jesus Christ in it. Such, in some sort, was the nature of the Gnostic heresy; for its chief professors, while confessing Jesus Christ openly, practically set him aside; declaring themselves to be the wisdom, power, and salvation of God. St. John's first Epistle is directed mainly against these erroneous views.

This dreaded Antichrist was evidently the same power foretold by Daniel as the little horn of the fourth Beast, or Roman Empire, and which was to be the great enemy, of Christ and his saints. This little horn was to rise not till after the empire's division into ten; whence it was well understood in the Church that till this empire was divided the reign of Antichrist should not be developed.

Nor indeed, notwithstanding Rome's apparent glory, were symptoms wanting which to a discerning eye might seem to indicate the possibility of Rome's fall or disruption being not so very distant. The population were alienated from their rulers, being disgusted with their tyranny, vice, and folly. Fierce barbarian hordes, especially those at the north of the empire, were hovering on the frontiers; and had more than once shown their power by defeating the Roman legions.

From this view we may suppose that the holy Apostle retired with joy, anxiety, and grief: joy that the Savior's Church was extending; sorrow that the seed was sown within it which might after a while issue in the apostasy of Antichrist; and anxiety to know how long the time should be till the kingdom of the Lord he loved should be established. We doubt not earnest prayer would mingle with his meditations not infrequently. The Redeemer had given his promise, "I will send my Spirit, and he will show you things to come;" so would the exiled prophet plead the promise; and in answer to such prayer, and in fulfillment of such promise, may we not believe that the revelation was given. "*I was in the Spirit,*" he writes, "*on the Lord's day. And I heard behind me a great voice saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.*" It was the voice of Jesus; and he gave this injunction, "*Write the things which are, and the things which are to happen after them.*" *These things then were written to be read; and the blessing was pronounced before hand, "Blessed are they that read the words of the book of this prophecy."*

St. John seems to have been then abstracted from all that was around him; and though himself in the isle of Patmos, the scenery he describes is Jewish. He sees a *temple*, and the interior of it is open to his view. There are *seven lamps* burning: Jesus Christ, habited like the *high priest*, though with marks of divinity attaching to him, overseeing all.

These lamps are explained to be emblematic of the seven Churches then in Asia Minor; and throughout the Revelation we shall find *Jewish scenery* and *emblems*, all familiar to St. John as a Jew, used to show forth the Christian Church. The seven stars are said to be the angels or chief pastors of the Churches. It is well to mark these emblems, as again and again they occur through the book we are about to study.

It is not my intention to enter upon the practical lessons that may be derived from the exhortations to these Churches, if personally applied, and which would furnish rules for living and dying applicable to the children of God to the end of time: the warnings and encouragements being as sign posts to keep each in the right way on his pilgrimage kingdom bound; and the object held forth that we shall, if we overcome, "inherit all things, and dwell in the temple of God to go no more out." However useful and pleasant this, my present purpose is to follow St. John, and to show what the things were then existing, before pro-

ceeding to show what was to follow. These Churches, I imagine, were specimens of the whole state of religious society and practice then in existence, with the mixture of good and evil, tares and wheat; the budding of that evil which St. Paul had stated would go on working until it ended in general apostasy.

The promoter of all this mischief, hidden and subtle, and indiscernible on earth, is shown to be the devil. He is described with his mimic "synagogue of Satan"<sup>1</sup> as at work to injure the growing good. He is designated as the instigator of persecution, "Behold Satan shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." Again, he is called "the devil, the old serpent, and Satan, which deceiveth the nations;"<sup>2</sup> and in the same chapter, "the accuser of the brethren." It is only a repetition of the power attributed to him in other Scriptures, "the father of lies," "the roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," "a murderer from the beginning," "the enemy that soweth tares." Moreover, he remains in his enmity unchanged, and has had six thousand years of experience in his dealings with man to increase his devilish wisdom. Who could withstand him if it were not for power stronger than his, and that the power of an almighty, all seeing, ever present God? St. John shows in his Epistles that an antagonistic Power would finally conquer him: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."<sup>3</sup> The call, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," shows us that the instructions and warnings given to them were to apply to all that should ever after hear or read them. The distinct blessing pronounced on "those that hear and keep the words of this prophecy" or teaching shows that it is our duty to study and diligently lay them to heart, both for encouragement and warning.

There is a very marked connection between the promises to the seven Churches and the blessings described as belonging to the saints in the New Jerusalem at the close of the Revelation. Thus to the faithful ones in the Ephesian Church it was promised, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God;" while in the description of the New Jerusalem it is said, "On either side of the river was there the tree of life;"<sup>4</sup> and, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life."<sup>5</sup> To the conquerors in the Church of Smyrna, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death," a promise correspondent to that, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. 12. 9; and 20. 2, 3.

<sup>3</sup>1 John 3. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Rev. 22. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Rev. 20. 6.

second death hath no power.”<sup>1</sup> To the victorious at Sardis it was said, “They shall walk with me in white; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life:” the former of which was seen by St. John as fulfilled when he beheld the multitude clothed in white, with palms of victory in their hands;<sup>2</sup> and again is mentioned at the end of the Revelation, when to the Bride, the Lamb's wife, was given to be “arrayed in white,” which white robe “is the righteousness of the saints:”<sup>3</sup> the latter refers to those whose names will be found written in the book of life at the last and final judgment.<sup>4</sup> A similar correspondence exists with regard to the promise to the Laodicean Church, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne;” and that to the New Jerusalem, “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus, he that gave the promise at the beginning gives the picture of its realization at the end. How consolatory to those who are struggling forward, engaged in withstanding publicly the inroads of evil in the Church and in spreading abroad the Gospel; or having to bear in private the scorn and persecution of the cross, often unseen save in the narrow sphere of daily life, contending against inbred corruptions of the heart, and endeavoring to bring the thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ; how consolatory, I say, to know that the victory will assuredly be given, and that the final end will be blessedness.

And so the scene passed away. The messages were sent and reached the ears of thousands – a message in each case direct from God, and sent to each Church by the appointed minister: God thus recognizing the ministerial order and office. And what may have been the effect? Probably that which every faithful minister finds to be his experience in the congregation where he delivers his message, “some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.” Nineteen hundred years have come and gone since then. We have the list of warnings and promises; but where are those to whom they were first sent? And, when a few more years shall have passed away, where will those be to whom we now reiterate them?

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 19. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. 7. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. 29. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Rev. 20. 12 – 15.

<sup>5</sup>Rev. 20. 4; 22. 5.

## ***Lecture II. View of Scenery as it Appeared to St. John.***

*(Rev 4:1) After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither; and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. (2) And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. (3) And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. (4) And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. (5) And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (6) And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. (7) And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. (8) And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. (9) And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever; (10) The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, (11) Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

*(Rev 5:1) And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. (2) And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? (3) And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. (4) And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. (5) And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. (6) And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (7) And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. (8) And when he*

*had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. (9) And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; (10) And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. (11) And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; (12) Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. (13) And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. (14) And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

**In our last Lecture we mentioned** these several points:

- 1<sup>st</sup>, That the writer of the Revelation was St. John.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, The geographical position and state of religion in the Churches.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>, The state of Jerusalem at the time St. John wrote, now that its city, temple, and services had passed away, and given place to one spiritual structure.
- 4<sup>th</sup>, The expectation of an anti-Christian power, before that the Lord should again visit the earth.
- 5<sup>th</sup>, We saw the commencement of those two kingdoms, between which a long struggle was to go forward for supremacy: the one headed by the persecuting pagan Domitian, the last of the twelve Cesar's; the other by St. John, the representative of Christ's Church, and the last of the twelve Apostles, at that time suffering in exile.

In chapter five the scenery changes, or the Apostle's eyes are directed from it to that of a very different character.

When Moses drew near to the burning bush the Voice said to him, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Let us, not without a deep reverential feeling as of being in the presence of God, survey with St. John what we have now read in the description.

The first and the grandest object exhibited in the vision is Jehovah, King of kings, seated as Lord of all on the throne of the universe. As if to encourage the Apostle, there appeared round about the throne that well known and lovely memorial of the covenant of mercy – the rainbow, in sight like unto an emerald. There were seen seven candlesticks burning before this throne, in allusion to



the seven Churches or, said in chapter five to be the seven Spirits of God; hence showing the influence of the Holy Spirit as the inspiration of what is holy and right in His people. The English Church adopts this idea in the hymn used in the ordination service –

“Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,  
And lighten with celestial fire!  
Thou the anointing Spirit art,  
That dost thy *sevenfold* grace impart.”

We take the four living creatures round the throne to be the representatives of the Church then in Paradise, and for this reason: They sang a song of thanksgiving, and the chorus was, “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tribe, and nation.” Such likewise were the twenty-four elders seated round the throne. Habited as priests, on thrones, having crowns on their heads, they sung, “thou hast made us to God kings and priests;” and afterwards joined in the chorus, “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” We should therefore say all these glorified beings represented the Church in its triumphant state to be accomplished hereafter.

Some think the number twenty-four represented the twelve Patriarchs and the twelve Apostles; the one body as founders of the Jewish, the other of the Apostolic Church. To explain definitely what all those living creatures meant may be impossible; but, generally, we may judge by the song that they were “the spirits of the just made perfect.”<sup>1</sup>

Such was a part of the company seen on this occasion; besides which we read there were angels attendant, in number ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, who united with these other spiritual intelligence in singing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, gives a lively description of this Church of Christ as begun on earth, and seen through all its prospective changes until it is present in eternity. After showing how all the old saints lived by faith, and died, and are witnesses by which we are compassed about, he says, *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant...* (Heb 12:22-24)

We come now to that part of the vision which relates to this Mediator. Around the throne was the concourse described as looking on; and, behold,

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<sup>1</sup>Horae Apocalypticae, vol. i.

there was a book in the hand of Him that sat on the throne: but it was closed and sealed. And when a strong angel proclaimed, "*Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals?*" not one of the assembled throng was able to stand forth. As St. John, the representative of the Church on earth, was weeping because no man was found worthy to open it, One of a higher nature stepped forth and took the book; and the elder said to St. John, "*Weep not; the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book.*" And when the Savior, – for he indeed it was, the Lamb as it had been slain, had taken the book, the whole angelic company burst forth into acclamations of praise, and heaven rang with the song, the new song, "*Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals: for thou hast redeemed us to God, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.*"

Before we enter into the examination of the subjects contained in this book of the future, I would beg you to observe the scenery of the vision which appeared to surround St. John. This must be understood in order rightly to decipher the emblematic language of the Revelation.

The first scene remained stationary throughout, the interior of a temple similar to the Jewish temple. In one place it is called the "temple of God;" in another, at a later stage of the prophecy, "the temple of the tabernacle of witness."<sup>1</sup> In the innermost part there was the throne of God, and voices are described as proceeding from this throne.

Three divisions were noted in the Jewish temple:

1<sup>st</sup>, the most holy place, in which was the divine glory and the ark of the covenant:

2<sup>nd</sup>, the holy place, separated by a veil from the most holy, and in which stood the golden altar of incense, and the seven branched lamp stand;

3<sup>rd</sup>, a court with a great brazen altar for sacrifice, wherein the priests ministered, while the multitude worshiped at its entrance. There was also an outer court for proselytes. These places are variously alluded to in different parts of the Revelation. We have already looked with the Apostle into the innermost; for no veil now separated it from the holy place.<sup>2</sup> In chapter 7:9, there is allusion to the altar: "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain," etc. In chapter 11:2, the outer court is referred to: "The court that is without the temple leave out, and measure it not."

Further, as the Apostle looked around and landscape scenery broke on his view. Near him stood Mount Zion; and Jerusalem too, no longer a ruined heap, but a new and holy city bearing the much-loved name; then, stretching far and

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 11. 19; 15. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Compare Matt. 27. 51; Heb. 9. 8, etc.

wide, beneath and around, the miniature Roman world. Yet all was so placed that while Mount Zion and the temple appeared elevated above, the outer court seemed accessible to the inhabitants of the world below. The object in view being to portray the future state of the Roman world, its changes and revolutions, decline and fall, together with the agencies that caused them, whether from within or without, and also to combine at the same time the history of the Church, adverse or prosperous, whether internally pure and holy, or verging towards apostasy, whether externally enlarged and protected, or persecuted and in distress, could any arrangement be better suited for the purpose than the one described?

To represent Christ's worshipping Church, there was the symbolic temple. In its most holy place symbolizing heaven, was the enthroned Savior, with the spirits of the just made perfect. In its holy place (or passage to the most holy), the spirituality of the Church on earth was figured out, as seen and judged by Christ; while the temple court showed what was observable to the eye of beholders in its visible and outward worship; and the court without the temple, the Gentiles that truly or untruly might conform to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> To depict the Christian body in its citizenship, there was the Mount Zion, its base on earth, its summit reaching towards heaven. Besides which, in order to represent the true Apostolic line of the Christian ministry, there was St. John in his representative character, present all through upon the scene to take his assigned part in the figurative drama as it proceeded.

In landscape around the heaven, with the sun, moon, and stars, symbolized, as we have noted elsewhere, the secular powers, whether exalted or cast down, shining or eclipsed. The atmospheric changes, storms of hail, overflowing rivers, etc., from without the landscape, might suitably figure foreign invasion; while its earthquakes depicted commotions and political revolutions within. There was furthermore a certain geographical resemblance to the Roman earth in the general landscape, with its four quarters, its frontier rivers, its inland seas, etc., which allowed for the visibly marking any particular place affected.

As to the book, it was probably a roll, a very common form amongst the Romans, and almost universal amongst the Jewish sacred books. It was written within and without. Thus, it would appear, additional particulars and details might be supplied without breaking the thread of the history. It was visibly sealed with seven seals – seals to be successively opened in order. On the breaking of the seventh seal there appeared seven angels with trumpets to evolve its events; each of which trumpets had its symbolic visions and peculiar history successively exhibited: all with correspondent writing or painting in the inside of the unfolding roll. Besides which there was super-added a writing on the

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 11. 2.

outside, constituting a necessary and most important supplement to the prophecy. Once more, in evolution of the seventh angel's trumpet, a succession of seven vials was announced as to be poured out on the earth, filled with judgment; the last of them detailing events that are still future, and reaching even to the period when the present dispensation shall close, and time shall be no more.

In the days of St. John there had been dramatic displays and acting at Rome with all that imperial power and wealth could impart of pomp and splendor. But, in the comparison, how poor and mean! The grandeur and dignity of this drama who can express? Its subject – nothing less than the conflict between the Church and the World to the end of the age; Its *moral*? – that however now the ungodly may prosper, and however scorned and persecuted the people of God may be, yet will success and glory be eventually transferred to the Church, and Christ shall reign forever. And then such music, such actors, such an audience!

Let us observe also the difference between the way in which we regard events, seeing only the effects, and the way in which they were revealed to St. John, with the secret springs and motives that originated them in the secret recess of the *Holy of Holies*, the Divine presence. As he beheld what passed in the inner temple, he would observe that nothing done on earth was there unknown or unobserved. Thither came up for a memorial the sins of its inhabitants, each with its call for judgment; thither, in striking contrast, whatever concerned the Church militant. Not a sigh could escape from its members, not a suffering vex them, but its vibration was heard and its influence felt there. There rose up the cries of the martyrs from beneath the altar; as the sweet incense, the prayers and adoration of the saints. And mark the results! It was when the cry of his persecuted Church rose up that the sentence was given for the supremacy of the oppressing power to pass away. And, amidst all the judgments denounced against mere false professors in Christendom, provision was seen to be made that no real evil should assail the faithful.

We find in this book also much as to the ministry of angels. They are the actors throughout in the scenes described. They direct the tempests, sound the trumpets, pour out the vials, scatter the fire, gather the vintage; just agreeably with what is said of the angelic office in other Scriptures.

St. John, we must bear ever in mind, was the representative of the true Church, or rather of its chiefest minister, at the time of each vision of the drama, as the drama went on. In this his character, angels interpreted to him, and the saints of the Church triumphant showed their fellowship of spirit.

Were not the words of our poet truly written – *Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth Unseen.*"

### ***Lecture III. The First Seal***

#### **Prosperity and Triumph of the Roman Empire**

##### **Following the Visions in Patmos.**

##### **Nerva to Commodus, A.D. 96 – 180.**

*Rev. 6:1-2 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. (2) And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

**The Symbol of an animal is not** infrequently used in Scripture to represent a power or a nation. In Daniel we find it said, “*The ram that thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. The rough goat, is the king of Grecia;*”<sup>1</sup> and accordingly on Persian coins a ram is still to be seen, and on Macedonian coins a goat, attesting the propriety of the emblems. Similarly, on ancient coins of the Roman people a horse was stamped on the one side, and on the other Mars, the reputed father of Romulus and the Roman people, to whom the warrior horse was sacred. Hence the propriety of the horse in the visions of the first four seals to depict the Roman people or empire; while the colors white, red, black, and livid pale, figured its state at the time symbolized; and the rulers the ruling agencies in that state, whether favorable or adverse.

In the first seal the color of the horse was white, indicating prosperity and triumph; and the rider had a laurel crown given him, the distinctive badge in St. John's time of ruling emperors. So the vision indicated that new emperors would arise, in character quite contrasted with the then ruling emperor, Domitian, and would be the main causal agencies in the foreshadowed prosperity and triumph.

In further illustration of the imagery of this seal, there may be noted the frequent Roman custom, when an emperor was going to war, and success came to him, of the senate striking a medal, whereon the emperor was depicted galloping forth on horseback, and striking down the enemy, with the motto underneath, “Augustus going forth.” Further, if success really attended him, the plan was to represent him on an arch going forth between trophies and captives; with Victory personified, either crowning him, or crown in hand preceding him. Such a medal was struck for Claudius when he conquered Britain.

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<sup>1</sup>Dan. 8. 20.

Such being the purport of the symbols of the first seal, as we believe St. John must have understood it, it is our part now to follow up his graphic prophecy by showing its historical fulfillment.

The date, as before observed, of St. John's writing was A.D. 96: The Emperor Domitian then reigned, but died that same year, and was succeeded by Nerva. Trajan followed; next Adrian; and after him the two Antonines; until the accession of Commodus, A.D. 180. In order to see whether the character of their reigns agreed with the figuration of the first Apocalyptic seal, turn we to Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, our best standard English work upon the subject, and peculiarly valuable as the testimony of an infidel. For, somewhat remarkably, his history commences with this very period.

He represents the period then as "a golden age" of prosperity, union, civil liberty, and good government; "unstained by civil blood, and undisturbed by revolution:" a period remarkable, both at its commencement and at its close, for very wonderful and almost uniform triumphs in war, whereby the glory of the empire was illustrated, and its limits extended; while the intermediate time was generally a time of profound peace. And he thus strikingly sums up the view: — "If a man were called to fix: the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus." As to the causes of this happiness and prosperity, he adds, with reference to the five successive emperors whose reigns filled up the period, "The delight was theirs of beholding the general happiness of which they were the authors."

We said that there were triumphs, too, indicated in the vision; for the rider "went forth conquering and to conquer." It was the same in the history. We read even in the short reign of Nerva of a triumph over the Pannonians. More especially the reign of Trajan was memorable in history for its triumphs. Dacia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and other provinces were then added to the Roman Empire. And though for some forty-three years afterwards there was for the most part honorable and happy peace, *i.e.*, during the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, yet there were victories in the few brief wars that occurred; a victory gained over the Jews by the former, and some smaller ones over the frontier barbarians by the latter. These wars, says Gibbon, "just served to exercise the Roman legions." After some sixty or seventy years, however, it appeared for a time as if the character of "conquering and to conquer" was about to change. The whole of the barbarian world, especially from the east and from the north, burst on the frontier barriers, and sought to overwhelm the Roman Empire. The result, however, was to show the truth of the Apocalyptic symbol, "He went forth, not only conquering, but with the destiny that he should still (to the end of the first seal) conquer." After one defeat at first, the Eastern war was ended in the capture of Artaxata, Seleucia, and Ctesiphon. Again, in the north, victory

after victory attended the second Antonine, till the German barbarians were driven to their forest and reduced to submission. On occasion of the Trajan and earlier series of victories, a column, still standing at Rome, was erected to Trajan; and on occasion of those of the latter times of the seal, another was erected to M. Antoninus.

But there is one symbol in the vision yet unexplained, and which to any one conversant with Roman customs might appear strange. It is the bow in the hand of the rider. Romans were not wont to be so represented on medals. A javelin or sword was the weapon in their hands. How then, it may well be asked, can this be a Roman emblem? To solve this we must refer back to the time when the bow was first invented, the fable is that the Grecian god, Apollo, first discovered it, and then instructed the inhabitants of the island of Crete with its use. Subsequently the Cretans, of all the Grecian people, were most famous as archers; and their manufacture of bows, too, was in much repute. Cretan medals still extant illustrate this; and ancient military history, both Greek and Roman, strongly attests it. Hence the apparent Cretan significance of the emblem in question. Let me add a further and curious confirmation of this from the still extant epitaph or epigram on the tomb of a Greek female. The epitaph consists of a set of emblems: a magpie, some wool, a cup, and a bow; with an express explanation of them to this effect: that the magpie sculptured was to mark the loquacity of the deceased; the cup, her proneness to drink; the wool, her diligence in work; the bow, to signify that she was a Cretan!

But how does this apply to the five Roman emperors, who succeeded one another, as we have seen, for the space of some eighty or ninety years? Observe, the crown did not descend then, as now, in hereditary succession from father to son. The reigning emperor might adopt his successor, who, in virtue of this adoption, was, according to the Roman law, regarded precisely as his son. This being so, Nerva adopted Trajan; he, Hadrian; Hadrian, Antoninus; who, in turn, adopted Marcus Aurelius. So indeed inscriptions still extant illustrate to us. There is one, for example, in honor of Marcus Aurelius, which reads thus: "To the Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of Antoninus Pius, grandson of Hadrian, great grandson of Trajan, great great grandson of Nerva."<sup>1</sup> Thus they were to be all regarded as of Nerva's family. What, then, was Nerva's own country and extraction? Aurelius Victor, and our best known modern historians after him, relate that Nerva was in respect of family extraction a Cretan!

Thus, then, is the enigma solved. Had a sword or javelin been pictured in the conquering rider's hand, it would have indicated nothing peculiar or characteristic. But He who cannot err, and who knew that the very year this prophecy was given a foreigner in respect of extraction should for the first time govern

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<sup>1</sup>Given from Gruter in Clinton's *Fasti Rom.*, on the year A.D. 165.

Rome, with a distinctness peculiar to all these pictures, gave the precise badge to mark the country of his ancestry.



## ***Lecture IV. Second, Third, and Fourth Seals.***

### **Oppression of the Empire, Military and Civil, and by God's Four Sore Judgments. Commodus to Diocletian, A.D. 180 – 284.**

*(Rev. 6:3-8) And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. (4) And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. (5) And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. (6) And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. (7) And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. (8) And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

**In the Second Seal the emblematic** horse and its rider again appears; but the color seen is changed from white to red – from the emblem of peace and prosperity to that of war and bloodshed. Moreover there is in the rider's hand, instead of the Cretan bow, a great sword, a military emblem; and it is declared of him that he was “*to take peace from the earth, and that men should kill one another.*”

We turn to history, and what do we find for some ninety years after M. Aurelius to have been the state of Roman affairs?

Commodus began his reign well; but after a time changed his course of conduct and began a system of oppression and misrule, till at length in an insurrection he was assassinated. Pertinax succeeded, and in a month met a similar fate; then Julian, but was soon assassinated. Next came a four years civil war, which raged from east to west, and through which Severus fought his way to the throne – a throne established on the defeat and slaughter of his competitors, Niger and Albinus. Then came a fourteen years interval of internal peace (such as it was); but followed, on the accession of Caracalla, son and successor of Severus, by the murder of his brother and co-regent emperor Gata; and then Caracalla's own murder by Macrinus. A civil war ensued which crushed Macrinus and raised Elagabalus to the throne, who in his turn was assassinated. Then, after a partial

interval of peace during the reign of Alexander Severus, came the murder of that prince. Civil wars followed against his murderer and successor Maximin, wherein two emperors, Gordian and his son, perished the same day in Africa. Next, Maximin himself and his son were murdered at the siege of Aquileia. Subsequently, Balbinus and Maximus, joint emperors, were put to death at Rome; and not long after, the younger Gordian. Then came the destruction of the emperor Philip and his son at the battle of Verona, which, in the year A.D. 249, decided the civil war between himself and Decius. Can the history of any other empire exhibit such a fifty years' record of civil strife and bloodshed? Truly "peace was then taken from the Roman earth, and men had power given them to kill one another." What followed for thirty or forty years was only an aggravation of the same evil, though with the accession of other evils noted in the next seals. "With Commodus' death commenced a most disastrous period," says Sismondi; "it lasted ninety-two years, from A.D. 192 to 284. During that time thirty-two emperors and twenty-seven pretenders to the empire alternately, by incessant civil warfare, hurled each other from the throne."

Having seen the evil, let us now examine its cause. By the great sword given to the rider or ruling power in the symbolic vision, we might, as this was a military badge, infer that the agency prefigured as causing all these calamities was a military agency. And on looking into history we shall find the idea correct. During the era of peace, prosperity, and triumph, described in our former lecture, the power of the senate and magistracy of Rome was predominant. To enforce the laws the military aid was useful and necessary, but it was kept in check by the civil authority. With Commodus began the fatal change. He first exalted the Praetorian guards and their Prefect to despotic influence. So great did their control become, that on occasion of his death they proceeded to sell the empire, as their right, to the highest bidder. This shows, as Gibbon says, that "the power of the sword" had begun its reign. The rule of the military became a pure despotism. In the reign of the first Severus the licentious Praetorian band that overawed Rome was quadrupled; and under his son in law, Plautian, to whom he gave the command, the city, we are told, was "made to tremble." The senate he utterly set at naught, saying, "That he would have no such power come between him and his army;" and he bequeathed this maxim to his son, "Enrich the soldiery, despise the people." The soldiery exercised supreme law, set up whom they pleased, put down whom they pleased, and murdered whom they would. "The sovereignty had passed into the hands of the legions." These caused the imperial murders, and the civil insurrections and wars.

Dion Cassius, a historian of the time, speaks of this disastrous change from the former era of prosperity, peace, and triumph, continued down to the commencement of the reign of Commodus, in this manner: "It was a change from a golden age to one of iron;" and he paints, in strong colors, the then established military license and despotism as the great evil of the times.

Observe, now, it was by girding a man with a sword that he was admitted to the military profession among the Romans, none but a soldier being permitted to wear it. Further, to his chief generals, when appointed to the high office of the imperium, with power of life and death over the military, a sword was publicly presented, in token of it, by the emperor in person. So to the Imperial Lieutenants, invested with military command in the provinces, in a ceremony outside the walls of Rome; and to the Praetorian Prefect, in a ceremony inside the walls. Thus we read that the Emperor Trajan, on presenting a Praetorian Prefect with this sword-badge of power, addressed him with the words: "Use this for me, if I rule well; if not, against me." St. Paul too, you may remember, alludes to the custom: "He beareth not the sword in vain."<sup>1</sup> The symbolic sword bearing rider may therefore represent generally the military power, whose badge was the sword; or, more especially, the military generals, with power of the sword, whether Praetorian Prefects at Rome, or the Imperial Lieutenants of the provinces.

But military despotism could not be established in a country without other evils following soon in its train. The next two seals depicted graphically the great successive aggravations.

**The Third Seal:** Hitherto I have omitted all critical arguments, considering it better to state the facts where I think them proved satisfactorily, than to go over the grounds by which such proofs have been arrived at. I must here in the present lecture deviate, in some little measure, from this plan.

Most expositors have explained the emblems in this seal to mean famine. The color of the horse being black (opposed to the white, which symbolized prosperity and happiness), might seem at first sight to favor this solution; while the balance in the rider's hand has been explained, in accordance with the view, to foretell a time of such scarcity that bread should be eaten in each family during its continuance by measure.

It has been shown, however, that the Roman denarius, was the daily wages for a man in the time of St. John; also that a *choenix*<sup>2</sup> of corn, equals about one quart in measure, or two pounds in weight, and was considered a day's sufficiency of food for a man. And could it be a famine price when three times this amount of barley bread might be procurable by a laborer's daily wage?

Nor, again, as to the *balance* in the rider's hand, does it appear to be here used with reference to the measuring out of bread by a parent to his children, or rather in relation to the buying and selling of corn; in which relation it would always be necessary, and might as well be an indication of plenty as of famine.

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 13. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Strong's [G5518] χοῖνιξ.

At this present time, on a baker's monument outside one of the gates of Rome, a pair of balances appears sculptured as one of the designations of the trade.

Moreover, the charge "injure not" (if we take that rendering of the Greek phrase), said relatively to wine and oil, the two articles of consumption next most important to bread at the time and in the empire alluded to, all but precludes the idea of scarcity.

Notwithstanding, then, the black color of the horse and the balance, this is not a famine scene.

No doubt the black color is figurative of distress and affliction in the Roman body politic; and to see what distress, we have only to look into the history of the times, and to compare the prophetic symbols.

It appears, then, from history, that at an epoch following some thirty years after that of the commencement of the second seal, an aggravation of taxation was established which pressed most heavily on every part of the Roman Empire; the object being, with the money raised therefrom, to support the licentious soldiery and the lavish and profligate military government.

From the time of Augustus there had been a difference between the taxation of the provincials of the Roman Empire and of the Roman citizens at Rome and in Italy. The *provincials* were obliged to pay tributes of produce in kind, of corn, wine, and oil; and also a capitation tax, *i.e.*, a tax on each head. The taxation of the *Roman citizens* consisted of excise and legacy duties. About A.D. 215, the provincial taxation was most oppressively increased by the celebrated edict of Caracalla, which, with apparent liberality, gave the provincials the rights of Roman citizens, but of which the real intent was to add the burden of Roman taxation to the provincial, already too burdensome. The edict was compulsory, and its corrupt administration made it still more oppressive. Gibbon says, in recounting the history of Caracalla, "The great body of his subjects was oppressed by the aggravated taxes, and every part of the empire crushed under the weight of his iron scepter." Under Alexander Severus a check was attempted to the corrupt and oppressive fiscal system; but only partially, and in vain. He could not stop the evil. The soldiery, the real masters of the state, must be satisfied. "Am not I he," said he to his mutinying troops, "who bestows upon you the corn, the clothing, and the money of the provinces?"<sup>1</sup> He struggled nobly but vainly against the oppression of the age, and paid his life as a forfeit to his efforts. After his murder the evil increased. Italy soon shared the fate of the provinces. Gibbon, in speaking of the empire thirteen years after, under Philip,<sup>2</sup> says, "The industry of the people was discouraged and exhausted under a long series of

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, i. 252, 267.

<sup>2</sup>A.D. 248.

oppression,” The evil went on under Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, and Probus; until, in fine, Diocletian developed the system yet more fully, and increased the oppression and desolation of the provinces.

One main constituent of the provincial taxation, I have said, was that of produce in kind. Gibbon says, “We shall be too often summoned to explain the land tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil, and meat, exacted from the provinces for the use of the court, the army, and the capital.” So the very items specified in the Apocalyptic seal are noticed. And again, as if in illustration of the black color of the horse under it, Gibbon continues, “The evil, like a noxious weed, sprang up again with most luxurious growth; and in the succeeding age *darkened* the Roman world *with its deadly shade*.”<sup>1</sup>

Let us now consider whom the rider, or governing power, was meant to indicate. Agreeable with what has been above said, it might seem to refer to the provincial rulers, by whatever name called; for to them was committed the exacting of the taxes. And the very words spoken from the throne, the seat of equity,<sup>2</sup> in monition and rebuke to the rider, and also the badge of the balance that he bore in hand, is confirmatory of this. For sometimes, to prevent injustice, the price at which the governor should rate wheat and barley was prescribed, with a view to prevent injustice and oppression by the government at home. In one remarkable instance under the republic, the Cassian law, in its order to the Proconsul, was expressed literally thus: “A measure of wheat for a denarius!” So too with the justice loving emperors: whether they did it successfully, like Trajan and the Antonines, or the reverse, as Alexander Severus. Again, as to the balance in the rider's hand, it was an official badge of those who had the administration of justice in their hands; such as the Roman praetors and provincial governors. Under the old republic they were wont to have a balance over the magisterial chair, on coins struck in honor of their appointment to their high office; and sometimes also an ear of corn, with reference to their duty of collecting the com produce. In imperial times the emperors had the supreme power; whence the ascription to them of the balance of justice. But the pro praetors had it delegated to them. Nor ought we to omit that, in sending a provincial governor to his province, a horse was presented him for his use, and he went forth mounted from Rome.

Notwithstanding the monitions given them from time to time, the injustice of the Roman provincial governors was so notorious that they were called by M. Aurelius and Alexander Severus, “robbers of the provinces.” Throughout

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, i. 268.

<sup>2</sup>“Righteousness and judgment,” says Holy Scripture, “is the habitation of God's throne.” And again, “A just weight and a just balance are from the Lord.” Hooker beautifully says, “Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is in the bosom of God.”

what remained of the third century, whatever laws were made against extortion and injustice they may be looked upon as records of crime rather than preventives of its commission. A general internal wasting of the state resulted from it. The agriculture of the provinces was insensibly ruined, and preparation made for the terrible famine and pestilence which (as we shall see in the next seal) soon followed.

Can any picture then, be more correctly, as well as graphically, drawn than the one before us? "When he opened the third seal, I beheld, and lo! a black horse; and he that sat on it having a pair of balances in his hand! And I heard a voice (from the throne) in the midst of the living creatures say, A choenix of wheat for a denarius, and three choenix of barley for a denarius; and see that thou wrong not with regard to the oil and the wine!"

There is yet one remark to be added relative to the price of the wheat specified in the prophecy. Owing to the adulteration of the denarius, then begun (a fact well known to numismatists), as well as to changes in the market price of grain, it will be found that "a choenix of wheat for a denarius" was the enunciation of the fair market price of wheat in the times of Alexander Severus, to which we refer the third seal.

**In the Fourth Seal**<sup>1</sup> Scripture is its own interpreter. The rider is Death! His badge Hades, or the grave. Four agencies of destruction were committed to him; and the horse on which he rode (still emblematic of the Roman Empire) appeared of a livid hue – a symptom of approaching dissolution.

Well did the pictorial prophecy prefigure the misery of this period. About fourteen years after the death of Alexander Severus, beginning with the reign of Philip, about A.D. 248, Gibbon speaks of the twenty years of "shame and misfortune, of confusion and calamity," that then ensued. And, all unconsciously speaking the voice of Scripture, he says that at that time "The ruined empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution."<sup>2</sup> Yet more, in continued accordance with the prophecy, he depicts the agencies of destruction at work. *The sword!* "Every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted, by *barbarous invaders and military tyrants*;" – the sword from without and the sword from within. – *Famine!* "A general famine was a calamity of a more serious kind (i.e., than certain other calamities superstitiously ascribed to the era); the inevitable consequence of pillage and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present and hope of future harvests." – *Pestilence too!* Gibbon continues: "Famine is almost always followed by epidemic diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. But other causes

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<sup>1</sup>Horae Apocalypticæ, i.

<sup>2</sup>Gibbon, i. 384.

must have contributed to that furious plague, which, from the year A.D. 250 to 265, raged without intermission in every province, every city, and almost every family in the empire." He adds, that during a part of that time 5000 persons died daily in Rome; and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated. Speaking of the provinces he says, "We might suspect that war, pestilence, and famine, had consumed, in a few years, the moiety of the human species."

Does not this well answer to the prophetic picture: "Behold a livid horse! And his name that sat thereon was Death; and Hades followed after him: and power was given to him to kill with the sword, and with famine, and with the pestilence, and with the wild beasts of the earth."

The fourth destroying agent specified indeed has not been yet alluded to, wild beasts. But here, too, history verifies of prophecy. We have it on record that at an epoch twenty or thirty years after the death of Gallienus the multiplication of wild beasts of prey had arisen to such an extent in parts of the empire as to become a crying evil: Arnobius, the Roman writer, alludes to wild beasts as one of the plagues with which the land was then afflicted, about A.D. 296, near thirty years after the death of Gallienus. And this reminds me of the necessity of showing that in that thirty years interval the evils depicted had by no means passed away, though by the almost supernatural efforts of certain able emperors, attended by victories very remarkable in those terrible times, the actual dissolution of the empire was prevented.

It was in A.D. 260 then, after the Emperor Valerian had been defeated by Sapor, king of Persia, and at length cruelly murdered, that Gallienus, his son, succeeded to the throne. During his reign the empire was broken by different usurpations into fragments, of which most were short-lived. But three of them maintained for several years each a part of the empire for himself, beginning in the several years A.D. 258, 261, and 263, Odenatus and Zenobia in the East; Aurcolus in Illyricum; Posthumus in Gaul and Britain; while Gallienus himself ruled in Italy. A fact this very remarkable! For it exhibits the empire as at that time divided into four parts, just as the Apocalyptic verse (according to Jerome's reading) represents the Roman Empire under the fourth seal; and those divisions precisely the same that Diocletian saw fit to establish by law afterwards.

After the death of Gallienus in 260, Claudius was elected, and made a struggle to raise the fallen fortunes of his country. He was, however, cut off by the pestilence five years later, while engaged in fighting bravely against an immense army of Goths. So the sword and the pestilence were still doing their work.

*Aurelian* was next elected emperor. In continuing the war against the Goths, he found it necessary to cede to them the province of Dacia. Then came an irruption of the Allemanni. Three great battles were fought: the first near Placentia, which was accompanied by such loss on the part of the Romans, that the

historians say, "The immediate dissolution of the empire was expected." In the two others, the Emperor Aurelian was victorious, and thus the fate of the empire was suspended. But in the year A.D. 275, after setting out to repel a Persian invasion, he was assassinated by one of his own generals.

Had the color of the livid pale horse yet changed? Or were the destroying agencies of the fourth seal yet stilled? Let Gibbon tell in few words what followed. "The strength of Aurelian had crushed on every side the enemies of Rome, but after his death they seemed to revive with an increase of fury and numbers." In the following year the Alani spread themselves over Pontus, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia, and traced their course by the flames of villages. They were repulsed by the Emperor *Tacitus*; but he died afterwards suddenly, or was murdered; and so too his brother *Florian*, who succeeded him.

Under *Probus*, the next emperor, the Roman arms were victorious; and one condition of the peace that followed is remarkable. The barbarians were bound to supply them with 16,000 recruits. "For," says Gibbon, "the infrequency of marriage and ruin of agriculture had affected the principles of population, and had not only destroyed the strength of the present, but interrupted the hopes of future generations." After several victories in various parts of the empire over the Franks, and in Gaul and Egypt, in the year A.D. 281, all enemies seemed vanquished. Probus was honored with a triumph at Rome; but presently afterwards he was assassinated. *Carus* succeeded, and after several battles was killed – some say by lightning, some by assassination – A.D. 283.

Then followed civil war, three candidates fighting for the crown of the empire. One of them, *Numerian*, was murdered by *Aper*; and he again by *Diocletian*, who in a decisive battle defeated *Carinius*, and was elected emperor.

Then *Diocletian* divided the empire on system into *four parts*, under two chief and two subordinate emperors; deeming the empire too large and dangerously circumstanced to admit of the rule of one man. The empire, however, was still considered as *one*, and Rome as the one great capital of the whole empire.

I will only add the testimonies of three great historians, singularly illustrative of the accuracy of our prophetic picture as to the state of things at this period of time. One, *Sismondi*, says: "Diocletian put an end to a long period of anarchy. But such a succession of invasions and civil wars, and so much suffering, disorder, and crime, had brought the empire into a state of *mortal languor*, from which it never recovered;" adding, "the deserts spread with frightful rapidity." Another, *Niebuhr*, speaking of the same time, relative to the plague in the reign of *Probus*, "The empire was suffering from general distress, and its condition very much like that which followed after the cessation of the *black death* in the Middle Ages." Again, another, *Schlegel*, remarks: "The division of the empire amongst several sovereigns appeared then (in *Diocletian's* reign) an unavoidable and necessary evil. In other words, the several parts and members of the vast



body of the Roman Empire, which approached nearer and nearer its dissolution, began then to fall to pieces.”

## *Lecture V. The Fifth Seal.*

### **Last Pagan Persecution of the Church, Diocletian, A.D. 303 – 311.**

*Rev. 6:9-11 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: (10) And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (11) And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

**A Scene Quite different from any** that he had yet contemplated met St. John's eye on the opening of the fifth seal. It is no longer the Roman earth which he sees before him, but the symbolic *temple-court*, from whose altar proceed, not the voices of living worshipers, presenting their sacrifices for atonement, or thanksgiving and free will offerings, but the cries of departed and martyred saints, who had been slain for their testimony to the word of God.

We have brought the history down to that division into four parts by Diocletian which terminated the Roman Empire as it had hitherto been constituted. The era is one famous in Roman history. His four immediate predecessors had kept the empire in existence, and even helped, in some degree, towards its elevation; yet was this emperor considered as the founder of a new empire, and a triumph was decreed to him at Rome in the year A.D. 303. Here, then, for the present, we must turn from the history of the Roman world to take a survey in retrospect of the persecutions that had passed on the Christian Church during three centuries, before we notice the persecutions which marked the reign of Diocletian.

I adverted before to the spread of religion in the year A. D. 96, in the sketch of what must have passed before St. John's view in Patmos. Small as was its first beginning, Christianity had made considerable progress. Its founder had taught his disciples to expect that it would be so; but he had at the same time warned them that hatred and persecution from the world would mark its course: "*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*"

The first imperial persecution was in the reign of Nero. This cruel tyrant, having himself set fire to Rome, laid the blame of it on the Christians, in the hope that the hatred already existing against them would give currency to the charge. Fearful sufferings then ensued. Some of the condemned were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and in that disguise devoured by dogs; some were

crucified; others burnt alive. "When the day was not sufficient," says the historian, "for their tortures, the flames in which they perished served to illuminate the night." Nero looked on for his amusement.

The next great persecution was during the reign of Domitian. It originated more from jealousy than from wanton cruelty. Besides the charge of Atheism brought against the Christians, the sect were said to be seeking a kingdom. To hinder this, the emperor slew his own cousin, a Christian of the highest rank known; and summoned also the existing relations of Him who was regarded as the Christian's king; but finding that these were but poor men, not looking for a temporal inheritance or earthly grandeur, he dismissed them with contempt; sending the last of the apostles, John, in banishment to Patmos.

In Trajan's reign a law was for the first time issued against Christians *because they were Christians*. An old law was in existence which decreed that no god should be worshiped unless admitted and recognized as such by public authority: This edict Trajan was advised to enforce. He, however, mildly declared that no inquisition should be made for the Christians; but that, when brought before the magistrates in the regular course of law, if they should refuse to sacrifice to the gods, they must needs suffer.

This edict, intended to prevent the search for Christians, and so rather to *favor* them, had a contrary effect, as it pronounced the profession of Christianity illegal, and left it in the power of any governor or other person to persecute them; and so it proved. Numbers were added to the martyr band, and many more souls gathered under the altar. Amongst others, Ignatius, the venerable Bishop of Antioch, joined his brethren there before this reign had closed. In writing to the Church of Smyrna. he says, "Wherefore have I given myself up unto death, to fire, to sword, to wild beasts? The nearer I am to the sword, the nearer to God. When I am among the wild beasts, I am with God. In the name of Jesus undergo all, to suffer together with him." A little time after, in the great amphitheater of Rome, to which city he had been sent for execution, he was thrown to wild beasts amidst the exultation of assembled myriads.

Again, in the reign of the second Antonine, after a time of rest, persecution recommenced, and every form of cruel torture and death was exhibited to the Christians. Amongst other sufferers, Polycarp and Justin Martyr were executed; and they too went to their waiting brethren. Many also of the confessors of the faith at Lyons met the same fate.

An interval elapsed, and then oppression of the Church began afresh in the reign of Septimius Severus, which specially fell on the Churches of Africa and Egypt. Some boldly appealed against these persecutions, and many apologies for Christians, as these writings were called, were put forth.

Again, in the reign of Alexander, though that prince professed to respect the Christians and their morality, yet one and another laid down his life as the penalty of his faith in Christ; among them, Hippolytus, Bishop of Porto. Maximin

renewed the royal edict, and especially directed his persecution against the bishops and pastors.

Hitherto these unjust measures had been carried out against one Church here, and another there; but Decius determined upon crushing Christianity. His edict compelled inquisition to be made for them, and decreed torture and death to all Christians. Great now was the consternation. The Church had lost its first zeal and love. There were those who dared not to confess their creed, yet would not apostatize. Bribes of money were offered to and accepted by the magistrates, and thus the conflict was spared to those. The sword of the Goths struck down this persecuting emperor, and left his cruel work to be continued by his successor, Valerian, whose aim, in like manner, was against the bishops and presbyters, and the worshipping assemblies of Christians. Then also Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, was added to the noble army of martyrs.

Valerian, who followed in the same course, was cut down by the Persian sword; and his son, Gallienus, trembling under his judgments and fearing the Christian God, issued the first edict of toleration, A.D. 261. Their churches and burial-grounds were restored, and their worship allowed to commence unmolested.

Such briefly, is the history of *persecution* up to the reign of Diocletian. During the reigns of the four emperors who preceded him, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus, there was a respite. Churches were built, and worship in them legalized. Diocletian, we have seen, founded a new empire, and had his triumphal day at Rome, A.D. 303. Early, however, in that year, a secret council was held in the palace at Nicomedia between Diocletian and his partner on the throne, Galerius, to whom he had given the most easterly division of the empire. The destruction of Christianity was the subject. "Perhaps," says Gibbon, "it was represented to him that the glorious work of the deliverance of the empire was left imperfect so long as an independent people, *i.e.*, the Christians, were permitted to subsist and multiply in it." On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February an armed force destroyed the church of Nicomedia. This was the signal; and for a period of ten years the direst persecution that had yet taken place raged against Christianity.

Diocletian declared his intention of abolishing the very name of Christian. Their blood was shed mercilessly through the whole empire. This period is called the "era of martyrs."

Before the ten years had expired, Diocletian, Galerius, and Maximian agreed to raise pillars as monuments to commemorate their success in the extirpation of Christianity. These pillars are still extant.

Whoever visits Rome may still see the Catacombs, and will be shown there the quiet resting places of the bones and ashes of the martyrs of this season. Earthen vases, inscribed with the word blood, still show how precious was even

this remembrance to their mourning friends. There, too, will be seen the larger cavities below, where the excavated and rude chapel served as a house of prayer, and where a faithful Church assembled far below the level of the city. The only public testimony then given by the people of Christ was in their martyrdom. In vain did Pagan power try to destroy the Holy Scriptures. Copies had so multiplied, and been so carefully hid, that inquisition for these failed.

But we would draw attention to the next clause in the text, "*How long, O Lord, Holy One and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*"

This cry for vengeance seems scarcely in accordance with the feelings of the first martyrs, who "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ." But it is their cry in the ears of the survivors. It was said by the Lord of Abel, "*the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground;*" and the vengeance of God on his enemies and on the enemies of his people is often adverted to in the Epistles. Thus, "*Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*"<sup>1</sup> And for this requiting vengeance the Church in the third century was wont to look. Thus Marianus, an African martyr, "as if filled," we read, "with a prophetic spirit, warned his persecutors and animated his brethren by proclaiming the speedy avenging of his blood."<sup>2</sup>

Year after year did they wail and long for some turn in their favor. From those long, narrow passages, on either side walled with their dead brethren and martyred children, as we before noticed, in the Catacombs of Rome, from those subterranean houses of prayer, as they looked on the vases of blood drained from the death wounds of all dear to them, their cry was wont to ascend to heaven. Did not the wailing souls almost seem to impeach the justice of God, and his other attributes: "*How long, O Lord, holy, just, and true, dost thou not avenge our blood?*"

"And white robes were given to each of them."

Just as their condemnation in the view of their fellowman is depicted by their being under the altar, so would their equally public exaltation and justification before the world be expressed in their being robed in white.

And so it was. The historian tells us that the Emperor Galerian issued an edict, agreed to by the two other emperors, confessing (at least by implication) that he had wronged the Christians, putting an end to the persecution, and entreating "that they would pray to their God for him."<sup>3</sup> This was indeed an act of justification not less applicable to the memory of those gone before than to the

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 12. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Daubuz, p. 275.

<sup>3</sup>Gibbon, ii. 485.

character of those still surviving. It was a moral triumph of the Christian religion over Paganism. So while the three preceding seals showed the decline of *the Roman Empire*, this seal showed the corresponding decline of *Paganism as a system*.

These waiting souls were told that they should rest yet a little while till their brethren should have joined them. This probably referred to another line of witnesses, of whom more hereafter.

I have named Polycarp as one of the sufferers by martyrdom during this era. Unwilling to interrupt the narrative, I omitted to transcribe a passage from the Acts of his Martyrdom which is of much interest. "Having his hands tied behind him, and being bound to the stake, he looked up to heaven and said, "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee, I give thee hearty thanks that, at this day and hour, I should have a part in the number of thy martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life; amongst whom, may I be accepted this day before thee as an acceptable sacrifice. I praise thee, I glorify thee, my God and my Savior."

## ***Lecture VI. The Sixth Seal.***

### **Dissolution of the Pagan Firmament, Constantine Establishes Christianity.**

*Rev. 6:12-17 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair; and the moon became as blood; (13) And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. (14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; (16) And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: (17) For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

**As the Language of this passage** is very highly figurative, it may be well to call in mind what has been said relative to the figures used in this book, and the meaning attached to them. A few examples from other parts of Scripture will illustrate the subject.

When Joseph dreamed that the sun, moon, and stars made obeisance to him, his father and brethren at once understood that the paternal government was intended by the sun; and so of the other parts of the family. Jacob answered, "Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee?"<sup>1</sup> These eleven brethren were to be rulers, or rather founders of kingdoms, or heads of distinct tribes.

We find in Jeremiah the symbol of an earthquake. The prophet saw in vision the destruction of the Jewish kingdom by the Babylonians. "*I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly, I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black. The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets; and*

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<sup>1</sup>Gen. 37. 10.

*climb up upon the rocks.*"<sup>1</sup> So also in Ezekiel, prophesying of the overthrow of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, "*When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.*"<sup>2</sup> In Zephaniah, speaking of the destruction of Judah, "*The great day of the Lord is near, a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress.*"<sup>3</sup> In Isaiah, prophesying of the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes, "*The day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger; the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.*"<sup>4</sup>

Again, for the hiding in dens and rocks of the earth, look to Hosea treating of Shalmaneser's attack upon Israel: "*They shall say to the mountains, Cover us: and to the hills, Fall on us,*"<sup>5</sup> i.e., not to crush, but to hide them.

Have not these quotations anticipated the explanation of the text?

When St. John looked from the altar and its crowd of white-robed martyrs to the landscape, which he had before seen all tranquil, what met his eye? Agitation and trouble. Lo, a great earthquake! The mountains and island rocks sink beneath the shock. The sun becomes black, and the moon blood red, as in a total eclipse. The stars fall from heaven like figs from the tree during a windy tempest. Kings, warriors, freemen, slaves, all appear in flight, and seek to find shelter in caves and holes. Then goes forth a cry, "*Hide us from Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*"

Could St. John have doubted the import of these emblems, familiar as he was with Scripture and Scripture symbols? Surely he must have foreseen a revolution of no common kind. No partial change – only such a change as the entire destruction of heathenism before the progress of Christianity could be implied.

Did, then, such a change, in fact, take place at this period of time as will warrant the application?

When the time came that God would deliver his people Israel out of the hand of their oppressor in the land of Egypt, Moses was born.<sup>6</sup> Again, when about to

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<sup>1</sup>Jer. 4:23-29.

<sup>2</sup>Ezek. 32. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Zeph. 1.14.

<sup>4</sup>Isa. 13. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Hos. 10. 8.

<sup>6</sup>Acts 7. 17 – 20.



deliver them out of Babylon, Cyrus was raised up.<sup>1</sup> So, when about to raise his Church to a state of power, Constantine appeared.

Constantius, father of Constantine, died at York, in our own country, and appointed "Constantine the Great" as his successor. This prince was already known to favor the Christians, while yet the son of the persecuting emperor Maximian, Maxentius was in possession of Rome – Ere Constantine (A.D. 306) bore down against Maxentius, he avowed his belief in and his adherence to Christianity. We are told (and before his death he asserted it) that on his march toward Rome, as the sun was declining, there appeared suddenly in the heavens a pillar of light in the form of a cross, with this inscription, "In this overcome." Constantine immediately adopted the cross as his ensign; that object of hatred to the Pagans was seen "glittering on the helmets, engraved on the shields, and interwoven into the banners of his soldiers."<sup>2</sup> The emperor's own person was adorned with it. Moreover, there was displayed on his principal banner this once accursed emblem, above which was set a crown of gold and gems, and the initials of Him who suffered on the one and now wears the other were inscribed upon it.

"By this ensign thou shalt conquer." Well was the promise fulfilled to Constantine. Army after army, emperor after emperor, were routed, and fled or perished before the warriors of the cross. The terror of Maxentius and that of his army, in their flight over the Milvian bridge across the Tiber, is portrayed in sculpture, which may still be seen at Rome on the arch of Constantine. Similar was the terror of the other two commanders, Maximin and Licinius. As memorials of the persecution just before, the two joint emperors, Diocletian and Maximian, had medals struck of themselves, in the characters of *Jove* and *Hercules*, destroying the hydra-headed serpent monster, Christianity! Their successors had adopted these titles. When Maxentius went forth to battle, he went fortified by heathen oracles, and in the character of "the champion of heathenism" against "the champion of the cross." Again, when Maximin and Licinius were about to engage in battle, the former vowed to Jupiter that, if successful, he would extirpate Christianity. Licinius again, haranguing his soldiers, ridiculed the cross, and staked the falsehood of Christianity on his success. In the hour of danger and death, however, his boldness forsook him. "Licinius," says Gibbon, "dreaded the power of the consecrated banner, the sight of which animated the soldiers of Constantine with invincible enthusiasm, and scattered terror and dismay through the adverse legions."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Isa. 44. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Gibbon, iii. 257.

<sup>3</sup>Gibbon, iii. 258.

The dying terrors of these persecutors have been recorded. A dark cloud brooded over the death beds of Maximian and Diocletian; the former of whom, oppressed by remorse, is said to have strangled himself, and the latter to have died raving mad. Galerius, from an agonizing death bed illness, sent to entreat the Christians to pray for him; and Maximin confessed his guilt in his last moments, and called on Christ to compassionate his misery.

Thus did a sense of the wrath of the *Crucified One, the Lamb of God*, now seated in glory, lie heavy upon them. When we combine these terrors of the death-bed with those of the lost battlefield, in which all ranks, high and low, must have participated, routed, flying, and perishing, there was surely that in the event which answered to the symbols of the vision, wherein kings and generals, freemen and slaves, appeared fleeing from the face of Him that sat on the throne of power, even from "*the wrath of the Lamb.*"

This was the first shock of the earthquake. The sun of the Pagan power had been darkened; but all the *stars* of the Pagan firmament had not yet fallen, nor had the Pagan firmament itself passed away.

When Constantine first triumphed, he at once gave liberty to the Christians to exercise the rites of their worship, but heathenism was still tolerated. When he became sole emperor, however, he issued edicts for the entire suppression of Pagan sacrifices and the destruction of Pagan temples, and no toleration was allowed for any but Christian worship. His successor followed up the same object, and attached penalties to the public profession of Paganism. Before the century ended the stars of Pagan power were fallen. Its heaven, or political religious system, had vanished; and on the Roman earth its institutions, laws, rules, and worship had been all but annihilated. Pagans were now obliged, in fear of death, to seek for dens and caverns wherein to hide their devotions, as appears from the history of the reign of Theodosius.

The passage of Scripture on which we are now commenting has been by many supposed to refer to the day of judgment; and indeed there appears a strong resemblance here to the phraseology used in describing the terrors of that awful day; but a closer examination will show a marked discrepancy between them.

The clearest passage in the Bible descriptive of the final judgment is in 2 Pet. 3:10: "*The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up;*" and the Apostle adds, "We look for *new* heavens and a *new* earth," etc. Nothing of this is said in our subject text. In such a conflagration the sun would not be black as sackcloth, nor the moon become blood-red; still less could the stars fall on the earth. St. Peter speaks of a *real* destruction, a *real* conflagration, an *end* of the earth. A passage somewhat similar to this of the sixth seal occurs also in the sixteenth chapter, but still not *exactly* alike. In the sixth seal the earthquake

is said to be great: in the sixteenth chapter, “*such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great;*” accompanied, moreover, by division of Babylon into three parts. And while in the sixth seal men fly and hide themselves, and express great fear of God and of the power sent by him, in the sixteenth chapter, after the earthquake they blaspheme God, when the plague of hail follows. It appears then; that there is a lesser earthquake and a greater described, naturally alike in some things, but differing much in others. Gibbon says, “The ruin of the Pagan religion is described by the sophists as a dreadful and amazing prodigy, which covered the earth with darkness, and restored the ancient dominion of chaos and of night.”<sup>1</sup>

The question may be asked, “Was it from Constantine sitting on his throne, or from Christ on the throne of heaven, that the runaways are supposed to hide themselves?” The passage will admit of either sense. It may mean, Hide us from this conqueror, who with *the banner of the Lamb of God* is coming to destroy us. But we have seen enough in the repentance, remorse, and terror expressed by the dying persecutors to justify in preference the other construction. We cannot fail to mark what a contrast is thus presented between the deaths of the martyrs of Jesus and those of their persecutors. Truly we would say in reviewing it, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” Sin is, and has ever been, the only sting of death. Thanks be to God, who gave them the victory through Christ Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, v. 123.

## **Lecture VII. The Sealing Vision.**

### **The Faithful Distinguished Amidst Increasing Apostasy. Fourth Century.**

*Rev. 7:1-8 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. (2) And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, (3) Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. (4) And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. (5) Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. (6) Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. (7) Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. (8) Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

**It is obvious that the earthquake** had past, inasmuch as it is said in the first verse that “The winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea;” and in the twelfth verse of the next chapter, the sun, moon, and stars are spoken of as again having shone forth. Still further proof is that the earthquake, spoken of in our last lecture, was a symbolic scene, and not “*the great day of the Lord's second personal coming.*”

In continuance of this sixth-seal vision, the Apostle saw *four destroying tempest-angels* under temporary restraint; the command being given from the angel of the Lord to “hurt not” anything on the Roman earth for a certain time. The intent of this figure is explained in his unintentional manner by Gibbon, when, speaking of the Gothic invasion, he says, “*The threatening tempest of barbarians, which so soon subverted the foundation of Roman greatness, was still repelled or suspended on the frontiers.*”<sup>1</sup> When so great a revolution in favor of Christianity had just taken place, we naturally feel inclined to ask why

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, iii. 97

such a judgment should now be threatened? In seeking a reply to this, we are brought to a deeply interesting subject of inquiry, namely, what had been the progress of vital and spiritual religion when the outward and professing Church was thus exalted and fostered?

We have to look into the state of things and feelings in the now Christianized empire; and first, as to the change effected in the temporal position of Christians at this period. The cross, once so despised, was now everywhere had in honor; justice was done to the memory of the martyrs, and their righteousness was acknowledged in public edicts. The living confessors of Christ were restored from mines and dungeons, and brought in triumph to their homes. Instead of caves, vaults, and catacombs in which to worship God, there arose magnificent churches in all directions, and the services were celebrated with much pomp and outward solemnity. Instead of apostasies, which had not been infrequent under the late terror of persecution, candidates were now daily added to the throngs who crowded round the churches for baptism; and at the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide, these newly baptized neophytes, in their white vestments, appeared in groups round each Christian edifice. The professing Church Catholic began to be assembled in general councils under imperial sanction, at which representatives attended from every province and tongue in the great empire. The palace gates were open to the holy delegates. The Emperor bowed down before them in respectful deference, prepared to render to them both the watchful care of a father and the dutiful obedience of a son. On a medal struck at that era appeared a Phoenix, all radiant with the rising sunbeams, representing the empire as risen into new life and hope.

Such being the outward prosperity of the Christian Church, can we wonder at its general exultation, or at the high raised expectations then formed of Rome's future prospects, now that it had become a Christian nation? Nor was this expectation altogether unnatural. The remarkable tranquility which prevailed throughout the empire, immediately consequent upon Constantine's establishment of Christianity was recorded as the token of predicted latter-day blessedness. They thought they were become, as Israel of old, God's covenanted people – that both the present and future temporal blessings promised to Israel would attach to them; and, forgetting the warnings that Antichrist must first come, even some of the most eminent of the bishops spoke of these glories as about to be realized.

“What so many of the Lord's saints and confessors,” said Eusebius, “before our time desired to see, and saw not, and to hear, and heard not, that behold now before our eyes! It was of us the prophet spake when he told how the wilderness and the solitary place should be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the lily. Whereas the Church was widowed and desolate, her children have now to exclaim: Make room, enlarge thy borders, the place is too strait for us! The

promise is now fulfilling, in righteousness shalt thou be established; all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." So, too, with respect to other prophecies in his *Commentary on Isaiah*.

Such were the hopes of the professing Church. Can there be a greater contrast than existed between this prospect and that seen by the Apostle in the true perspective of future events? "I looked and saw four tempest-angels," or four destroying agents or powers, holding back the four winds indeed, but only for a time; and then ready at the word of command to let them go: this temporary restraint, it seemed, having soon to be withdrawn, and the Roman earth to be then desolated. But wherefore?

So the question arises as to the state of religion in this fourth century, and whether indications had already arisen of unfaithfulness to their Christian profession on the part of the newly converted proselytes from the Roman world to the *Christian Israel*.

I purposely so apply this term "*Israel*," because by it the Christian Church is evidently designated in the Revelation. To those who have observed what has been before noticed relative to the temple in the Apocalyptic vision, this name will not appear out of character. A high priest in Israelitish dress, an Israelitish altar, an Israelitish temple, will almost of necessity imply a correspondent Israel for the congregation. And as the former has been before shown to be symbolic of the Christian Church in the Apocalyptic scenery, so must the latter be explained, not of the literal Israel, but of the professing Christian Church. In the Church of Christ converted Gentiles were grafted into the flock of the believing Israel, and are so spoken of in several places in Scripture. For example, by St. Peter the temple, sacrifices, and priesthood are all spoken of figuratively as designative of the Church of Christ. "*Ye are an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices*;" and again, "*A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people*." So too St. Paul to the Gentile Christians of Galatia: "*If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*;" and again, "*As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God*."<sup>1</sup> In the Epistle to the Church in Philadelphia we read, "*Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God*;" and some of the false professors of the gospel at that place are described and reproved as they "*who say they are Jews, and are not*."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in that same address to a Gentile Church, it is intimated that such of them as shall overcome shall be citizens of the New Jerusalem; while at the close of this book it is distinctly implied that

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 6. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. 3.9, 12.

the “Holy City” shall only be for the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>1</sup> Further proofs to the same effect might be multiplied, but these will be deemed sufficient.

In accordance with these views, the British Church, in her Collect for Good Friday, uses the same language. After praying for Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, we are taught to say, “And so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved amongst the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ;” in other words, numbered amongst the 144,000.

We find that the angels were desired to “*hurt not the earth, etc., until these 144,000 servants of God should have been sealed in their foreheads.*” What division of Israel then was this, this 144,000 to be sealed out of all the tribes? It is clear there is a distinction here implied. The true translation from the Greek is not, “of the tribe of Simeon, of the tribe of Levi,” etc.; but “out of the tribe of Simeon,” etc. If then the twelve tribes signified the whole professing Church, what meant this sealing out of them? We must view it as pointing to the true spiritual body of Christ’s elect people, undistinguished by the world, but marked by the eye of the all-seeing God, however mixed up and involved they might apparently be in the world around them. Their interests and citizenship being in heaven, their affections are set on things above, in contradistinction to the worldly and the thoughtless, the lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, however these latter may be styled by a Christian name and enrolled in a Christian Church. And thus, “*Hurt not*” – until the servants of God are safe, intimated to the Apostle that all were not Israel who were called Israel, and that unfaithfulness was to be found in the body of men publicly recognized as the Church of believers.

And was that which was thus intimated to this servant of God in accordance with the actually existing state of things? We have seen that, after the overthrow of Paganism, the whole Roman Empire, with the emperor as head, became nominally Christian. No longer in any fear of persecution, men soon began to abuse the bounty of God. Hypocritical accessions to the faith were so numerous as to draw the notice of historians of the day; amongst others, of Eusebius, whom we found a short time before anticipating such glorious things for the Church. Arianism spread so fast that the saying, “Many are called, but few chosen,” was only too true, according to the concurrent testimonies of living witnesses. More and more distinct, from this time, became the two bodies of nominal and real Christians; and henceforward, through the whole of the Revelation, this distinction is more clearly marked.

And here let me call your attention to a species of indirect evidence of much value, of which we shall find several instances in this part of Scripture. This

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 21. 12.

principle has been termed *allusive contrast*. It may be thus illustrated. If, in the course of history, we read of any peculiar laws and penalties having been at any time enacted against certain specified crimes or habits, we feel at once that at that particular period there must have prevailed, to some extended degree, the habitual practice of the very evils which those laws were intended to correct. The description implies the corresponding opposite. So when Ezekiel spoke of the righteous man that "*hath restored to the debtor his pledge,*" and "*spoiled none by violence,*" etc.,<sup>1</sup> it implied, by *allusive contrast*, that injustice and oppression characterized Judah in those days, and that violence and fraud were special sins that then called for God's rebuke.

Let us bear this principle in mind as we advance in the history of the sealed and unsealed Israel. We cannot doubt its having been the Savior, the Angel of God, who gave the command, "*Hurt not ... till we have sealed the servants of God.*" There is a description by St. Paul of the seal of God. It is said to bear this motto, "*The Lord knoweth them that are his;*" and, "*Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*"<sup>2</sup> With this seal they were sealed in their foreheads, in token of their Lord's approval of their open and consistent course of holy walk. Illuminated by the Savior's influence and registered in his Book of Life, they were thus marked as for himself; and this sealing was given to them individually, as a preservative unto eternal salvation; and as a collective body, in token that a living succession of these sealed ones should be continued in all ages of the Church as the lights of the world and the witnesses for God.

The sealed ones are identified with the palm-bearing multitudes afterwards mentioned; and in this manner a glimpse is given in vision of their future blessedness. After coming out of a great tribulation, which was just then commencing, they are seen in perspective through the duration of time, in numbers numberless, with all their accumulated generations, safe arrived in the blessed presence of God. The palms they bore indicated their triumphant issue from the conflict; their white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb, were emblems of their justification through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. A welcome greeting sounded forth from the twenty-four representatives of the Church; and from the angels, a united song of thanksgiving and praise to the Lamb, the Author of their *redemption*. More on these hereafter.

We might here ask, and not without reason, Did not all the Church consider themselves as being of the number of the elect – of those whom the Holy Spirit sanctified? Else, why were they called Christians? But this general supposition, so often wanting support in fact, did it not in itself show that even at that early

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<sup>1</sup>Ezek. 18. 7.

<sup>2</sup>2 Tim. 2. 19.



time no small deception had been progressing? Must there not have been some Anti-christian principle which had taken root, and had led men to imagine that, without any real vitality, there might be a religion which would be equally efficacious; some ceremonial system, which, while less strict inwardly, would be outwardly more formal, and would equally serve to conduct them to the same termination?

Now let us see if, at that very period to which we have advanced, we can find an explanation of this distinction we have made, or rather, which was made by the angel, as before mentioned.

An esteemed writer of Church history says of the times immediately after Constantine had established Christianity, "There was much *outward* religion, but this could not make men saints in heart and life. The true doctrine of *justification by faith* was scarce to be seen, and that of *real conversion* very much lost, or *external baptism* placed in its stead."<sup>1</sup> Such is the testimony of many other able historians too numerous to be inserted here, but all telling the same story.<sup>2</sup> Our attention is particularly drawn by them to errors relative to baptism, which, partially in the third, but more eminently in the fourth century, became apparent, and may be considered as an essential development of the Anti-christian apostasy. So far as the outward *rite*, all was in due order. Members were regularly admitted into the congregation of the visible Church by the bishops and presbyters. And thus far it was well. But we do not read of these newly baptized looking in faith to *Jesus, as the souls Light and Life*, whereby alone to secure the spiritual blessings shadowed out in the sacrament. We read nothing of this. But we do read that exaggerated and unscriptural notions widely prevailed of the virtue attached to the outward rite, as of itself sufficient to secure these blessings, *i.e.*, when duly performed by the presbyter or priest, as it became the custom then to call him. Titles of honor had accumulated which led the way to these errors.

One writer tells us that "baptism was called the seal, the illumination, the preservative, the investiture from corruption, the salvation."<sup>3</sup> A bishop of that time says, "It was the ransom to captives, the remission of offenses, the death of sin, the regeneration of the soul, the garment of light, the holy seal indissoluble, the chariot to heaven, the luxury of paradise, the procuring of the kingdom, the gift of adoption."<sup>4</sup> Not only was a magical virtue attached to it for the washing away of sin, but all evil was supposed to be averted by it, as by a charm.

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<sup>1</sup>Milner.

<sup>2</sup>See writers cited in the *Horae Apocalypticæ*.

<sup>3</sup>See Bingham, xi. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Cyrl

New ceremonies too were added. It is said the candidate turned to the west, while the priest uttered words of exorcism, by which it was supposed he was delivered from the power of the Prince of darkness; then to the east, to receive with the immersion the illumination of the Spirit. He was then enrolled in the church register as one of the number of the Christian Israel. A crown was borne by him in token of his victory over sin and the world; a white dress put on to denote one washed from sin and robed for immortality: in this he was led up to the altar, and received with psalms, in foretaste of future hymning of the blessed. When first admitted as a candidate he was called "chosen," now was further added the title of "saint and faithful;" and so were called all who entered into the Church by baptism.

Another error likewise relative to baptism, which followed on those already named, was the practice of delaying the ceremony often till death was near. "This was done," says Neander, "that men might the longer give themselves to sin; and yet in the hour of death, being purified by the magical annihilation of their sins, might be received into eternal life." It was, in fact, what may be called "the extreme unction of that day." We cannot but regret that Constantine the Great fell himself into this error.

One of the most fatal mistakes which the Church at that period committed was "the holding reserve relative to God's written Word." It was made part of a religious system to observe a close reserve, except to the baptized, relative to one of the most important doctrinal truths, the propitiatory atonement of the Son of God, as the great object of justifying and saving faith.

Beyond all this, it had begun to be deemed allowable, for approved ends, to pervert Scripture. Silent and slow advance had been made towards this point, by permitting tradition to supersede the written Word. No wonder then that the only true source of light, life, and justification to the soul should have been forgotten. No wonder that there arose a superstitious exaltation of the ceremonial; that misapprehensions of the proper functions of the clergy prevailed; the communion table changed into an altar, the commemorative supper into something approaching to a sacrifice of the mass. So did Judaism mix itself up with heathenism, and, as we shall soon see, serve materially to help forward the Anti-Christian and apostatizing principle toward a full development; one indeed, the grand object of which was (and ever has it been followed out with admirable consistency by its designing originator, the master spirit of evil), that it should, within the Christian Church itself, while professedly exalting Christ and his institutions, practically set him aside out of its system, the priesthood, in one and all its offices, being substituted in his stead.

These were the great and growing evils which were marked out, in *allusive contrast*, by this significant action of the Apocalyptic angel. To these 144,000, and to these alone, were given the titles "called, and chosen, and faithful;" and these alone are said to have received God's seal on their foreheads, even the seal

of *baptism by the Holy Spirit*. The nominal Church took these titles in virtue of outward rites; the spiritual Church through the direct ministry and revelation of Jesus Christ, made to them by himself, and were enrolled by him in his own register: the Book of Life. Instead of an outward charm against evil, the Lord is himself their guard: "Hurt not the earth, till my servants are safe." Instead of white garments before men, they have the angel pointing them out as the blessed company who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and are received, but not until after a victorious conflict, with the triumphant emblem of palms in their hands, into the heavenly presence, amidst the hymning of angels and their own hosannas of praise to their Savior and God. Nor should we omit to notice that the professing Church, moreover, had its palm-bearing; a practice already become customary. On the Sunday preceding Easter, the congregations used to go forth with palms and with hosannas to give greetings to their bishops and presbyters, the authors of their supposed salvation; and not without similar anticipations of future happiness, to place their palms on the altar and hymn Alleluias.

We have noticed Constantine as amongst those who fell into the error of deferring baptism until the immediate prospect of death. It will be interesting, before we conclude, to hear the account of this great man's last hours. The history is given by Eusebius. On finding his health declining, Constantine gathered the bishops round him, and declared his wish to have the rite of baptism administered, as that whereby all the sins of his past life were to be cleansed and washed away. "This," said he to them, "is the time so long looked for by me, thirsting and praying that I might partake of the *salvation* of God. This is the time for my enjoying the *seal* that confers *immortality*. I had wished to have partaken of this washing in the Jordan, where the Savior was baptized as an example to us; but God, who knows what is best, has ordered that it should be here. Now then let there be no hesitation. If the Lord of life and death will that my life be prolonged, and it be once settled that I be *numbered* amongst His people, I promise I will lay down to myself a rule of life becoming." Then they, after the usual ritual, imparted to him the holy mysteries. "And thus Constantine, alone of Roman emperors, in the Church of the martyrdom of Jesus, *was regenerated and made perfect*; and, having the *divine seal* impressed upon him, he rejoiced in spirit, and was filled with heavenly light. Then, after the other ceremonies, he put on a dress of *white*, bright as the *light*; for he would no more touch the purple; and raising his voice, he thanked God, and spoke of his happiness as having been thought worthy of eternal *life*. Then having admitted some of the generals and captains of his troops, as they wept around him, and wished him years of prolonged life, he answered them that he had now been made partaker of that which was the *true life*; that none but himself could be aware of the blessings he had received; and that he was fain to depart, and not delay his passage to God! All this took place at the Whitsuntide festival; and on

Whitsunday itself, at the noontide hour of the day by the sun, Constantine was received up to his God.”

It is clear that the writer of the foregoing account had, as well as Constantine, imbibed in no small degree some of those pernicious errors. Eusebius was Bishop of Cesarea in A.D. 313. He was the intimate friend of Constantine, and wrote his life. He opposed the doctrines of Arius. He also wrote an *Ecclesiastical* or *Church History*, from which we often make extracts in these lectures.

## *Lecture VIII. The Palm Bearing Vision.*

### **The Final Salvation of the Elect.**

**Augustine – Fourth Century.**

*Rev 7:9-17 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; (10) And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. (11) And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, (12) Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. (13) And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? (14) And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (15) Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. (16) They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. (17) For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

**We have already in great measure** anticipated the main explanation of this vision; but there is one point not touched on, and which requires attention, namely the position which the true Church held on earth as to the Apostolic character of her ministry, symbolized by that which the Evangelist himself held during the visions which he saw. It may be well to mark very particularly this latter, since it will serve as an explanation to some difficulties: and in confirmation of the view being one recognized in Scripture, we need only refer to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, for similar examples.

These ancient prophets, we may observe, prophesied not merely by word, but by action. The acts that were required of them were meant to show on a larger scale what God proposed to do. They were, in other words, types; and in this way the prophets became typical or representative persons. Take for instance the passage in Isaiah: “Behold, I and the children that God hath given me

are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts.”<sup>1</sup> Again, the Lord had said to Isaiah, “Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years, for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians and Ethiopians captives, young and old, *naked* and *barefoot*,”<sup>2</sup> etc. When Jeremiah made yokes and wore them by the Lord's command, he is then desired to send them to the kings and peoples of Moab, Edom, Tyre, and Sidon, to cause them by this action to understand that they were to be brought under the yoke of the king of Babylon.<sup>3</sup> When Ezekiel, by God's command, had drawn on a tile a picture of the city of Jerusalem, he is told to build a fort, and set battering rams against it, etc.;<sup>4</sup> a sign of the approaching destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar's besieging army. Again, when he publicly prepared his stuff by day, and digged a hole, and carried it in the twilight, etc., he is told to say to Israel, “I am your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove and go into captivity.”<sup>5</sup>

Isaiah, like St. John, was rapt into vision, wherein we find him receiving a command, “Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy,” etc. On which he puts the question, “Lord, how long?” and receives for answer, “Until the cities be wasted without inhabitants,” etc.;<sup>6</sup> showing that the period of the vision extended to a time beyond the prophet's life. Again, in the vision of the dry bones we may see Ezekiel typifying to Israel the Gospel preachers of the latter day, his successors in the prophetic office.<sup>7</sup>

In the same way St. John is to be regarded as a representative individual during his visions, a figure of the true Apostolic ministry that was to be continued in the Church on earth, and those views that he received as representing the light to be given to the Church on various points and at different times, to the end of the present dispensation.

The view which was permitted to him in the present vision was that of an elect number, who, being sealed, were to go through tribulation; and being victorious, and having in their hands palm branches as symbols of their victory (a

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<sup>1</sup>Isa. 8. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. 20. 2 – 4.

<sup>3</sup>Jer. 27. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ezck. 4. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Ezck. 12. 11.

<sup>6</sup>Isa. 6. 11.

<sup>7</sup>Ezck. 36.

Judaic as well as a Roman symbol), were to arrive, in white garments washed in the blood of Christ, and in countless multitudes, at the throne of God. No change had taken place in the scenery round about. *There* was the Roman earth; here stood the four tempest angels holding the winds; and afterwards followed a series of events, all which tend to show that this vision of the palm bearers was, by anticipation, a *prospective* glimpse into *the future*, promised at this juncture to the faithful for their encouragement.

Let us examine, then, whether there was at this period any revelation made to the true Church, or to any of its principal ministers, of this doctrine of electing and saving grace. Does it appear that any one did observe the distinction between the professing and the real Church, and did mark it out so publicly as that it formed an era in Church history, and therefore a fit subject for prefiguration to St. John by the angel?

To Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in the year A.D. 395, is the Church acknowledged to be so much indebted, that the time of his ministry has ever been considered as furnishing a remarkable epoch in its history. He was born near Hippo, in North Africa, A.D. 354, during the reign of Constantius. He went to Rome, and thence to Milan, A.D. 383, 385. There he heard its bishop, Ambrose, preach; he was converted and baptized. In A.D. 388 he returned to Carthage, was ordained a presbyter, and in A.D. 395 Bishop of Hippo. His life was continued for nearly thirty-five years after, till the time when the Vandal irruption into Africa took place.

His views of divine truth were peculiarly full on two points, the same that we have considered, as being the two most strongly marked in the visions just before us: 1<sup>st</sup>, that of Christ's true Church being composed of spiritual believers alone; and 2<sup>nd</sup>, that of the origin and increase of this *true* Church being the work of God's *sovereign grace*; of grace electing, preventing, quickening, illuminating, adopting, saving; saving alike from sin's dominion and from all other real evils of this life, an everlasting salvation. Doubtless the manner in which he was himself called into this true Church led him to feel its value, and prepared him zealously to advocate this truth. Born of a Christian mother, and at one time anxious as a youth to be baptized, his wish was not complied with; the danger of sin after baptism, according to the error of the day, constituted an objection in the minds of his parents; so he grew up not even in profession a Christian.

In his Confessions he tells us how he was led into vice and error, error of a nature to lead him still further into vice, as it led him to disbelieve the holiness of God and the responsibility of man. It was in this state of heathenism, sensuality, hardness of heart, and philosophic pride and darkness that he visited Milan, heard the truth, and was converted. Thus previous to his baptism he experienced the truth of God's *free, sovereign, and converting grace*; and we find him soon afterwards preaching zealously and writing on this very subject, as well as on the spirituality of the true Church; and yet again on the doctrine of the final

perseverance of the saints, which was soon added to his other views of divine truth.

A few years later he opposed the Pelagian error, which had arisen in the Church, asserting man's free will; and by his direction councils were induced solemnly to condemn the heresy, and at the same time to recognize the doctrine of grace. Further, on occasion of the capture of Rome by Alaric, A.D. 410, Christianity having been reproached by the heathens as the cause of the calamity, and the Christians being in bitterness and disappointment at their hopes of speedily coming blessedness being frustrated, he wrote his great work called the *City of God*.<sup>1</sup> It was his plan in it to draw a line between *the professedly baptized* and *the truly baptized* Church – the *kingdom of this world* and the *kingdom or city of God*. He sought to distinguish the elect: their character, that of love to God, as distinct from the love of self and the world; their privilege, that of being enlightened, quickened, sanctified, and saved even to the end, by the same divine grace; their state in this world, that of strangers and aliens, with tribulation and warfare here appointed them, but with the assurance of future glory. In short, it was the very tracing out historically the past and prophetically the future fortunes of the 144,000 of the Revelation, as distinct from those of the unsealed Israel. Indeed, he speaks of the citizens of this heavenly city as “God's twelve tribes of election out of Israel's professing tribes.” He notes the number as definite, yet large in the aggregate, as a number numberless. He speaks of their being gathered out of all nations and kindreds and tribes; also of the Church's tribulation and Antichrist's persecution as by no means so short as many expected it to be. He writes too of the alone cleansing blood of Jesus as washing them from sin, and of the final victory and triumph of these redeemed in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Such were the views put forth by Augustine on the subject of divine grace; views obtained, he says, from the Apostolic Scriptures, and under the immediate teaching of the Holy Ghost. As regards the doctrines of the election of grace and the final perseverance of the saints, it is evident that not only the sealing and vision, but also the prospective palm-bearing vision was needed; and both were revealed at corresponding epochs in the history of the Church as a prophecy to the representative of the earthly Church, St. John, and as the fulfillment of such prophecy to Augustine – to the one, previous to the great tempest blasts let loose by the four angels; to the other, previous to the irruption of the barbarian nations over the Roman world.

Augustine's views relative to baptism are interesting, and were well calculated to serve as an antidote to the errors of his day. He distinguished carefully

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<sup>1</sup>Author: I do not wish to be understood as asserting that on all points Augustine's views are free from error; we find some of his writings bordering on superstition.



between baptismal regeneration, and the regeneration or conversion of the heart, to which last change personal faith in Christ was deemed by him essential. He was convinced, from observing those around him, that men did not obtain spiritual life by the washing of water, and he felt from his own experience, as well as from the Scripture account of the Ethiopian eunuch and others, that spiritual life may be begun before baptism. Yet he entertained a high opinion of the benefits often conferred in baptism by the Divine Spirit, *i.e.*, if rightly performed, and followed by faith in the person receiving it. It was thus that his doctrine of electing and preserving grace obtained a general sanction in the Church; Rome itself at one time assenting, and reckoning Augustine amongst its saints. But the contrariety of Augustine's doctrine to that system of ecclesiastical salvation begun by the priest in baptism, and carried on simply by virtue of Church ceremonies and ordinances, was too decided to remain unfelt; and Rome soon eschewed its former direct approval, and substituted a kind of mongrel system of ecclesiastical semi-Pelagianism in its room.

And so, after the barbarian irruption, a twofold stream of doctrine was perpetuated in the visible Church through the centuries following – the one, the ritualistic ecclesiastical doctrine of religion, maintaining that *Church* ceremonies are in themselves meritorious; the other, the Augustinian spiritual doctrine of saving grace. Thenceforth also a corresponding twofold view prevailed respecting the Church of Christ – one party regarding it as the earthly visible Church under a vice-Christian priesthood; the other, as being the little flock, simply and alone, who are united by living faith to Christ, the living Head.

The Augustinian light, which then shone, continued to glimmer on through the dark ages down to the Reformation. Indeed we may trace Rome's opposition to it and God's blessing on it to this present day even in the English Church. Its 17<sup>th</sup> Article is an epitome of much that we have gone over in the last two lectures in point of doctrine. Speaking of the elect, it says: "They which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God (predestination to life), be called according to God's purpose, by his Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling, they be justified freely, they be made sons of God by adoption, they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity." In the prayer used in our burial service there is likewise a reference to these called ones, where we are taught to pray that God would "speedily accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom."

Milner in his *Church History* gives a testimony to Augustine's usefulness very similar to that already adduced. He says, "It is evident that real Christianity, notwithstanding its nominal increase under the emperors, must soon have been extinct, if God had not interposed with a second great effusion of his Spirit. This involves the private life of Augustine. The effects of this effusion were solid, though never brilliant. The light from Augustine's writings never broke out into

a vivid flame, but shone with a moderate brightness at first, and afterwards through many ages, even down to the Reformation.”

Why Rome ever tolerated or titled Augustine has excited surprise. It may have been because he was an opposer of the Pelagian doctrine of free-will, an error in its essence opposed to the Romish system of chaining down man's mind and conscience. Our Article 10, On Free-will puts the doctrine in a Scriptural point of view: “We have no power of ourselves to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.”

It has been said by some that there are passages in the writings of Augustine which would seem to favor the errors of the times in which he lived, and since we have mentioned him in a manner so commendatory, it is but right to admit the fact. He seems to have been in some respects tinctured with the superstitions with which the age was infected. For he credulously believed in miracles being performed by relics of saints, etc. His humility and charity disposed him to be credulous. However, he distinctly disavowed any belief in the omniscience of departed saints, or that they were able to afford any aid, temporal or spiritual; and he as distinctly avowed that whosoever directed men to any other “mediator than Christ must be esteemed an Antichrist.”

## *Lecture IX. The Seventh Seal.*

### **The Incense Vision – Saint Worship Begun.**

**A.D. 324 – 395,**

*Rev. 8:1-5 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. (2) And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. (3) And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. (4) And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. (5) And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

**In this lecture upon the sealing** vision we had to notice the intimation given to St. John of apostasy and unfaithfulness, begun and carried forward to a large extent in the professing Christian Church from the time that Christianity became the national religion of the Roman Empire.

But could such falling away occur and judgment from God not follow? And whence did such judgment arise, as we might justly anticipate?

There stood the four tempest-angels, prepared to execute the order and let loose the blasts. In other words, there stood waiting on the frontiers the barbarian hordes, ready to execute the work of desolation on the Roman Empire. There was silence in heaven. No trumpet blast had sounded. All was serene, tranquil, and silent. It was the stillness before the storm; and while such stillness lasted what vision came before the eyes of the Evangelist? "Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer."

There are three points here to be specially noted in the passage:

*First, the angel-priest* ministering. Whom can we suppose to be here intended but the Lord *Jesus*? For he is "*the great High Priest* over the house of God passed into the heavens."<sup>1</sup> In that character he appeared in the opening of the first chapter. None but the high priest in the Jewish temple used a golden censer; the common priests used one of silver. This angel, who goes into the

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<sup>1</sup>The vision in Ezekiel ix. is strikingly like the sealing vision, and the concluding part similar to this under consideration. It is the same person who marks the foreheads that afterwards, habited like a priest, scatters the altar fire over the ungodly Jerusalem.

holy place and afterwards scatters altar-fire over the apostatizing land of Roman Christendom, must be the same as the sealing angel whom we saw to be Christ Jesus, but now in his priestly and mediatorial character about to present as an offering the prayers of his people.

*Secondly*, we must note the position of the Angel. He stood at the altar, and much incense was given him. The Jewish law was, that the high priest should stand, receive the incense from the worshipers, and then, taking coals from the altar on his censer, should carry the coals and incense together into the sanctuary; and after laying the latter on the golden altar before the veil, burn it with the sacred fire. Any other than this was called strange fire; for using which Nadab and Abihu, though sons of Aaron, were instantly struck dead by God. And why such particularity? It was that a deep mystery was shadowed forth in this Mosaic ordinance, that the prayers and praises of God's people, unless purified by and associated with the meritorious atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God, could never rise up acceptably before the mercy seat of Jehovah. In the symbolic vision before us, the Angel's standing by the altar and receiving and offering up the incense shows that such association here too was necessary. Association with Christ in his twofold character, both as sacrifice and as priest, is figured out, even as the true Christian's privilege is stated: "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (i.e., an intercessory priest), and he is the propitiatory (or sacrifice) for our sins."<sup>1</sup>

*Thirdly*, who were and who were not, those that gave him incense offering? They were "the saints," i.e., the 144,000 – the sealed ones. The prayers of "all these," we read – and mark well, of these alone rose up. Here comes in the force of allusive contrast. No other offerers came, no other prayers rose up. So it is expressly noted, for we read of wrath soon after being poured out on the earth, i.e., on the inhabitants of it, showing that they were not present at this service in the altar-court.

Had then the members of the professing Church indeed forsaken the altar-court? Had they indeed renounced the privilege of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice and his mediatorship? Such seemed truly the meaning of the symbol. It appeared as if some renunciation of this privilege would about this period of time become apparent, not only in private but in public worship, and that the saints would be distinguished from the professing Church by their adherence to Christ's mediation and propitiatory atoning sacrifice for acceptance with God. This first step in apostasy was about this time taken by the visible Church.

If we consult history, we shall see how the invocation of saints and martyrs and new means of propitiating God had just then come into fashion among the inhabitants of the Roman world, and that while professing to be Christians, they

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<sup>1</sup> 1 John 2. 1 - 2.

were rapidly falling back into Christ renouncing idolatry. This was, in fact, the second step into Antichristian apostasy, and the more to be marked as here the invisible world was called in to strengthen the delusion. A recent writer<sup>1</sup> of Church history describes well the then state of things. Speaking of the horror with which the early Christians viewed idolatry, he says: "So definite and broad was the space which in this point separated between Christianity and Paganism, that it seemed impossible that a compromise should be effected between principles so hostile. Yet the contrary result took place. A reconciliation, which in the beginning of the fourth century could not easily have been imagined, was virtually accomplished *before its termination*. Those who had sealed a Christian's faith by a martyr's death were exalted above men and enthroned among celestial beings. Superstition gave birth to credulity. Those who sat among the powers of heaven might (it was thought) sustain by miraculous assistance their votaries upon earth, hence the stupid veneration of bones and relics. People were taught that prayer was never so surely efficacious as when offered at the tomb of some saint."

Gibbon gives a sketch of the state of public worship then prevailing. "If in the beginning of the fifth century some of the primitive fathers<sup>2</sup> had been suddenly raised from the dead to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle which had succeeded the pure and spiritual worship of the Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the Church were thrown open, they would have been offended by the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused at noonday a gaudy, superfluous, and in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd . . . (whose) devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice; and their fervent prayers were directed (whatever might be the language of their Church) to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saints, which were usually concealed by a linen or silken veil from the eyes of the vulgar. They frequented the tombs of the martyrs in hope of obtaining from their powerful intercession every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal blessings. (Were their wishes fulfilled), they again hastened to the martyrs' tombs to celebrate with grateful thanksgivings their obligations to the memory and relics of those heavenly patrons. The walls were hung round with symbols of the favors which they had received – eyes and hands and feet of gold and silver, and edifying pictures

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<sup>1</sup>Dean Waddington.

<sup>2</sup>Gibbon specially names Tertulian and Lactantius: the former as having declared even trading in incense wrong, because it was burnt on heathen altars, v. 134

which could not long escape the abuse of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, represented the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelar saint." Such is Gibbon's account of the state of public worship at this epoch, A.D. 395: this being the very time we are now arrived at in symbolic history, when the angels were about to let go the wind, and the time also in Roman history of the commencement of the Gothic irruptions after the death of the Emperor Theodosius.

Let it not be supposed that it was only the young, the weak and the ignorant who thus ran into folly and superstition. The highest of their bishops and doctors led the way, and the multitude followed. Pagans, of whom a few were left, as well as heretics, ridiculed the heathenish character of the new worship. In the year 396, Eunapius the Pagan, exclaims, "These are the gods the earth now-a-days brings forth; these the intercessors with the gods – men called martyrs, before whose bones and skulls, pickled and salted, the monks kneel and lay prostrate, covered with filth and dust." The Manichean heretic, Faustus, A.D. 400, says, "You have but exchanged the old idols for martyrs, and offer to the latter the same prayers as once to the former." The monk Jerome did truly step forth to repel such charges. He disclaimed idolatry, but he admitted and maintained that the dead saints were omnipresent, had influence with God, could hear and answer prayer, and even work miracles in behalf of the suppliant, as also punish neglect and torture demons. He spoke of them as intercessors and mediators and ministers between God and man. Thus was Christ set aside; for how could these saints act as successful mediators, except as having a stock of merit of their own sufficient to propitiate God? How is Jesus Christ a prevailing Advocate with the Father, except as being "Christ the righteous," who hath made atonement for our sins?<sup>1</sup>

But to the merits of departed saints, as we have seen, were added the merits of the living Church; gifts and alms-deeds were offered at the saints' tombs. So was the true offering of incense at God's altar forsaken. In the language of the prophet, "They had forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, and hewn to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water,"<sup>2</sup> committing thus two evils. And the sad apostasy went forward. For whether it be the sacraments, or the Church forms, or tradition, or the dead saints, or the living priests; whatever it be that interposes and hinders the direct personal communion of each sinner's soul with Christ as its Mediator, atonement, righteousness, and Savior, it is altogether contrary to the written Word of God, taken in its simple un-perverted sense. Had the early Church but kept fast to this written Word for its guide and rule, nothing could have misled it.

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<sup>1</sup>1 John 2. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Jer. 2. 13.

How innocent, nay more, how even amiable, were the first steps that led to martyr worship! "What more natural than that the remains of those who suffered for Christ's sake should be carefully preserved, and their birthday into eternal glory annually remembered! What more natural than on these days to have a service at their tomb! Are they present? Do they hear us and see us? How natural to speak to them, and ask their prayer! Here began the danger of interfering with the mediatorship of Jesus. Had not the word of prophecy spoken of the worship of demons or deified dead men as being one mark of the apostasy?<sup>1</sup> As it was, the warning note was neglected. One Council, indeed, forbade the worship of angels, but dead saints were not to be considered as such. In this distinction appeared the deceit of Satan, the bold and crafty author of all this mischief. The angels could not be connected with a particular spot or edifice on earth: the dead saints were more readily associated with the priestly functionaries of the church built over the place where their bodies were entombed. Who so effectual a helper to the saints' favor as the priest that watched the saints' relics? Hence it arose that the priest also in the eyes of the populace became a mediator, and a dispenser of the favor and wrath of Heaven. He was regarded with superstitious awe as holy and elect, and as having connection with the invisible world – a regard tending surely to increase pride and vanity amongst the clergy. Thus saint worship, like the former error of baptism, became abiding. The great step in Antichristian apostasy was taken. The infidel Gibbon and the Christian writer and bishop, Van Mildert, speak alike "of heathenism as revived in the empire." To use the words of Coleridge, "The pastors of the Church had gradually changed the life and light of the Gospel into the very superstitions they were commissioned to disperse, and thus *paganized Christianity* in order to *Christen paganism*." Well might the Apocalyptic prophecy speak of these heathenized Christians as of the rest of the world, under the title "the inhabitants of the earth."

But were there no true worshipers left? None who acknowledged and held close to their High Priest and Intercessor, Jesus Christ? Far from it. "There was given to the angel much incense, that he should offer it, with the prayers of all the saints, upon the golden altar before the throne." And the names of some of the number remain on record. "Whom shall I look to as my mediator," said Augustine; "shall I go to angels? Many have tried it, and deserve to be the sport of the illusions they loved. A mediator between God and man must have the nature of both. The true Mediator, whom in thy secret mercy thou hast shown to the humble, the man Jesus Christ, hath appeared a Mediator between mortal sinners and the immortal Holy One; that by his divine righteousness He might justify the ungodly. He was shown to ancient saints that they might be saved by faith in his future sufferings, and we by faith in the same sufferings already past.

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 9. 20.

How hast thou loved us, O Father, delivering up thy Son for us, for whom he our Priest and Sacrifice, was subjected to death! Well may my hope be strong in such an Intercessor.” Nor was Augustine singular. We may hope those members of the Laodicean Council, of which we before spoke, were influenced by love to Christ in forbidding angel worship. Mention is made of Jovinian and Vigilantius, the latter called “the Protestant of his age,” who, even more prominently than Augustine, protested against the prevailing errors. They were cast out as heretics by their fellowmen, but can we doubt their acceptance with their Lord? “Their prayers ascended with the incense smoke out of the angel's hand unto God.”

And for the earthly ones in Roman Christendom, what of them? “The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire, and cast it (the fire) upon the earth.” The signal was given. “And there were thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake. And the seven angels prepared themselves to sound.”



## ***Lecture X. The First Four Trumpets.***

### **Irruption of the Goths, Etc.**

**A.D. 395 – 565.**

*Rev. 8:6-12 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. (7) The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. (8) And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; (9) And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. (10) And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; (11) And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. (12) And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

**The Trumpet was of God's own** appointment to Israel, to be used in the tabernacle or temple by the priests that “stood before God.”<sup>1</sup> Its purpose was twofold. 1<sup>st</sup>, As regarded the, Israelites, its use was to proclaim the advance of time – the Sabbaths and other festivals, to summon the congregations for prayer and praise, and to direct the movements of the camp in their pilgrimage. 2<sup>nd</sup>, As regarded their enemies, to proclaim war, as from God himself, in token that the Lord was about to fight for Israel.

Similar to these would seem to be the objects indicated by these symbolic trumpet soundings in the Revelation. As one after another uttered its solemn and far echoing clang, his own Israel, the true Church, might look upon the sign as one would note the striking of the dial, to mark each epoch of progress toward the consummation. So, also, to the opponents of the truth, each successive blast was a denunciation of war and troubles about to come upon them. An interesting analogy might still further be observed between the mode of these Apocalyptic soundings and the trumpet blasts at the fall of Jericho, commemorated up to the

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<sup>1</sup>Num. 10. 1 – 10.

Apostles time for the annual feast of tabernacles, when a palm-bearing procession, with trumpets blowing and chanting hosannas, were wont to visit the temple. Thus might the saints of God, even amid those forebodings of woe to the earth, direct their hearts in bright anticipation to their final victory over every enemy, when the glorious anti-typical feast shall be celebrated in the kingdom of Christ.

The first four trumpet visions, like those of the first four seals, are connected together by certain features of resemblance. They depict a series of tempests about to affect in succession the third part of the Roman earth, of the sea, of the rivers, and of the heavenly luminaries; each having sufficiently distinctive characteristics to fix the application of the symbol to the precise epoch of historical events.

For the explanation of the peculiar tripartite division of the Roman world here intended we are necessarily confined to that which will suit its application, not to one, but to all these four visions, in which the same, or corresponding third part is evidently designated.

And thus we are directed to that trisection of the empire which occurred just before the establishment of Christianity, when the entire provinces were apportioned between the three emperors, Constantine, Licinius, and Maximin. To Constantine there attached Gaul, Spain, Britain, Italy, and Africa; to Licinius, the vast Illyrian Praefecture, which embraced the rest of Roman Europe; to Maximin, the Asiatic provinces and Egypt. This division continued geographically and historically recognized even after the well known bi-partition of the empire into Eastern and Western, the intermediate third province of Illyricum being subject to frequent alterations, sometimes belonging to the Eastern and again to the Western Empire, until, after the death of Theodosius, it became so detached, by Gothic occupation, from the rule of both Eastern and Western Empire as to require that it be henceforth treated of in distinct and separate history.

It will tend much to our comparison of the prophecy with the history if we endeavor to place ourselves in the situation of the John the Evangelist, and trace, as we may believe he was enabled to do, these successive visions as locally affecting each its assigned portion of the Roman world. The living, though miniature, landscape was stretched before him, with its triple divisions and boundaries, each portion including *its third* of the Mediterranean or Roman Sea, as well as *its third* of the land, and each one also its own characteristic stream of *the three* great frontier rivers, the Rhine, Danube, and Euphrates. It is *the Western third* to which the first four trumpet visions alike refer.

Observe the vision. The Angel-Priest has come forth from offering the incense of the faithful. He goes again to the great altar and refills his censer with the burning embers, not to bless, but now to destroy. He casts them upon the professing but apostate world below, devoting the land to a curse. Heaven and earth, animate and inanimate creation, feel the shock, from the cloud of glory

issue thunderings and lightnings. The four angels have loosed their hold of the winds, and the tempests burst forth. The Roman earth quakes through its vast extent, and everywhere, from suffering or fear, mens faces gather blackness. And now the angel sounds...

The First Trumpet, coming from the bitter north, from the countries beyond the Danube, a tremendous tempest, charged with lightning and hail, appears driving westward. Its course is over the continental provinces of the Western Roman Empire. It touches the Rhaetian Alps hill country, and sweeps over the Italian frontier. Other terrific thunder clouds from the north west intermingle with it; and once and again passing the Alps and the Apennines, spread in devastating fury over Italy. Dividing, a part bursts over the imperial city, and passes to the southernmost coast of Bruttium. Another part, driven backward, takes a westerly course over the Rhine into Gaul, causing devastation far and wide; then, crossing the Pyrenees, pours its fury on the Spanish provinces, nor spends itself till it has reached the far shores of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Throughout the whole the lightning-fire runs along the ground, as of old in the plagues of Egypt, burning up country and town, trees and pasture. Moreover, "blood mingles with the hail; life is destroyed. The third part of the land is desolated. A short pause ensues; then presently...

The Second Trumpet sounds; another trumpet-blast of judgment. Now is the visitation of the western third of the Mediterranean Sea, including its islands and the marine province beyond. A giant mountain-rock, blazing like Etna with volcanic fires, is up-heaved from the southernmost point of Spain and cast into the sea. The waters are agitated by it. The burning ashes are scattered, for hundreds of miles round, on sea and mainland, coasts and islands; first on the shores of Africa, then opposite from Gibraltar Straits along to the head of the Adriatic. Ships are on fire in harbor and at sea, and blood, as before, marks the loss of life. Over the whole maritime scene of its ravages all that is habitable is destroyed. "The third part of the sea becomes blood," etc.

Third Trumpet. The volcano is not yet fully spent when another angel sounds. Just where the Theiss, pouring itself into the Danube, marks the center of the Illyrian boundary, a portentous meteor, like a blazing torch trailing its red line of light behind it in the northern skies, descends, and taints the rivers in its downward course. Tracking the line of the Upper Danube and the Rhine, it poisons the waters even to the Belgic lowlands. Thence it shoots westwards; but, repelled by some counter force, it turns south, and falls on the fountains of the European waters, even on the Alpine glaciers. Rivers and streams are "made bitter," and the dying and dead lie along their banks. "The name of that star is Wormwood..." So, having done its part, it shoots back toward the Danube, there blazes for a moment, and is extinct.

Fourth Trumpet. Hitherto, while land, sea, rivers, and fountains had been in vision desolated, yet had the *sun* continued to shine on the Western Empire.

Now this too is affected. One *third* of its orb is eclipsed, and the darkness of night supervenes; then the *moon* and the *stars* of the symbolic firmament, all that are in *that third* of the Roman sky, are darkened also.

Such, we may imagine, was the manner in which these successive visions passed before the John. Nor need we doubt the natural interpretation he would attach to them. Surely he would consider them as prefiguring the ravages of some terrible invaders from Northern Germany, which should desolate the Western Empire successively in its continental and maritime provinces, followed speedily by a fresh scourge on the Illyrian Praefecture, thence ravaging the countries of the Rhine and of its Alpine source, and, finally, symbolizing the extinction of the imperial dynasty of the West, and even of its inferior governments. In such manner, we believe, must St. John have interpreted these prophetical pictures. It remains for us to see the historical fulfillment of them.

And here, while expositors have with somewhat general consent designated the great Gothic destroyers of the empire, *Alaric* and *Rhadagaisus*, as well as *Geneseric*, *Attila*, and *Odoacer*, as having in a remarkable degree answered to the prefigurations in these trumpet-visions, it is worthwhile tracing farther back the agreement with the prophecy of the events preceding their irruptions.

We have already remarked on the "*silence in heaven*," the stillness which supervened on the death of *Theodosius*, A.D. 395. It was but of short duration. "Before the winter had ended," says Gibbon, "the Gothic nation was in arms." In 396 the fearful tempest bursts upon Thessaly and the Grecian provinces. The march of Alaric and his hosts was traced in blood. The land seemed to tremble. Nay, strange convulsions of nature gave literal portents of evil to come, uniting their voices with the voices of men<sup>1</sup> in sounding a solemn alarm.

Then was a pause, while "the angels prepared to sound." Then was Alaric preparing himself for his task. Through the infatuation of the Emperor Arcadius he had been made master general of Eastern Illyricum, and thus was furnished by the Romans themselves with arms for their own destruction. There, seated in authority, between the two empires, four years he meditated, like an eagle of prey, on which half of the devoted carcass he should fall, until his preparation was complete in his formal exaltation as *king of the Visigoths*.

And then the *First Trumpet* sounded. His course was to Italy. As he said himself, "He felt a secret impulse that impelled him to the gates of Rome." Thrice did he descend from the Alps, marking each step of his course with conflagration and blood, till the city was opened to the conqueror, and the Gothic fires blazed around the Capitol. Meanwhile, Rhadagaisus, with 300,000 Vandals from the Baltic, broke "like a dark thunder cloud," as Gibbon writes it, on the

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<sup>1</sup>As Ambrose, Jerome, etc.

Italian valleys. Repulsed, it was only to bend the coarse of the vast remnant westward upon the fertile provinces of Gaul and Spain. Fire and blood here again marked their course; trees and herbage, as well as cities, were burned up. "Over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul the scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man."<sup>1</sup> A similar description is given of the desolation of Spain. This passage of the Rhine by barbarians, "who never afterwards retreated," may be considered as the *fall of the Roman Empire* in the countries beyond the Alps.<sup>2</sup>

This era of the first trumpet extended from about A.D. 400 to A.D. 410, or somewhat longer. *Alaric* was arrested suddenly by death while meditating further conquests, reserved however for another band and another trumpet.

To the Vandal, Genseric, it appertained to follow up the scourge by smiting the *maritime provinces of Africa* and *the islands* which *Alaric* had left untouched. Scarcely had Italy begun to recover in part from its ravages, and while Gaul and Spain continued to be rent by the quarrels of the conquerors, Africa was made to feel that its time was come. In the year 429 the *Second Trumpet* had sounded. Genseric had transported his force across the Afric sea, and like the noted volcano of that very age, entered on his rapid work of destruction. Hippo fell before him and was burnt; then Carthage. Resistance was at an end. The fire did indeed "mingle with blood," till all that province was Vandalized. Then did Genseric cast his eyes on the sea. He created a naval power and claimed the empire of the Mediterranean. Sicily and Sardinia, all that was in the third part of the sea, sweeping from Gibraltar to the Adriatic, with their adjoining coasts, were mercilessly ravaged. When asked by his pilot what course to steer, "Leave the determination to the winds," was his reply; "they will transport us to the guilty coast whose inhabitants have provoked the divine justice." Twice, on memorable occasions, the Roman navies were gathered to oppose the Vandal's progress, but in vain. Fire-ships were driven among them, and the prediction was fulfilled, "the third part of the ships was destroyed."

This Second Trumpet era reached till A.D. 477, when this sea tyrant died. Before that period, however, another plague had been commissioned against the devoted empire in Attila the Hun – "the scourge of God." Alone of conquerors, ancient or modern, he united under his sway the two mighty kingdoms of Germany and Scythia. The superstition of the times regarded him as more than mortal, and their chroniclers tell how a *blazing meteor* in the heavens, with other *fiery northern lights*, boded ruin and war when Attila entered upon his conquests.

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, v. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 224, 352.

Having made himself lord of the Lower Danube about A.D. 450, he crossed the Rhine and traced this great frontier river of the west down to Belgium, massacring its inhabitants and wasting its valleys; until, having burnt its principal cities, and left behind him a scene of desolation and woe, he was arrested in his course and repulsed in the tremendous battle of Chalons. Thence turning upon a new scene of predicted ravage, he fell upon “the European *fountains of waters*” – the Alpine heights and Alpine valleys. “From the Alps to the Apennines all was flight, depopulation, slaughter, slavery, and despair.”<sup>1</sup> Men fled into the sea for refuge, and then it was that Venice was built out of the deep – a standing memorial of Attila the Hun. And now that all Italy lay exposed before him, we might well ask what hindered that he should not have advanced in his career of slaughter? But his prescribed work was ended. The *third of the rivers and fountains of waters* had been made bitter by his means. An embassy from the Emperor Valentinian and the Roman Bishop Leo sufficed to deprecate his wrath. He suddenly withdrew from Italy, recrossed the Danube, and the very next year, A.D. 453, was cut off by apoplexy. The meteor was extinct. The power of the Huns was broken; the woe of the Third Trumpet had passed away.

Little now pertained to Rome's empire but an empty title. Its glory had long departed; its provinces had been rent away; its power by sea annihilated; its country had become desert. The time was now come when Rome's imperial title was itself to come to an end. Odoacer, chief of the Heruli, a barbarian host left by Attila on the frontiers of Italy, gave command that the *name and office of Roman Emperor of the West* should be abolished. The command was obeyed. *Romulus Augustulus* abdicated. The insignia of authority were sent by the senate to Constantinople, with a profession that one emperor was sufficient for the whole of the empire. Thus the western third of the imperial sun was darkened – to shine no more. Still a shadow of authority remained at Rome. The senate assembled and consuls were appointed yearly, Odoacer himself being named governor. Thus the inferior lights, the moon and stars, for a while appeared not wholly extinguished. Before fifty years more had elapsed, these also were to pass away. Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, destroying the kingdom of the Heruli, ruled in his own name till A.D. 526; then, on the reconquest of Italy by Belisarius, the Roman senate was dissolved and the consulship abrogated. In the prophetic words of Jerome about a century before, “The world's glorious sun has been extinguished,” or, as our modern poet has, in like Apocalyptic imagery, expressed it – “She saw her glories *star by star* expire;”<sup>2</sup> till not one star remained to glimmer on the vacant and dark night.

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<sup>1</sup> Sigonius.

<sup>2</sup> *Childe Harold*, canto iv.

So the *Fourth Trumpet* sound died away.

Meanwhile, amidst all these troubles, the elect and sealed of God were preserved. Searching and trying indeed must those times have been to them, and not from the secular afflictions alone of the world around them, but yet more, be sure, from the advancing apostasy in the professing Church. By many even of the most eminent of the teachers and rulers of the Church superstitious practices were encouraged, and their influence and talents zealously and most lamentably exercised for the upholding of grievous errors. Sulpicius, Paulinus, Jerome, Martin of Tours, contributed each his aid in so helping forward the apostasy at the end of the fourth century, and others still succeeded in the fifth. But the influence also of Augustine continued. He had himself died in peace the very year Hippo was burnt, and then been numbered with the Church above. But his doctrine, his holy doctrine, died not.

## *Lecture XI. Forewarning of Coming Woe.*

A.D. 565 – 612.

*Rev. 8:13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*

**This vision, coming between those** of the *fourth* trumpet and the *fifth*, corresponds with that period of time in history between the extinction of the old government at Rome and the rise of Mahomet – from the Emperor Justinian's death, when the Lombards settled in Italy, to the beginning of the seventh century, the usually admitted period of transition from ancient to modern history.

From the angel flying through mid-heaven we may infer that his message of warning was one that might be recognized by all who observed the signs of the times, and in the Church of Christendom doubtless there were those who at this crisis were not insensible to the forebodings of evil. From the time of St. Paul through the different centuries following, we find in the writings of the Greek and Latin fathers that the expectation of the Church was, that with the fall of the Roman Empire the coming of Antichrist in power might be looked for. Jerome, about the time when Alaric took Rome, wrote again and again, "The Roman world rushes to destruction and we bend not our neck in humiliation, the hindrance in Antichrist's way is removing and we heed it not." Many were the writers, in different centuries who had sent forth from their retirement, some from their monasteries, their note of warning. Well might they regard that as being Rome's downfall, when the name of Roman emperor had been extinguished in the west by Odoacer, and then, that of consul and of senate by Justinian's generals in A.D. 550. From Rome prostrate the solemn voice seemed to rise and echo through the world, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the judgments now pending."

There was in the chronology of this particular time also that which favored the idea that the consummation of all things approached, it having been universally believed, both amongst the Jews and the Christian fathers, that the present world was designed to last but 6000 years, at the end of which the expected Millennium was to commence. But according to the Septuagint, the errant reckoning of which was generally received by the Romans, these 6000 years were at this period nearly completed.

There was also something in the outward aspect of affairs that omened ill. All the empire seemed affected. The newly founded Gothic kingdoms were still



in commotion in the West. Another barbarous horde, the Lombards, had seized on many parts of Italy. The Avar Tartars had settled themselves in Hungary. War from Persia likewise threatened the Eastern third. Nor were they the terrors of man's wrath only that tended to alarm. Pestilence during fifty-two years infected the greater part of the empire, by which many cities were depopulated and made desert. At Constantinople 5000, and at length 10,000, died daily. At Rome, in a solemn procession for imploring the mercy of Heaven, no less than eighty persons in a single hour dropped dead from the infection of the pestilence.

The greatest man of that age, the then Pope of Rome, Gregory the Great, gave out a warning cry of what he too thought to be portended by the state of the times. His forebodings are on record. "We know from the Word of Almighty God that the end of the world is at hand, and the reign of the saints which shall have no end. In the approach of which consummation, all nature must be expected to be disordered, seasons deranged, wars raging, and famines, earthquakes, and pestilences. If not in our days," he concludes, "we must expect it in those following." Was it not like the angel flying in mid-heaven, and crying, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the judgments about to come"?

Nor was it only concerning the coming of the Lord as being near that Gregory raised his cry: he spoke of *Antichrist's* being at hand also. In consequence of the Patriarch of Constantinople having taken the title of "Universal Bishop," Gregory wrote, at intervals from A.D. 580 to nearly the end of the century, letters to emperors, bishops, etc., declaring before Christendom that whosoever claimed *this title* was the likeness, the precursor of, and the preparer for Antichrist; that he bore the same characteristic of boundless pride and self-exaltation; that the tendency of his assumption, if consented to, was to *withdraw all members of the Church from its only true head, Jesus Christ, and to connect them with himself*. His letters state or imply that he considers such title as *the name of blasphemy* connected with the ten-horned beast of the Revelation; the *self-exaltation* above his fellow men, as that predicted by St. Paul of the man of sin;<sup>1</sup> and the *consenting* to it, as that *departure from the faith* and the *apostasy* named by the same apostle.<sup>2</sup> What would this wise observer have said had he but foreseen that, before *fifteen years* passed, this title should be adopted by the Bishop of Rome, his successor, and extended even to that of *universal episcopal supremacy* over the whole professing Church on earth – an assumption never to be abandoned? Surely the fact was well calculated to excite the misgivings of

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<sup>1</sup>2 Thess. 2. 4.

<sup>2</sup>1 Tim. 4. 1.

thinking men, and to awaken the inquiry, whether, in truth, the very Antichrist of prophecy was not even then in existence.

We have, in a former lecture, observed the gradual progress in the Church visible of these Antichristian tendencies; and we have seen the grievous judgments commissioned by God against the portion of the Roman world in which these errors had become more flagrant. What then, we may ask, had been the moral effect of these warnings and judgments which the Gothic wars had so distinctly pronounced? Had they led to the rooting out the growing evils? Alas! No. Those evils had gone on advancing; old superstitions continued, and new ones added. The Baptismal sacrament was still regarded as having the mysterious efficacy of a charm for man's salvation; and the Lord's Supper was held up in nearly the same light. The saints and their merits were still invoked, and in the best authorized liturgies set forth as the most powerful mediators and the best pleaders with God, and their relics and pictures more than ever venerated. One Christian bishop, Serenus of Marseilles, having cast out the saints images from his churches, on account of the idolatrous worship paid to them by the people, Gregory the Great took part with the people, and had them retained. This same Pope Gregory just then gave his authority to the doctrine of purgatory. This arose from the custom of thanksgivings for the dead. Originally it alone applied to martyrs; but in time more doubtful characters were solemnly remembered; and church prayers were offered for the remission of punishment, and for the purification of those souls which had departed in sin. Then came *with* this error, and as a part of it, curious questions relative to the purifying of the soul by fire; and now Pope Gregory, at the close of the sixth century, fixed authoritatively the awful and false doctrine of a purgatorial fire immediately after death. This was done on the presumed evidence of recent visions and revelations. The Bishop of Capua asserted that he had himself seen the soul of Paschasius the deacon boiling in the hot baths of St. Angelo!

We noticed the power put into the hands of the priesthood by the sacramental error, and that of saint and relic worship. About the middle of the fifth century *private* and particular *confession to priests*, instead of public general confession was substituted; after this came *indulgence* for sins, granted by the priest, as well as remission from their guilt, and from penance. Now the doctrine of purgatory increased the priestly power – a power fearful to contemplate. They (the priests) were forbidden to marry, and thus detached from the ties of the world. Ecclesiastical power was their sole ambition; and this, when their morals, like their knowledge, were debased and low. The use made of this priestly power was to come between Christ and the Church, and to shut Christ more and more out of the ecclesiastical system. When, after all this exaltation of the priesthood, one among them not only assumed the title of “Universal Bishop of the whole Church,” but a still higher title ascribed to him by the Italian bishops and priesthood in council, “Christ's Vicar,” or “God's Vicar on earth,” must it not again

have struck the thinking mind of every real Christian that herein was the very likeness of that “man of sin” referred to in God’s Word.

Except in the religious matters, there was not a single sin in the catalog mentioned in the ninth chapter of Revelation, verses 20, 21, as the cause of these woes, which was not to be found at this time in the Roman Church. There was the *worship of demons*, or saints canonized, and of *images of gold, silver, brass, stone and wood*, which neither could see, nor hear, nor walk; there were the *sorceries*, or lying *miracles* and there was licentiousness, and priestly religious thefts. Must not all these have seemed to an enlightened Christian to cry to heaven for vengeance against apostate Christendom? Might he not well have anticipated the angel’s cry, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth,” by reason of the other judgments yet to come upon it? By the world, however, the interval of warning was neglected, and soon passed away; and the trumpet sounding again gave sign to the Apostle that judgment was once more aroused, and the threatened woes about to begin. Previously to our entering upon the consideration of the coming vision, let us endeavor to mark the limits of its infliction.

We find no express intimation as to the particular division of the Roman earth that was now to be visited. But it may be inferred that the eastern or Asiatic third, as the one nearest to the Euphrates, was to be the scene of suffering under the fifth as well as under the following trumpet. To this portion, comprehending Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, the former troubles reached not. Its religion had been sinking deeper and deeper into superstition. In its controversies, the characteristic of the Greek ecclesiastical history of the times, we look in vain for the Christian spirit. Now its hour was come. But what the scourge, and whence? The answer is conveyed in Scripture by means of locally figurative and characteristic symbols, which will require an attentive consideration before we enter on the explanation of the fifth trumpet.

It must strike an observant reader how often in Scripture symbols are taken from either the plants, the animals, or the people of the country prophesied of, so as to identify it in respect of its geography, natural history, or national habits. Thus, is Judah symbolized? We find the olive, the fig tree, and the vine trees peculiar to that country. “The Lord called thy name a green olive.”<sup>1</sup> “He hath barked my fig tree.”<sup>2</sup> “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt.”<sup>3</sup> If Egypt be characterized, Isaiah describes Rabshakeh as saying, “Thou trustest in the staff

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<sup>1</sup>Jer. 11. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Joel 1. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ps. 29. 8.

of this broken reed, on Egypt;”<sup>1</sup> and again Ezekiel complains, “They have been a staff of reed to Israel,”<sup>2</sup> the reed being characteristic of the banks of the Nile. So David indicates his own land. “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.”<sup>3</sup>

With the same local appropriateness animals are used as symbols. Judah is again and again depicted as a lion – “Judah is couched as a lion.”<sup>4</sup> “Ephraim also is like a silly dove,”<sup>5</sup> the dove being constantly used in the Jewish sacrifices. Judah in sorrow is “like a pelican in the wilderness.” All animals well known in these countries.

The *personal appearance*, the *dress* and *armor* in general use, is sometimes taken to indicate the nation intended. Take that beautiful personification of Judah as a female child brought up to womanhood, affianced to God, and then faithless.<sup>6</sup> Here the long hair, the anointing with oil, the brodered dress, the jewels and other ornaments, are all appurtenances of the Jewish female of olden times.

Many other examples will readily occur to each Bible reader, but these will suffice to enable us intelligently to enter upon the coming subject.

We may take this opportunity of noticing an objection which has been taken to the admixture of literal and figurative language, so apparent in the foregoing explanation of the first four trumpet visions, as also in those we have yet to consider. But are there not in truth numerous instances of the like throughout the Scriptures? Take the prophetic description of our Lord's sufferings: “They pierced My hands and My feet,” in immediate connection with “strong bulls of Bashan have beset Me round”<sup>7</sup> – this figurative, that literal. See also Ezek. 27:25; and Ps. 80:8.

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<sup>1</sup>Isa. 36. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ezek. 39.

<sup>3</sup>Ps. 92. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Gen. 49. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Hosea 7. 11.

<sup>6</sup>Ezek. 16.

<sup>7</sup>Ps. 22.12, 16.

## **Lecture XII. The Fifth Trumpet**

### **Mahomet and the Saracens.**

**A.D. 612 – 755.**

*Rev. 9:1-11 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. (2) And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. (3) And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. (4) And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. (5) And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. (6) And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. (7) And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. (8) And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. (9) And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. (10) And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. (11) And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

**We have already, in the preceding** lecture, remarked the *geographical propriety* of the selection of the various symbols of Scripture prophecy, serving as it does, in a great measure to designate the particular country to which the vision points us. Sometimes the imagery is of that general character which belongs alike to every part of the world, but at other times a slight attention to the emblem will convince us that the same Divine mind that has given to different lands their characteristic objects, has expressly designed the introduction of those objects into the figurative descriptions of the prophecy in order to confine the application to its true locality. It is on these grounds that we are able at once to infer, from the passage before us, the identical *country* whence this woe was to have its rise, the *agents* and their *commission to destroy*, and the particular *individual* also who was to constitute their prophet and leader.

I. First as to the peculiar country and people whence it was to originate. The locust, the groundwork of the symbol, is wholly Arabic. It was the “east wind which brought the locusts” on Egypt<sup>1</sup> a statement distinctly pointing to Arabia as to the land upon the east of Egypt. The Syrians, we are told by Volney, “have remarked that locusts come constantly from the deserts of Arabia.” The terms *Arab* and *locust* are in Hebrew almost the same. The symbol is elsewhere in Scripture used with like appropriateness; “They (the Midianite Arabs) came as grasshoppers,” meaning locusts.<sup>2</sup>

Great peculiarity attached to these monsters in the vision before us; they were half beast, half man. Their coming, locust like, in destructive swarms is in accordance with the figure, but their shape was like horses. The horse was peculiarly Arabian, and seems to indicate hordes of cavalry; they were, it is said, “prepared for battle,” They had teeth like lions – savage destroyers of life; and they resembled scorpions in their poison stings, implying that they would be the tormentors of those whose lives they spared.<sup>3</sup> The scorpion is of the same native locality: witness the words of Moses when reminding the Israelites of God’s goodness to them throughout their forty year wanderings, “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents and *scorpions*.”<sup>4</sup> Thus the *zoology* is all *Arabian*.

Next, as to the human appearance of these locusts their faces like men, their hair as the hair of women. What people could be thus pictured? Neither to the Greeks and Romans, nor yet to their Gothic invaders, will the whole of the test apply, the former having had repugnance in John’s time to the feminine appearance of long hair in men,<sup>5</sup> while the latter were remarkable, as is noticed by Jerome, for the un-man like shaven smoothness of their faces. There was, however, a nation to which the whole of the descriptive symbol was literally applicable. Pliny, St. John’s contemporary, speaks of the Arabs as wearing the turban, having the hair long and uncut, and with the mustache too on their upper lip – that “venerable sign of manhood,” as Gibbon calls it. In the Arabian poem “Antar,” written about Mahomet’s time, we find the beard and the mustache, the long flowing hair and turban, all specified as characterizing the appearance of the Arab. And the turban of the Arab was often noted as a crown. So Ezekiel spoke of “Sabeans (Arabs) from the desert with beautiful crowns upon their

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<sup>1</sup>Ex. 10. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Judges 6. 5.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix.

<sup>4</sup>Deut. 8 15.

<sup>5</sup>1 Cor. 11. 14.

heads.”<sup>1</sup> One of their national proverbs also tells that turbans were given by God to them instead of *diadems*.

The *breastplates of iron* worn by these creatures are also noted in the vision. The Saracen policy was the wearing defensive armor, their coats of mail being repeatedly mentioned by historians.

Thus, on the whole, these concurrent symbols point to *Arabia* as the country whence the woe was to originate. And if we turn from prophecy to history we find, at the opening of the seventh century, a fact notoriously verifying the prediction. A mighty Saracen or Arab invasion is the chief event which it records.

II. But what of the abyss out of which these locusts are said to have issued? The word is often used in Scripture with reference to hell, or the place of the departed wicked. And in the New Testament it is likewise introduced as “the deep,” into which the devils entreated of our Lord that they might not be sent; and in the Revelation as “the bottomless pit,” where “that old serpent, the devil,” is bound. Moreover, as the natural light of the sun is a fit emblem of the spiritual illumination that comes down from the God and Father of lights, so may we infer that whatever is described as darkening the atmosphere, even as smoke from a pit, must be meant in the opposite sense of a moral or spiritual pollution. This smoke, then, in the Apocalyptic vision, we consider to be an emanation from Satan issuing from the pit of hell, i.e., some system of false religion which should obscure truth or dim the light of heaven.

And was it even so? Did it so happen, at this particular juncture, that such a system of pestilent error rose up? And if so, did it take its rise from Arabia?

To these inquiries we reply, Who has not heard of Mahomet, that false prophet, and of the spread of his too popular creed? This deadly evil came out from Arabia at the very time we speak of, a creed the invention of fanaticism and fraud. In its system the blessed God is described as cruel and unholy; and in its morals pride, ferocity, superstition, and sensuality are held up for admiration, and show palpably whence it had its origin. It was just after embracing Mahomet's principles that the Saracens, as “locusts from the abyss,” issued forth on Christendom. It was the adoption of this creed, the creed of Mahomet, that made them what they were; that united these hordes as one; that gave them the impulse to fly, locust-like, to propagate their faith over the world, and that imparted to them, as to raging lions of the desert, their destructive fury of fanaticism. Their scorpion venom was thereby prepared to torment such of the Christians as they should bring under their yoke, while the hope of gross licentiousness to be indulged in both here and hereafter added sensuality to their ferocity.

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<sup>1</sup>Ezek. 23. 42.

Well does the Saracen history accord with the prophetic emblem concerning them!

III. We have to observe the peculiar nature of the commission, "Hurt not the grass or trees, but only the men who have not God's seal on their foreheads." Mahomet expressly declared that his mission was against "idolaters;" and such he considered Christians. But in urging forward his followers against them, the Caliph Aboubeker did but fulfill the precept of the prophet when he gave the command, "Destroy no palm trees, nor any fields of corn: cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle." It was the dictate of policy, not of mercy; for by following this plan the Saracens had, soon after their conquest, formed flourishing countries round them. It was a marked peculiarity, for in other invasions, as the Gothic, fire, sword, and devastation tracked the invader's progress, and was accordingly prefigured in the Apocalyptic imagery; but with the Saracens it was the very reverse, and this reverse still more connects it with the prediction now before us.

IV. We have so far identified this passage with the Arabian heresy and irruption that the inference we clearly deduce is, that Mahomet was the *star*, or ruler, referred to. But why is this impostor mentioned as a *star*? and why, still more, since success followed his course for such a length of time, is he said to be a *fallen star*?

To answer this question, we must trace Mahomet's history back to his birth. His origin was princely, being descended from one of the noblest families in Arabia. Gibbon says, "The grandfather of Mahomet and his lineal ancestors appeared in foreign and domestic transactions as the *princes* of their country." They were, in the view of the Syrian Greeks, as among the stars on the political horizon. But just after the prophet's birth his father died, and soon after his grandfather. Then the governorship of Mecca and keys of the Caaba (or holy place of religion amongst the Arabians) attached to the office passed into another branch of the family. Thus Mahomet became a star fallen from power. He says of himself that at the opening of the seventh century "he was a desolate orphan." He was indeed *fallen*, when, as a poor widow's servant, he used to traffic in the markets of Damascus.

Mahomet, however, was imbued with a spirit calculated to struggle against and triumph over misfortune. That was already stirring in his mind which was to raise him far above a mere prince of Mecca, the scheme of re-ascending to the station he had lost by introducing a new system of superstition. About three miles from Mecca was a cave called Hera; it was a secret and a desolate spot. There he withdrew every year to consult, as he said, a spirit who was wont to visit him in his solitary hours and hold converse with him. Gibbon well calls it "the spirit of fraud and enthusiasm, whose abode was not in heaven, but in the mind of the prophet." This cave has aptly suggested to interpreters the idea of



the *pit of the abyss*, whence the pestilential fumes and darkness were seen to issue.

When, privately at first, and then more publicly, he began to announce his creed, for a while his uncle and the elders of the city affected to despise the orphan's presumption. They chased him from Mecca, and his flight marks in history the era of *the Hegira*, A.D. 622.

Seven years afterwards, he was seen in Mecca's streets as one to whom all bowed down in honor, whose words the multitudes revered, to whose command armies were obedient, who swayed the minds of men that they yielded implicit faith to his wild or crafty imaginations. The "fallen star" had come forth again. The key of office was restored to him. "The fugitive missionary was enthroned as the prince and the prophet of his native country."<sup>1</sup> The *key of God*, asserted in the Koran to have been given to Mahomet to open the gate of heaven to believers, continued to be borne by his followers both as a religious and a national emblem, and may still be seen sculptured on the proud gate of justice in the Alhambra or palace of the Moors. Even so in *allusive contrast* it is written in Revelation, "The key of the abyss" was given to him, and truly the smoke that arose upon his opening, was as the pestilential fumes and darkness of hell.

Having thus endeavored to illustrate the suitability of these emblems in the vision to the rise of Mohammedanism, and of the Moslem Arabs in the seventh century, let us follow on and try whether their subsequent history will verify the other intimations respecting them.

"There came out locusts on the earth." It was in A.D. 629 that the Saracens first issued from the desert and proclaimed war against Christendom. The year 639 saw Syria subdued, and the muezzin call to prayer, soon after sounded from a mosque built on the site of Solomon's temple. It can still be heard to this very day when the appointed hour comes for remembering the prophet. The subjugation of Egypt followed quickly on that of Syria; then, some few years after, that of the African provinces; then, at the commencement of the eighth century, that of Spain. All this was within the limits of Roman Christendom, and consequently within the sphere of the Apocalyptic vision. Even beyond, their conquests extended far and wide with terrible rapidity. Two short statements from history will give some idea of the progress of the Saracens, and of the desolation caused by them, of whom it might be said, as was said of the desolating force mentioned in Joel, "The land was as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." The one, that in ten years, i.e., from A.D. 634 to 644, they had reduced three thousand six hundred castles to ruins, destroyed

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, ix. 308.

four thousand churches,<sup>1</sup> and had built fourteen hundred mosques for the exercise of the religion of Mahomet. The other, that at the end of the first century of the Hegira, the Arabian empire had been extended from the confines of India and Tartary to the shores of the Atlantic.

Bitterly did the Christians feel the scorpion sting. They were deprived of the use of their arms, and, like slaves of old, made to pay annually a life-redemption tax. They were required to stand up always in presence of their tyrants, and were called by the names of opprobrium, as "infidel dog, Christian dog," etc. In further token of contempt of their religion, to which the Christians still clung with fond attachment, no new churches were permitted to be built, no church bell to be rung, while the scoffing Moslem had free access, even during divine worship, to all those which were allowed to exist. Insults of the grossest kind were continually offered to Christian females, and undefinable acts of oppression practiced on all. Every inducement was offered to apostasy, and the punishment of death was inflicted on any who, after apostasy, again professed the Christian faith.

These *locusts*, it is said, had a king over them, whose name was "Abaddon," or the "Destroyer." Mahomet professed that *the Spirit of the cave* had dictated to him the Koran; this was accordingly the law that governed the Saracens. The Caliphs, or chief governors, held rule only as vicars of the false prophet. What the doctrine of the book was, as acted out by them, appeared on the field of battle. There when we see not only the loss of bodily life resulting, but also the ruin of souls from the poisonous precepts of Islam, we cannot find more fitting title to express the perpetuation of the prophet's character in each successive Caliph than that of the "Abaddon," the "Destroyer" of Christians!

There was, however, a term and limit prescribed to these locusts, both as to effect and as to *duration*. For observe, they were not to *kill*, i.e., to annihilate

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<sup>1</sup>The number of churches destroyed may at first sight appear incredibly large; it may be well, therefore, to form an idea of the extent and power to which the nominally Christian Church in these parts had extended in the early centuries. In Palestine alone were 74 bishoprics, and 50 in Phœnicia and Arabia. The ruins of churches and cathedrals show how great their grandeur had been. Antioch itself had 360 churches. Between this city and the sea is a hill called Ben-ki-liseh, or the thousand churches, from that number being erected on it. The see of Antioch exercised power over 203 bishops, besides 12 archbishops, etc. Exclusive of this, attached to Tyre were 13 bishoprics; to Ahamea, 7; Hierapolis, 8; Seleucia, 24; Damascus, 10; Caesarea, 19, etc. Many other similar lists are given in Reland's *History of The Episcopal List of the Three Palestines*, alluded to in Dr. Keith's *Land of Israel* p. 187, from which the foregoing is extracted. Edifices of Saracenic structure, scattered over Syria, show that these invaders sought to perpetuate their conquest, and made it their work to build as well as to destroy.

The ecclesiastical tyranny, which continued for centuries after, had, at this period reached to great power; church architecture and church offerings forming a large part of church religion.

the men of Roman Christendom as a political body, but “only to torment them.” And this woe was to last 150 days, i.e., in prophetic language, 150 years.

Vain, accordingly, were the Saracen efforts to destroy the State. Twice did they attack Constantinople, the capital of the eastern division of the Roman empire; they were defeated with ignominy and obliged to retire; the last of which repulses was in A.D. 718. Again, in the West, when they sought to destroy Pelayo and his band of Goths in the mountains of Asturias, they were twice driven back with disgrace, A.D. 711. Still more remarkably, when they attempted to subjugate France in 732, they suffered signal discomfiture from Charles Martel; though he did not succeed in driving them from Provence and Lyons till fifteen or twenty years after. Still, though hindered from driving far their conquests, the locust swarm remained to torment, and was united under one head. About the middle of the eighth century, however, a division took place among themselves. The Caliphate was divided; one Caliph being set up in the west, and an opposing Caliph in the east.

The eastern Caliph, resolving to build a new capital, laid the foundation of it at Bagdad, and thither the head of the locust tribe and the swarm took their flight. Once settled at Bagdad, the Saracens began to decline from the warlike spirit which had animated them. Gibbon says, “The luxury of the Caliphs relaxed the nerves and *terminated the progress* of the Arabian Empire.” In the west, the son of Charles Martel drove back the Saracens beyond the Pyrenees, A.D. 755. Again, in the year 761, the Christian remnant in Spain turned back the tide of war on their oppressors.

The termination of the Saracen woe, at least in *intensity*, may date at this period, A.D. 762.

Observe now what had been the length of time occupied in these transactions. We date from the period when Mahomet publicly announced his mission to propagate his religion by violence and with the sword – a mission which made his followers a woe to all countries, but specially to Christendom. The destroying commission might be said to commence at that period when Mahomet, addressing his assembled followers, inquired, “Who will be my lieutenant?” Ali, called by him “the Lion of God,” replied, “O prophet, I will be thy lieutenant. Whoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip him open. I am the man. I will be thy vizier.” Mr. Hallam justly observes, “These words of Mahomet’s illustrious disciple are, as it were, a text upon which the commentary extends into the whole Saracen history.”

Thus then, reckoning from A.D. 612 to A.D. 762, when the Caliphate was removed to Bagdad, we find the intervening period to be precisely 150 years.

To two remarkable coincidences which occurred during this period we should give attention. It has been observed that the apostasy of the Church was the assigned and predicted cause of this judgment. Now Mahomet’s asserted commission was specially directed against idolaters; and it was in that character,

as an idolatrous people, that Christendom appeared when the Saracen woe fell upon it. Up to the close of the seventh century, the reproach of image worship might seem deservedly to give cause for the scourge which they suffered under the Moslem sword; but about the year 717, the Isaurian family ascended the throne of Constantinople. For sixty years its princes, supported by many real Christians, though opposed by the Popes and the masses of the people, resisted image worship, and endeavored to overthrow it. Mark, then, it was during this period of resistance to the error that the Saracen horde received its first defeat at Constantinople.

Again in A.D. 754 Constantine Copronymus called a council in order to condemn the idolatrous image worship. It passed a solemn judgment against it; and behold, it was the very next year that the Caliphate was divided, and the intensity of the Saracen woe was ended.

But alas, the efforts of these emperors availed but little. In the year 781, the Queen Irene succeeded to the throne, having murdered her image destroying husband. She convened what is called the seventh general council; and by a solemn act of the Catholic Church the worship of images was declared lawful. Just then the Saracen woe seemed for a time to revive. The Arab forces swept through Asia Minor into Greece, again and again bearing down all before them. Was there in all this no warning from God? The Eastern Church, however, persisted. In A.D. 842 the struggle ended under the reign of the Empress Theodora, and image worship became indisputably established; Through the ninth and tenth centuries it so continued; yet such was the long suffering of God, no judgment seemed to follow. But the time of retribution came at last.

Here we close as far as regards this vision. But a fact or two relative to the downfall of the Saracen power may be added. Luxury, we have said, weakened its strength. In A.D. 841 the Caliph, distrusting his guards, was forced to hire a protective force of 50,000 Turks. These, like the Praetorian guards at Rome, in their turn became tyrants, and accelerated the sinking of the Saracens. At Fez and Tunis, in Egypt and Syria, in Khorasan and Persia to the east, new and independent powers were formed. A third Caliphate arose at Cairo. The Persians, in A.D. 934, stripped the Caliph of Bagdad of all temporal power, and left him only the title of Pontiff of Islam. In the west a century after the Saracens were driven out, and though they continued as marauders, and even gained victories in Crete and Sicily, the woe might be said to have passed from Christendom.

## ***Lecture XIII. The Sixth Trumpet***

### **The Turco—Moslems.**

**A.D. 1063.**

*Rev. 9:12-19 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. (13) And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, (14) Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. (15) And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. (16) And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. (17) And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. (18) By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. (19) For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

**We have seen in the last lecture** that in the year 934 the Caliphate at Bagdad was stripped of its temporal dominion in the east, and that in the west, though not until towards the end of the tenth century, the Moslem power was reduced to act wholly on the defensive. The date A.D. 985 might be fixed as about the period when the woe had totally passed away.

About this time a strong persuasion was abroad that the final consummation of all things was at hand. It was preached of and listened to by breathless crowds. Under the impression that Christ would descend to judgment at Palestine, numbers made over their properties to monasteries, and traveled away to the Holy Land. Others devoted themselves as servants to the churches and priests, so as to have milder sentence, as being the dependents of Christ's servants. Buildings were let go to ruin, it being supposed they would be thenceforth useless; and, on occasion of eclipses, etc., the frightened multitudes fled to the rocks and caverns for refuge. But the time of the end was not yet. In the decrees of Heaven it stood written, "One woe hath passed; behold there come yet two more woes after them." The dreaded 1,000<sup>th</sup> year came and went without any great attending calamity, and gradually expectation died away.

But the *Sixth Trumpet* was about to sound. Would its woe fall on western Christendom, which had long been settling down into the idolatrous worship of

departed saints and its accompaniments – priestly fraud, avarice, superstition, and gross immorality, insomuch that afterwards this period was denominated the *Iron Age*? Or was it to fall on Rome itself, where these impieties were still more rife, particularly amongst its popes, cardinals, and bishops, so as to be compared by certain writers to Sodom? Not so. Antichrist was not yet fully matured, its time was not yet come. The approaching woe was again designed to fall on the eastern division.

Basil II was then on the throne of Constantinople. Had it been at the time foretold to him that woe was at hand, he might not unreasonably have discredited the prediction; for looking around over the known world, no enemy appeared formidable, nor did approaching storm threaten from any quarter – least of all, perhaps, from the Euphrates and Bagdad. That power once so fearful was fallen. Could it be again raised up and become terrible?

So might the royal Basil have spoken. Devoted to Greek superstition, all the evils before named were unchecked in his empire, and he reckoned not that they would surely bring down vengeance from God. Fearful was the word which was now fulfilled, “They shall be given to strong delusion to believe a lie.” How differently would real Christians have looked upon the state of things – such as were represented on the Apocalyptic scene as God’s sealed ones. These would in the features of the time foresee the coming woe; and that, while men were saying “Peace, peace,” judgment was even at the door.

From the quarter least expected the danger impended. The agencies were prepared; the trumpet again sounded; and the four angels, newly commissioned to destroy, loosed from the Euphrates.

Observe whence issued the “voice” mentioned in the vision – *from the four horns of the altar of incense*. Had it come from the throne in the inner temple, it had been from God; or if from an angel specially sent, the same idea would attach to it. But when a voice proceeded from any other place invoking judgment, it would rather seem to indicate *guilt connected with, that locality*. In Gen. 4:10, when Cain had struck Abel to the ground, we read, “Thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me *from the ground*;” in James v. 4, “The hire of the *laborers* who have reaped your fields crieth;” in Isaiah 66:6, “A voice of noise from *the city*, a voice from *the temple*, a voice from the Lord that rendereth recompense.” The ground, fields, city, temple, whence in each case the cry, were in each case also the scene of guilt. Just so as to the cry from the *four horns of the golden altar*, seemed to indicate sin in Roman Christendom, involving the desecration of that mystic altar and its golden horns.

Now the projecting horns of the altar, as noted in Lev. 4:7, were appointed for sacrificial blood sprinklings expiatory of the sin of priests and sin of people. On this rite’s due performance, in Hezekiah’s time, both priests and people, after

previous apostasy of God, were reconciled.<sup>1</sup> A voice *then* went forth from the altar, not of judgment but of mercy – of mercy through Him, thus typified, whose blood was to be shed as “a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.” Sennacherib's army, which was then approaching, was bidden back, and the city for that season was spared: a contrast to the voice which, in the vision before us, went forth calling for judgment. What then, when John heard its sound, would be the interpretation he would put on it? Would it not be that both priests and people of Roman Christendom, in spite of former judgments, persisted unrepentant in their old sins: still abandoning Christ in His character of the one divinely appointed propitiation for sin; still adopting other means of atonement, and other mediators? So, it would seem to him, their sins were registered, as it were, on the horns of the symbolic altar; and that the High Priest himself was forced to pronounce from thence the decree of judgment, “Loose the four angels to slay the third part of men.” The opportunity for repentance had passed altogether unheeded by Greek Christendom. The guilt of inveterate Antichristian apostasy was stamped at the time spoken of on their ritual worship. Indeed, the Mariolatrous impress of the national coinage still testifies of it to the eye of the numismatist.

But *who were these, four angels?* Surely the same that had formerly let loose the winds and tempests; and who might seem to have been stayed in their commission, *when* the Saracen woe inflicted by them ceased, and *where* it ceased (like as in the case of the angel inflicted pestilence, 2 Sam. 24:16); even at *Bagdad*, by the *Euphrates*. To prove how this was, I must take up the history of the Turkmans.

We mentioned Basil as being the emperor at Constantinople. He died A.D. 1025; as did, three years after, Mahmoud, the Caliph at Bagdad, whose empire then began to fall to pieces. Many Turkman tribes had been established during his lifetime at Khorasan, near the Caspian Sea. It was these that were now to become a woe to Christendom. Proceeding to assert independence, they killed Mahmoud's son; then chose Togrul Beg as their commander; and stood forth as the chief power in Central Asia. Originally idolaters, they had lately become Mahometans, and were called into Bagdad, A.D. 1055, to assist the Caliph on occasion of domestic danger. After subduing the factions and overthrowing the weak dynasty of the Bowides, who had ruled in Persia since A.D. 933, Togrul Beg became lieutenant to the Caliph; thus being constituted, in effect, temporal lieutenant of the Prophet's Vicar, and head of the secular power of Islam.

Animated by the same *spirit from hell* as their Arab precursors, a holy war against Greek Christendom was now resolved on. Togrul was succeeded by his

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<sup>1</sup>2 Chron, 29. 20.

nephew Alp Arslan,<sup>1</sup> who passed the Euphrates at the head of the Turkish cavalry, A.D. 1063. The loss of the kingdom and frontier of Armenia was, Gibbon says, "the news of a day." The Greek emperor, Romanus, having invoked the Virgin Mary's aid, the chief object of his worship, hastened to oppose him. But in vain. At Malazgerd he was defeated, taken prisoner, and the fate of the Asiatic provinces sealed irretrievably. Alp Arslan was succeeded by Malek Shah, who continued the victorious career of the Turks. In A.D. 1074 Asia Minor came into their hands, and Nice became the capital. This, remarks the historian, was the severest loss the empire had sustained since the first conquests of the Caliphs. Asia Minor, or Roum, became an independent kingdom after its conquest by Malek's general, Suleiman, who had gained the name of *Holy Champion* for his zeal against the infidel Christians.

Throughout the whole extent of the new empire Mohammedism now prevailed; mosques were built even from the Euphrates to Constantinople. Alexius the emperor trembled on his throne, and begged assistance from Western Europe; representing that, unless some aid were sent, his division of Roman Christendom must fall. "The third part of men would be destroyed." Assistance was sent: the *Crusades* began, yet through two centuries the Turkish Sultany of Roum was preserved in its vitality. In the first crusade, A.D. 1097, the Turkmen were defeated; but in 1147 the leaders of the second crusade reported the Turkman power unbroken; and how the bones of Christian hosts lay bleaching among the Pamphylia mountains. In the third crusade, the Emperor *Frederick I* lost immense numbers before he stormed Iconium, and made the Sultan sue for peace. It was not till the next century that the Moguls subdued the Seljukian dynasty, and partially interrupted the Turkish sway. But Othman soon furnished a new head to the Turkman host; the Moguls declined, while the Ottoman Empire rose and progressed. As to the rest, the history of the Sultans Othman and Orchan, Amurath and Bajazet, is well known. Their victorious armies crossed the Hellespont; and little more than the city of Constantinople remained for the Eastern Roman Emperor, even this they surrounded on all sides.

Let us observe some of the characteristic national features of these Turks.

I. As to *their numbers*. In the vision it is said, "The number of the army of the horsemen was myriads of myriads." This implies a large but indefinite number. The peculiarity in the description is their being *horsemen*. In European armies at that time foot soldiers were numerous and cavalry few; but just the reverse prevailed with the Turks, with whom literally the number numberless was cavalry. There may be a reference also in the expression to the method in use amongst them of counting by myriads.

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<sup>1</sup>The name signifies "the valiant lion." The heads of the Apocalyptic horses were said to be "as lions."



It is added, "I heard the number of them." St. John heard it *in his representative character*. Just at that period went forth the cry that alarmed Europe and led to the Crusades. From the Patriarch of Europe came letters to all princes and churches: "Jerusalem has been besieged, ransacked, and taken. What may the rest of Christendom promise to itself? The strength of the Turks is daily increased. We call on you for help, as Christians. Ere the tempest thunder, ere the lightning fall on you, avert from yourselves and children the storm hanging over your heads. Deliver us, and God shall requite you." So the report ran throughout Europe; the ferment rose, and the Crusades ensued.

II. *Their appearance*. "I saw the horse in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire (i.e., of fire color), and jacinth, and sulphur." This, it is said, is exactly the ornament of apparel which these people assumed. "From their first appearance the Ottomans affected to wear warlike apparel of *scarlet, blue, and yellow*."<sup>1</sup> It needs but to see the Turkish cavalry to be struck with their rich and varied coloring. The word hyacinthine or jacinth fixes the meaning of the other two words, *fire-like, sulphur-like*, necessarily to color; these words, fire and sulphur, having no indistinct bearing on other characteristics of the Turkish armies, as we shall presently see.

III. "The *heads* of the horses," the Evangelist observes, "were as the heads of *lions*; and out of their mouths goeth forth *fire, and smoke, and sulphur*. By these were the third of men slain, by the fire, and by the smoke, and the sulphur which proceedeth out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouths." The *heads* of the horses, being unnatural, are clearly symbolical; the symbol being constantly used to designate the leaders of the people, and that of lions we take to signify the lion – like haughtiness of their characters and bearing. But it is of the new destroying agents, "fire, smoke, and brimstone," we are now to speak. It was entirely by the use and force of artillery that Constantinople was destroyed, and with it fell the Greek Empire. Eleven hundred years it stood and repelled Goths, Huns, Avars, Persians, Bulgarians, and Saracens, one after another, its walls remaining impregnable. Hence the anxiety of the Sultan Mahomet to find a force still stronger. "Canst thou," he said to one, "find a cannon of sufficient size to batter down the walls of Constantinople?" Gibbon, in his *History of the Fall of the Greek Empire*, gives the account of the new invention of gunpowder, "that mixture of saltpeter, sulphur, and charcoal." He describes how, in the siege, the arrows were accompanied by the smoke of fire of the musketry and cannon: how, "as from the lines, the galleys, and the bridge, the Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides; the camp and city, the Greeks and Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke which could only be dispelled by the

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<sup>1</sup>Daubuz.

final deliverance or destruction of the Greek Empire:" how the walls were rendered by the cannon a heap of ashes; and so "Constantinople was irretrievably subdued, her empire subverted, and her religion trampled in the dust by her Moslem conquerors."

IV. Next as to the horse *tails*. These were seen in the vision as having *heads*, and so associated with that which the head symbolized – rulers or governing authorities. But when did a *horse tail* ever denote a ruler? One historical fact must answer in part the question. It seems that in the time of their early career the standard having been once lost in the course of the battle, the commander, cutting off his horse's tail, lifted it as a rallying ensign, and won the day. Hence this ensign became among the Turks, and *them alone*, a badge of authority. The number of one, two, or three *horse tails* still marks the Turkish pasha's dignity, from the grand vizier down to the lower governors of provinces.

"And with these they do injustice." Where is the historian of Turkish conquests or the traveler through Turkish scenes who has not to tell of cruel tyrannies and heartless oppression? The writer of the *Horae Apocalypticæ* describes his feelings on seeing, as he traveled in that country, the terror of the inhabitants when one of these horse-tailed pashas was near. After noticing the procession of horsemen and retainers, shining in red, blue, and yellow, and how the ensign of two horse tails was carried before the pasha to mark his dignity, he tells how he entered a village which a few days before had been deserted; and how a straggler, coming from his hiding place, informed him that men, women, and children had fled to escape the oppressive visit of a neighboring pasha.

One point more remains to be explained: the time within which the commission to destroy was to be accomplished. "The four angels were loosed, which were prepared for, or rather *after*, an hour, and day, and month, and year, to slay the third part of men." That is, that the slaying, the *national* slaying, should occur or be completed at the end of these portions of time added together.<sup>1</sup>

Now, counting up these several parts of time, we have, according to the prophetic principle of *a day for a year* –

A year equal to 365  $\frac{1}{4}$  days, i.e., to 365 years, 91 days.

A month = 30 days = 30 years.

A day = = 01 year.

An hour =  $\frac{1}{12}$  yr. = 30 days.

Total = 396 yrs., 121 days.

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<sup>1</sup>It is curious that the only known record, as it is supposed, of a similar expressed period occurred in Turkish history. The peace granted by the Turkish Sultan Saladin to Richard I. was to be three year, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours, all to be taken in the aggregate.

It was on the 18th day of January, A.D. 1057 that the Turco-Moslem power was *loosed* from the Euphrates; in other words, when Togrul Beg, the acknowledged head of Islam, with his Turkmans, quitted Bagdad to enter on a long career of war and conquest. It was on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, A.D. 1453, that Constantinople fell and the siege ended. The interval coincides with the prophecy exactly in years, being 396; and very nearly in days, being 130. In effect the prophetic period expired nearly about the *middle of the siege*, as nearly as possible at the very critical turning point of defeat or victory.

When the Sultan Mahomet pressed the siege, no intervention occurred to delay the catastrophe, either from the east or the west from the Crusaders of Christendom or from the savage warriors of Tartary. No longer could the fate of the unhappy Greeks be averted. The artillery of the Othmans thundered, the breach was stormed, and amidst the shouts of the conquering Turkmans from the Euphrates and the dying groans of the last Constantine, Constantinople fell! The third of the men were slain! The Greek Empire was no more!

## ***Lecture XIV. The Unrepentant State of Western Christendom***

**A.D. 1057 – 1500,**

*Rev. 9:20-21 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: (21) Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

**The remarkable events which we** have noticed in these last lectures, consummated by the destruction of the eastern third of Roman Christendom, were well calculated, we should have imagined, to arrest the other portions of the professing Church in their course of error and ungodliness and to have induced repentance and reformation. But the subsequent history of the West affords evidence to the accuracy of that prophetic announcement which had been given to the Evangelist, how that the long prevailing doctrinal perversions and moral iniquities of men would continue wholly unaffected by these warning judgments of their Lord. It was an awful, but a true picture – “The rest of the men repented not.” Compared with the history and fate of her sister in the East, the case of the Western Church resembled that of treacherous Judah, whose guilt was even more unpardonable than that of backsliding Israel.

The announcement made in the vision is twofold; 1<sup>st</sup>, as implying the grievous corruptions which had existed in Western Christendom *during the progress* of these *woes*; and 2<sup>nd</sup>, as declaring the continuance of the same *after the fall* of the Greek Empire.

1. The period embraced by the advance and decline of the Turkish woe: “the hour, day, month, and year,” – from A.D. 1057 to 1453, is well worthy of observation in the *general* history of Christendom. The kingdoms of Western Europe had been slowly assuming those territorial forms and limits which, in the main, they have ever since retained. The Christian remnant in *Spain*, after having for a length of time confined the Moors within the kingdom of Grenada, had in the year 1452, under Ferdinand and Isabella, completely conquered and expelled them. The central *Frank or French* kingdom had subordinated to itself by degrees the several principalities which had been broken off. England, which, previous to the Norman conquest, had been subdivided into small states, had become united in government, and had attached Ireland and Wales to its dominion. Both France and *England*, thus aggrandized, had begun that rivalry of centuries which, while it gave occasion to prolonged wars, served at the same time to develop their national resources. The elective *Germanic Empire*, after a par-

tial diminution of strength and glory through its wars with Rome and Switzerland (the latter having become independent), now under the house of Austria extended on the one side over Hungary and Bohemia, and on the other to the Baltic Sea. *Italy*, after witnessing for two or more centuries the short but brilliant course of the Lombard republics, had been subdivided into several small states. The temporal sovereignty of the Bishops of Rome had become firmly established through Central Italy, and was now fully recognized in European polity as the *ecclesiastical state*, or, as it was in part singularly called, *the patrimony of St. Peter*.

Moreover, with the political progression of these great European confederations there had been a steady advance from barbarism to comparative *civilization*. Chivalry had exercised a beneficial influence on outward manners. Internal trade, and still more maritime commerce, had led the way to *civil liberty*; so that many *free towns* had been established, and feudal servitude had gradually disappeared. *Intellectual energy* had also awakened from a long slumber. Universities had risen up. Oxford and Cambridge, Paris and Montpellier, Bologna and Padua, Salamanca and Prague, were crowded with students. A yet more extended range was opened for learning when in A.D. 1440 the art of printing was invented. The scholars of Greece, fleeing before the Turkish woe, had brought their stores of classic lore before the Western literati, who now eagerly engaged in the study, and everywhere knowledge and science was pursued.

Again *religious zeal* was a feature of the times, if such term may be applied to the Crusaders, and to those who exercised their Powers in building those magnificent ecclesiastical structures, cathedrals, etc., which still remain and excite the admiration of all beholders in England, France, Germany, and Italy. Certainly with those who raised them such zeal could not be called lukewarm.

Thus much for the progress in power, freedom, refinement, intellectual energy, and religious zeal of the western division of Europe. Would we next inquire what the *character of religion* had been during the same period? The Scripture in the few lines before us tells the tale. The first clause says, "Men repented not of worshiping demons." The term *demons* was used in St. John's time, both in Roman literature and Scripture language, to express the heathen gods, and also those malignant evil spirits which entered into those possessed. Such being its double meaning, the Apostle might infer, from the words of the vision, that there would be established in the nominally Christian Church a system of demonolatry, the counterpart of that of Greece or Rome – a fact, as before observed, for which he was prepared by the gradual apostasy from the faith of Christ's mediation and atonement; that imaginary beings would be worshiped, and the spirits of dead men deified; also that moral virtues would be attributed to them, in about the same proportion of good and bad, as to the heathen gods; that like them, they would be supposed to act as guardian spirits and mediators; and that this false system would be in fact, an emanation from hell, as was its

precursor, malignant hellish spirits being the authors, actors, and deceivers in it. All this the Scriptural meaning of the word *demon* might well imply.

Of the fulfillment of the prophetic declaration no well informed Protestant is ignorant. The decrees of the seventh General Council, which established *image worship*, remained in force during this period, more and more superseding the spiritual worship of the one great God and Christ in his mediatorial character. The evil was not confined to mere mental worship, inasmuch as visible *images* of different value were made, so as to suit all grades, from the palace to the hovel; and before these all men, high and low, rich and poor, laics and ecclesiastics, did, in contempt of the positive command of God, bow down and worship, just as did their Pagan forefathers. Added to this, as might be gathered from the vision, the grossest dissoluteness prevailed alike among priests and people. Indulgence for crimes not even to be named might be purchased for a few pence. This system of indulgences, the journeying of both sexes to the same places to perform the same penances, generally at the shrine of some saint, the compulsory celibacy of the clergy, the increase of nunneries, and the practice of auricular confession – these are named by various writers as some of the means and incentives which tended too surely to include *licentiousness* amongst the effects of superstition.

When we feel wonder at such practices being admitted amongst professing Christians, we must call to mind that the Bible was at that time almost unknown, and the priests supported the religion they taught by magical deceits and sorceries, whereby they worked upon the imaginations of their trusting followers. Who that has ever read the history of these times knows not of the impostures through which miracles were said to be wrought: relics of saints made to perform wonderful cures; images that could neither see, nor hear, nor walk, made to appear as though possessed of human senses, and as restoring sight to the blind, strength to the lame, and hearing to the deaf? Who knows not the stories invented of purgatory, and the happy effects of masses and prayers purchased on earth upon the souls suffering therein? This was the work, not of ignorance, but of deliberate deceit. These were the sorceries specified among the unrepented sins of Papal Rome. Amongst these were also included thefts. But what the motivation of all these impositions? Doubtless, while ambition, pride, and blind superstition combined, each in large measure, the love of money was yet the root of the evil. By payment to the priest, full license was obtained for sin, and impunity guaranteed, both then and thenceforward. In order to appease God, it was only necessary to make pilgrimages, and to lay offerings on the shrines of the saints; all then was well. In A.D. 1300, Pope Boniface established a pilgrimage to Rome, instead of to Jerusalem, by virtue of performing which every sin was to be canceled, and the pilgrim's salvation ensured. The sale of Church dignities and of *episcopal licenses* for the grossest immoralities swelled the funds of the Church. But enough upon this subject!

To these is added the charge of *murders*. The blood of their fellowmen: of Petrobrussians, Catharists, Waldenses, Albigenses, Wickliffites, Lollards, Hussites, Bohemians, not dissenting heretics only, but the genuine disciples of Christ, was shed abundantly during the latter half of these four hundred years. It was guilt enough to incur death in that they were opposed in anywise to the pretensions of the Church of Rome.

In the twelfth century some few began to read and explain the Bible. The cry of heresy was forthwith raised, and the extermination of the whole people urged as a meritorious act. The innocence of these Waldenses was admitted; but the Book itself was condemned by Pope and priesthood, therefore suppressed.

In the fourth Lateran Council, A.D. 1215, a *Crusade* was proclaimed against them, and plenary absolution of all sin from birth to death was promised to such as should perish in the holy war. "Never," said Sismondi, "had the cross been taken up with more unanimous consent." Never, we may add, was the merciless spirit of murder exhibited more awfully in all its horrors. It was followed by the Inquisition, having Gregory IX. for its apparent author, the spirit of hell its one unseen. That horrid tribunal, from which no man could feel safe, was supported by the princes of the West.<sup>1</sup> The same murderous spirit was manifested from A.D. 1360 to 1380 against Wycliffe in England, and against Jerome and Huss in Bohemia, who forty years after, endeavored to revive the spirit of true religion, and were martyred. But more on these hereafter.

Such is a sketch of the so-called religion of this period in Western Europe; so characteristic was the description, "idolatry, sorceries, fornication, thefts, murders," as identified with its state during "the hour, day, month, and year," up to the fall of the Greek Empire.

There are some who would paint those times as *ages of faith*, and others as periods of *illumination* in the Church; but the religion of the majority of such persons is obviously that of the *imaginative and external*, and not what the Bible recognizes of heart cleansing practical godliness. Those who extract passages from mystic writers of the day as adorned with some beauty, and more or less of truth, and hold them up as specimens of the *spirit of the age*. But the appeal must be made to history for the truth; and history accords in every *iota* with the wonderful prophetic description in the text as expressing the real state of faith and conduct existing at that time.

2. "Men repented not." We have seen what history records as to the state of morals and religion up to the fall of Constantinople; and as the prophetic voice indicates that after that woe men continued unrepentant as before, so, turning to history, we shall find it. Not a word is there about reformation or repentance,

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<sup>1</sup>The Emperor Frederick II. and Louis IX. of France.

but we do find every sin continued and demonolatry increased. In A.D. 1460 came the renewed use of the rosary,<sup>1</sup> a mechanical method of devotion specially used with reference to the Virgin, which soon became the rage in Christendom, and was embraced alike by clergy and laity, being consecrated by Papal sanction. In A.D. 1476 Pope Sixtus gave sanction to an annual festival in honor of the Virgin's immaculate conception. The canonization of saints continued. In A.D. 1460 the enthusiast Catherine of Sienna was sainted. Bonaventure, a blasphemer, who dared to parody the psalter by turning the aspirations there addressed to God into prayers and praises of the Virgin Mary, was added to the list, 1482. In 1494 Archbishop Anselm was canonized by Pope Alexander VI, who on that occasion declared it to be the Pope's duty thus to choose out and hold up the illustrious dead for adoration and worship.

*Sorceries and thefts* increased. Rosaries were for sale. Each canonization brought devotees and offerings to a new miracle working shrine. Nor did Rome accord canonization without itself first receiving payment. "With us," says a Roman poet of the age, "everything sacred is for sale: priests, temples, altars, frankincense, the mass for the living, prayers for the dead, yea, heaven and God himself."<sup>2</sup> The pilgrimage to Rome every twenty-five years was decreed by Paul II, thus accelerating the return of that lucrative ceremony. Relics were sold to those who were not able to travel, and indulgences retailed by numerous hawkers such as Tetzl was at the opening of the sixteenth century, infamously associated, a crowning example of the thefts and sorceries.

Impurity, chiefly among the priesthood, glaringly advanced. The Popes led the way. Alexander VI was a monster in vice. "All the convents of the capital were houses of ill fame;"<sup>3</sup> and one German bishop, according to Erasmus, declared "that 11,000 priests had paid him the tax due by them to the bishop for each instance of fornication." Let us not enter further upon this subject.

Finally, murders ceased not. Anti-heretical crusades were proclaimed on a large scale. The Bohemians and Waldenses were the chief victims. Paul II, who had been elected Pope in order to check the Turks, turned his energies against the Bohemians, and offered to the Hungarian king the crown of Bohemia as a

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<sup>1</sup>The rosary is a string of beads used by Roman Catholics in devotion, often as an act of penance. Each large bead being counted, the Pater Noster or Lord's Prayer is repeated; and, after each small one, an address to the Virgin. A Romish catechism, approved by the Popes, has this question and answer: "Why repeat the Ave after the Lord's Prayer? Answer. — That by the intercession of the Virgin Mary, I may more easily obtain from God what I want." There are ten Aves to each Pater Noster

<sup>2</sup>Battista Mantuana.

<sup>3</sup>The historian Infessura.



reward if he should succeed in exterminating the Hussites. This was only attained at last by dividing the poor persecuted people amongst themselves; and after seven years of unsuccessful war this civil strife proved their most severe suffering.

In the years 1477 and 1488 Innocent VIII commanded all archbishops, bishops, and vicars to obey his inquisitor, and engage the people to take up arms with a view to effect the extermination of the Waldenses; promising indulgence to all engaged in such war, and a right to apply to their own use all property they might seize.

Then 18,000 troops burst upon the valleys; and had not the sovereign, Philip of Savoy, felt compunction and interfered, the work of extinction would have been completed, even as it was at Val Louise in High Dauphiny. "There the Christians," says the historian, "having retired into the caverns of the highest mountains, the French king's lieutenant commanded a great quantity of wood to be laid at the entrances to smoke them out. Some threw themselves headlong on the rocks below; some were smothered. There were afterwards found 400 infants stifled in the arms of their dead mothers. It is believed that 3000 persons perished in all on this occasion in the valley." Is Rome changed?

In 1478 the *reform*, as it was called, of the *Inquisition* took place, the Pope and the king of Spain agreeing in the arrangement, whereby it became a still more murderous instrument for persecution than before. In the first year alone 2000 victims were burned! It is computed that from its reorganization up to 1517 there were 13,000 persons burned for heresy, 8700 burnt in effigy, and 169,000 condemned to penances. It was in 1498 that Savonarola, a Dominican, was burnt at Florence for preaching against the vices at Rome, and this too by order of Papal emissaries.

Thus does history, upon the clearest authorities, abundantly bear out the truth of the statement that after the fall of the Greek Empire "men repented not of their idolatry, sorceries, fornications, thefts, and murders." Relative to idolatry, there is a singular proclamation by Mahomet II, issued in A.D. 1469, which will show how the Christian worship of that time was regarded by Mahometans. "I, Mahomet," he says, "son of Amurath, emperor of emperors, prince of princes, from the rising to the setting sun, promise to the only God, Creator of all things, by my vow and by my oath, that I will not give sleep to mine eyes, etc., till I overthrow and trample under the feet of my horses *the gods of the nations*, those *gods of wood, of brass, of silver, of gold, or of painting* which the disciples of Christ have made with their hands."

So closed the fifteenth century. Hopelessly wretched seemed the then state of the Church, the more so because remedies for bettering its condition had been tried and failed. At the commencement of these four and a half centuries Charlemagne tried, by *augmenting the temporal power of the priesthood*, to soften

and civilize the minds of the people under its control; but pride, ambition, covetousness, and immorality, rife among the leaders, were not likely to lead to reform amongst their followers. The attempted remedy only increased the evil during the twelfth century. In the thirteenth century the *Dominican and Franciscan orders* rose up, proclaiming that riches had caused the corruption of the clergy; and binding themselves by a vow of poverty, they set forward to preach the Gospel of Christ. For nearly two centuries the tide of popularity set in in favor of the friars. They, it was said, exhibited simplicity and self-denial in practice; they alone were the true ministers of Christ. At length this delusion also vanished; the lying fables palmed on the credulous were unmasked. But it was found more difficult to get rid of these orders than to establish them. The Pope gave them encouragement, and who could resist the Pope? So matters were not improved.

*Councils* were called, and it was hoped that this would be a sovereign remedy. The Council of Constance in A.D. 1414, showed that it was ready to assist the Papal tyranny by its decree against Huss and Jerome. Again, in the middle of this century, in the Councils at Florence and Ferrara, the Pope was decreed to be superior to any council; and at the close of the century it was almost universally received that, as God on earth, he could not err and may not be controlled. Little was success attendant on this effort of reform.

*Literature* was next tried. But what could it do? Without the Bible it might make men infidels but not Christians, and at that time the Bible was unknown. The superstitions believed by the people were fostered on the priest's part for interest sake, though known by these to be false; and the penalties against heresy forbade any public objection on the part of the laity.

The character given of the last Pope of the fifteenth century was in a measure applicable to the cardinals and hierarchy of Rome gathered round him. It was an atheist priesthood; and its hypocrisy was deliberate, systematic, avowed, and unblushing before the face of God and man.

Thus the various efforts for reform acknowledged to be needful had apparently failed. As the sixteenth century opened, there were some who still looked for change even from councils. In fact, supported by the French king, but opposed by the Pope and cardinals, one reform council was gathered at Pisa; but it was too weak to oppose the current evil. Apostasy from their God and Savior constituted the essence of the disease; and for remedy nothing but the republication of his own gospel of grace, and the power of his Spirit accompanying it, could effect the cure.

Dark and dreary was this time to the true but secret Church of the "hundred and forty-four thousand." Amidst these days of desolation one and another had lifted up the voice of witness, and many prayed and wailed in hopes that He, whom to know is life and light, would reveal himself and interfere for his Church. But time went on; the first watch of the night, the second, and the third

watch passed, and their strength was spent. Their hopes waxed fainter. Persecuted, wasted, scattered, it seemed as if "God had forgotten to be gracious," and that the promise that the gates of hell should not prevail against his Church had become a dead letter. But was it really so? Did John so see the end of the Church and the triumph of the foe? No! He says, "I looked, and saw another mighty angel descend." That intervention of the Lord for his people so long waited and prayed for was come, and the next scene in this wonderful drama. is that of the Reformation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>To the foregoing we may add a word or two as to the state of the English Church during these last centuries. The tale is soon told. It partook of the general corruption. One or two instances will suffice relative to a part of the charges made against Rome. Thomas a Becket's shrine was one of the places of pilgrim resort. A jubilee was celebrated to his honor, and plenary indulgence given to such as visited his tomb, of whom 100,000 have been registered at a time. In the Cathedral at Canterbury were three shrines, one to Christ, one to the Virgin Mary, and one to the saint. — So much for Demonology! Wickliffe was then raised up, who protested against the errors, and exposed so ably the fraud of the friars as to cause them to be detested throughout the land, where they had gained immense influence. In A.D. 1305, Edward I. wrote to the Pope to have the Bishop of Hereford canonized because "a number of miracles had been wrought by his influence."

## *Lecture XV. Intervention of the Covenant Angel.*

### **The Epoch of Antichrist's Triumph.**

**A.D. 1513.**

*Rev. 10:1-3 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (2) And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, (3) And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.*

**Glorious appearance! What a vision** to rejoice the heart of the Evangelist! Who this bright and cloud robed Being was he must have known full well, and what his mission he could easily anticipate. Is it not evidently the Lord Jesus, the *Covenant Angel* that now appears, come to vindicate his own cause, to assert his power, and by a renewed revelation of his grace and gospel to begin the consumption of Antichrist's usurped dominion? The *rainbow* must have signaled to John an interposition in support of the covenant of mercy, radiating from the *Sun of Righteousness* himself: in the roaring of the *Lion* of Judah was heard the voice of authority rebuking the enemies of God; and in the open volume he beheld the great means of effecting the divine purpose, the *Bible*. From all he must have gathered that at this juncture, when the power of darkness and corruption should be at its height, some sudden, striking, and direct intervention of Providence would take place, such as we cannot hesitate to recognize in the Reformation, with which the sixteenth century opened.

And here we observe another remarkable instance of that *allusive contrast* of which we have before spoken; the circumstances of this vision of Christ's revelation to his Church having at the same time a pointed reference to several particulars attending the display of Antichrist's pretensions to Christendom at this very period.

**To those latter we shall first refer**, and inquire what is taking place at Rome, that central metropolis of the world as well as of the visible Church of Christ. History has fully preserved the record of the high festival.<sup>1</sup> It is the month of March, A.D. 1513. From the window of the conclave of cardinals an announcement is made: "I tell you tidings of great joy: a new Pope is elected, Leo X;" and loud and joyous are the acclamations. Immediately the coronation

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<sup>1</sup>Roscoe's *Life of Leo X.*

begins at St. Peter's; but the grander ceremonial of his going to take possession of St. John Lateran – the church by the bishopric of which, as “mother and mistress” of all others, he is to be constituted Universal Pontiff, was delayed for a month that pompous preparation might be made. And now the day is come. Visitors from all parts fill the city. Besides the hierarchy of Rome, there appear many of the independent princes of Italy, ambassadors also from the states of Western Christendom, and the various deputies who represent the Church universal in the General Council now holden at the Lateran. The concourse from early morn has been to the great square of St. Peter's. Thence formed on horseback, the procession, crossing the bridge of St. Angelo, traverses the city to the Lateran church. First in order a troop of cavalry, then a long line of nobles and gentry, succeeded by the senators of Rome, Florentine citizens and other provincials; next the Papal bodyguard, with another file of barons and gentry. Envoys from Germany, Spain, Portugal, and other kingdoms follow; then abbots, bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs, above 250; then the cardinals wearing jeweled mitres in rich costumes, with streaming banners as on a day of jubilee. At length, closed in by a troop of military, the *Hero* (is it not rather the *God*?) of the day – the Pope comes. He rides on a white horse; a cope of the richest broidery mantles him; the ring of his espousal with the universal Church glitters on his finger, and on his head the *regno* or imperial tiara of three crowns. A canopy is borne over him by the chiefest Romans. Beneath him the streets are strewn with tapestry and flowers; and as he approaches, the multitude fall on their knees to receive his benediction. “It seemed to me,” said the Romanist narrator of the pageant, “that it was the Redeemer of mankind going to Jerusalem, there being substituted only for ‘*Hosanna to the Son of David*,’ the cry ‘*Life to the Pope, the Lion!*’”

But is it really the case that the people regard him as filling the place of Christ to them, that they look to him as their Redeemer and Savior? Even so, every mouth dwells on the high station of the Pope as divine rather than human. Every tongue tells of Leo's personal virtues, his fitness for the office of Christ's Vice-regent; and as with Christ, so now with the advent of Leo, they anticipate a new era of happiness to man.

On every side the splendid devices and paintings, and other decorations for the occasion which meet the eye, while they prove the revival of the arts in Italy, may be taken as the most faithful exposition of the general state of thought and feeling regarding him. In these the *history*, *titles*, and *offices* of Christ Jesus are applied to Leo, and with a singular adaptation to the prophecy before us. In one, in the Genoese arc, the azure heaven is represented. Radiant with glory as the new risen *sun*, the Pope is portrayed on the horizon: a *rainbow* reflects its light upon an animated landscape, seen as if just emerging out of night and tempest; below which is the sentence, “*The world hath, been unveiled to light; the king*

*of glory has come forth!*" Another painting in the arc of the Florentines represents the Pope with one foot on the land, the other on the sea, having a key in his right hand with which he opens heaven, and in the other another key (of hell, or perhaps of purgatory); with the legend beneath, "In thy hand I behold the empire of earth, and sea, and heaven." Yet again the lion appears as a symbol in these devices. For instance, in the arc near the bridge of St. Angelo there appear two lions, each with one foot on the Papal insignia, to designate that it is the Pope they symbolize, the other on the mundane globe, with the inscriptions, "*The prey is worthy of my glory!*" and, "*To me the charge belongs!*" Various other devices might be instanced; such as Leo receiving the homage and offerings of the Magi; sitting a youth in a cardinal's dress disputing with the doctors; impersonating Christ at his baptism; one while surrounded by his cardinals sacrificing, with the scroll, "*Tanquam Aaron;*" then opposite, a leader among his armed men, "*Tanquam Moses;*" or, lastly, as a fisherman exercising Christ's prerogative, separating the good fish from the bad, returning the good into the river and casting the bad into a burning fire.

Such is the exaltation of the great usurper of Christ's place, the Papal Antichrist. While, shut up in a small box covered with gold brocade, guarded by some five and twenty attendants, the consecrated wafer is carried to swell the procession. That, they tell you, is Christ! Oh, foul dishonor to their Lord! A state prisoner to add to the brilliancy of the pageant, a puppet in the hands of the priesthood!

Meanwhile, with every eye fixed upon him and every knee bent before him, the Pope reaches the Lateran. Here the studied mimicry of Christ is continued. Dismounting at the vestibule, Leo takes a lowly seat for a moment in assumed humility; then, amidst the chanting, "He raiseth up the poor from the dust to make him inherit the throne of glory," he is raised by the officials, carried up the nave, and seated on the throne within. They call it his *assumption* or *taking up*, as if like Christ, his elevation was to a heavenly glory, with all power given to him in heaven and earth.

These were not merely the exaggerations of popular excitement. The devices signified *realities acted out* in the history of Papal pretensions. As the *sun* in its brilliance, he claimed to be the dispenser of light to the world – the light of *truth* and of *salvation*. In all disputed matters of faith the appeal was not to the Bible but to the Pope, the very statements of the Bible being supposed to derive their authority from him, not he from *them*. One of the Decretals burnt by Luther was, "The Pope has power to interpret Scripture and to teach as he pleases, and no one may interpret differently." And the *rainbow*, emblematic of his prerogative of *mercy* to dispense *indulgences*, whereby all punishments of sin, temporal and eternal, were remitted, guilt blotted out, and innocence restored to the sinner. The tremendous efficacy of these emblems in support of such a system of superstition and error is all too clear.

And so it was that immediately after Leo's assumption an opportunity arose for the exercise of this prerogative of mercy. The design had been proposed by his predecessors of building the Church of St. Peter's, and the execution of it devolved on him. Artists were ready. Everything needful was procured save money. But whence was money to be provided? He must draw upon the credulity of the people. He resolved upon an issue of indulgences, the proceeds of which were to be given to the church.

In Germany more especially the sale went forward. Tetzel, a Dominican, was the vendor employed. As he traveled with pomp from town to town, a herald announced his approach, "The grace of God is at your gates." Forthwith magistrates, clergy, monks, and nuns were formed into procession, and with wax lights, standards, and the ringing of bells went out to meet him. The Papal bull was carried on a velvet cushion, a red cross elevated by the commissary near it, and amid the chanting of hymns and fuming of incense it was borne to the principal church and received with sound of organ. The red cross and Papal arms having been placed by the altar, the commissary mounted the pulpit and thus addressed the crowd: "Now is the heaven opened, now is grace and salvation offered. Christ, acting no more himself as God, has resigned all power to the Pope. Hence this dispensation of mercy. By virtue of the letters bearing the Papal seal that I offer you, not only is the guilt of past sins remitted, but that of sins that you may wish to commit in future. None is so great but that pardon is ensured to the purchaser, and not sins of the living only, but of the dead in purgatory. As soon as the money sounds in the receiving box, the soul of the purchaser's relative flies from purgatory to heaven. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Who so insensate, who so hard hearted as not to profit by it? Soon shall I shut the gate of heaven and extinguish the bright sunbeams of grace that shine before you. How shall they escape that neglect so great salvation?"<sup>1</sup> Then the confessionals are set, each with the Pope's arms attached. The confessors dilate on the virtue of indulgences. Crowds come to the purchase. Some of the more thoughtful question, "Can the grace of God be *bought*?" and turn away. With others the doubt is silenced by the reflection that it comes from the Pope. Can the *Vicar of Christ* err? So they too, come to the purchase. The price is from twenty five ducats to a half florin, according to the rank and opulence of the purchaser. The monk's money box full, he deducts his wages, pays his reckoning at the inn with an indulgence, and transmits the surplus to the Prince: Archbishop of Mayence, whose agent he is, and at whose commands he acts, and passes on to the next town to perform the same blasphemous part again. An agreement had been made between the Archbishop and Pope for the division of the receipts, and so the moiety flows to Rome – the price of the merchandise

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<sup>1</sup>Merle d' Aubigne's History of the Reformation , i. 229, etc.

of souls. Thus the cheat is consummated. Meanwhile the deluded purchaser lives, and perhaps dies, with a lie in their right hand. And as regards the Savior, robbed by the usurping Antichrist of his own attribute of mercy, who can tell the magnitude of the insult offered to him, the true Sun of Righteousness? So was the first picture acted out in the history of Leo.

Moreover the representation of the Pope in the Florentine Arc, *fixing one foot on the sea and another on the land*, had its direct fulfillment. In the second year of Leo's reign an embassy arrived from the king of Portugal. Now observe what passed. The ambassador was a Portuguese general celebrated for his part in the late conquests of the far Indies. In testimony of them he brought, amongst other presents to the Pope, certain animals hitherto unknown. Great was the admiration as these were led through the streets of Rome, and more especially upon reaching the pontifical presence, the elephant stopped, and, as if with more than instinct, knelt and three times bowed down before him. Then the orator speaks. "Fear and trembling," he says, "are come upon me, and a horrible darkness has overwhelmed me." Then, reassured by the Pope's serene aspect towards him he concludes, "That divine countenance, which, shining as the sun, has dispersed the mists of my mind," – he proceeds to narrate the Eastern conquests of the Portuguese arms, addresses the Pope as the supreme lord of all, and speaks of these conquests as the incipient fulfillment of God's promise, "Thou shalt rule from sea to sea, and from the Tiber river to the world's end. The kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts to thee; yea, all princes shall worship thee, all nations serve thee," and under thy auspices "there shall be one fold and one shepherd." He concludes in the same style, "Thee as the true Vicar of Christ and God, the ruler of the whole Christian republic, we recognize, confess, profess obedience to, and adore, in thy name adoring Christ, whose representative thou art."<sup>1</sup>

Four centuries before Gregory VII had claimed authority over the kingdoms of the world, acknowledgment of the Pope's supremacy had already been claimed. Again, A.D. 1155, Pope Adrian IV, in the exercise of the same pretensions, gave Henry II permission to subjugate Ireland, on condition that *one penny per house* should be paid as an *annual quit rent* into the Roman coffers: In the fourteenth century Clement VI gave Louis of Spain the grant of the Canary Isles. Subsequently the Portuguese having made large discoveries on the coast of Africa towards India, Prince Henry of Portugal applied to the reigning Pope, requesting that, as Christ's Vicar on earth, he would give the grant of these lands to him, with promise to convert the natives. A bull was issued accordingly, granting to the Portuguese all they might discover. In 1493 Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain obtained a similar grant relative to the discovery of America by

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<sup>1</sup>Roscoe's Leo X.



Columbus, care being taken not to interfere with the previous grant to the king of Portugal. All promised to have the Pope acknowledged as universal bishop over their dominions, the judgment of the princes of Christendom consenting in each case to these pontifical grants being an unimpeachable title. In this manner did Leo place one foot on the sea, the other on the land, usurper of the rights of Christ, to whom had been promised “the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession!”

Once more let us see Leo acting out the emblem of the *Lion*. We must again visit St. John Lateran, and hear what is passing in a grand council there assembled. There are sitting in ordered array above 300 bishops and archbishops, arrived from England, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Savoy, and the lesser states of Italy, together with ambassadors, generals of religious orders, the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, and not a few other ecclesiastics from beyond the seas, the whole, under Pope Leo's presidency, constituting the representative body of the Universal Church! The bishops are in splendid dresses and mitres, and the Pope sits on a throne high and lifted up, robed in scarlet and gold, and wearing on his head the badge of universal empire. Truly he was “as God sitting in the temple of God.”<sup>1</sup> This council has been summoned for the extirpation of heresy and the union and exaltation of the Church. Before the business of each day mass is celebrated, the hymn “Veni Creator Spiritus” chanted, and a sermon preached. One preacher paints on this occasion the Church as in desolation, seeking refuge with the Roman Pontiff, and prostrate at his feet addressing him, “Unhappy, degraded by wicked hands and defiled, I come to thee, my true lord and husband, to be renewed in beauty. Thou art our shepherd, our physician – in short, a second God upon earth.”<sup>2</sup> Another figures the Church as the Heavenly Jerusalem in present desolation, and says, “But weep not, daughter of Zion! God hath raised up a Savior, the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* hath come, and shall save thee from all thy enemies. On thee, O most blessed Leo, we fix our hopes as the promised Savior.” And then other orators unite, “Vindicate the tent of thy spouse, purify what is polluted in thy Church. By the fire and the burning of the pastor's office extinguish schism and heresy, that so, the renovation of the Church accomplished, the golden age may revive, and, in fine, that prophecy be fulfilled, Thou shalt rule from sea to sea, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

And now hearken to the *lion's voice*. Accepting all this praise, this deification as his due, his first act in assertion of that sovereignty over the world which

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<sup>1</sup>2 Thess. 2. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Harduin, ix. 1651.

had been assigned him was to denounce as schismatics the Pisan Reform Council, mentioned in the previous lecture as being held at this time under the authority of the king of France; and straightway behold, the two schismatic cardinals and the French king hasten to make public humiliation and ask absolution. The absolution is granted, and on the submission of the whole of Western Christendom to the Papal supremacy, the schism is healed. His next lion's roar is against the Bohemian heretics, the only ones apparently remaining. These are cited to appear, but with promise of pardon in case of submission.

And when, as was triumphantly avowed by the preacher in the next session, no heretic or opposer of the Pope's opinion was forthcoming, but all hushed in submission, then the Papal lion issues his voice of command: First, that inasmuch as *printing*, that wonderful art just invented, might be used to disseminate heresy, no books be printed without consent of the Pope's inquisitor in the district. Second, that no *preaching* be allowed, or explanation of the Scriptures, except in conformity with that of the recognized fathers and doctors of the Church; no *mention* to be made of *Antichrist*, or *inquiries* as to the time of the *final judgment*. Third, that the Inquisition fail not in *searching for* and *rooting heresy out* of the Church.

As to the *reforming* of the Church, a few externals were to be corrected; and for its *exaltation*, the solemn bull was repeated and confirmed in which the Church is defined as one body under one head, the Roman Pontiff, Christ's representative, and of which this is the conclusion, "We declare, define, and pronounce that it is essential to the salvation of every human being that he be subject to the Roman Pontiff," with the prefix thereto, "Whosoever obeys not, as the Scripture declares, let him die the death!" So roars the *Papal lion*, and the assembled Church assents. After a Te Deum of thanksgiving the members separated, each having received from the Pope a plenary remission of sins and indulgence, once in life, and in the article of death.

Such was the character of the *Papal assumption of the functions of Christ* at the time represented in the Apocalyptic vision. And now we are prepared to turn to the text with advantage. For so it was, that just when this Antichristian usurper was acting out the character of Christ before an admiring and applauding Christendom, and was professing to exercise in regard to both worlds his prerogatives and functions, opening heaven to all believers in his magic charms, however laden with guilt, and exhibiting himself as the dispenser of covenant mercies, the fountain of grace, the savior, the justifier, the sun of righteousness; Just when, as lord of the universe, he received the homage of its princes, and granted the kingdoms of the earth to whom he would; Just when, at his coronation, there were exhibited paintings on which art seemed to have lavished all its ingenuity in order to depict him in his threefold assumed offices as Christ's vicar and impersonator, in one as the sun with a rainbow reflecting its brightness, in another as planting one foot on the land and the other on the sea, in a third with

the world in his grasp, even as when a lion roareth over his prey; Just when, after assuming Christ's title of *Lion*, he had begun to rage against and threaten every opposer, uttering forth his own voice to the shutting up and denouncing *the Book*, the *Word of God*; Just then was fulfilled another symbolic figuration devised by higher than human art, and evidently in purposed contrast to the former – which 1400 years before, Christ himself told in the vision of Patmos as now at length intervening, revealing himself as the true Covenant Angel of light and mercy, putting the world under *his* feet, and making his mighty voice to be heard, and opening again that long forgotten and now forbidden *Book of God*.

All this had been foreshadowed, and was now to be done. It is “when the enemy shall come in like a flood that the Spirit of the Lord” will ever “lift up a standard” for his people. “If the Lord himself had not been on our side, they had swallowed us up quick when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Psalm 124. 1-6.

## *Lecture XVI. Intervention of the Covenant Angel.*

### **The Epoch of the Reformation.**

#### ***Discovery of Christ the Savior – Discovery of Antichrist the Usurper A.D. 1513 – 1521.***

*Rev. 10:1-4 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (2) And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, (3) And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.*

*(4) And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*

**It has been well remarked** that “the Reformation passed from the mind of Luther into the mind of Western Europe,”<sup>1</sup> and that its “different phases succeeded each other in the soul of Luther, its instrumental originator, before its accomplishment in the world.”<sup>2</sup> Hence the importance of tracing its development in the history of the Reformer himself, the master spirit, under God, of that great revolution.

Of these phases, the two which gave rise to all the rest were, the discovery of Christ in the fullness of his grace and truth, and the discovery of the predicted Antichrist in the Papal Apostasy. These two appear to have a distinct and direct prefigurement in that portion of the vision which we have already in part considered, and which is repeated as the heading of this Lecture.

1. Luther, the son of a poor miner of Mansfield, was born A.D. 1483. In his early boyhood, when at school both at Magdeburg and at Eisenach, he had often to beg his daily food with the pitiful cry, “Bread for the love of God;” and was indebted to a burgher's wife for the means of pursuing his studies and for his preservation. Grown to manhood, he passed four years at the University of Erfurt, where his intellectual powers and learning excited general admiration. But just as the honors and emoluments of the world seemed about to be opened to his attainment, he suddenly, to the dismay of his friends, renounced the world

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<sup>1</sup>Smythe's Modern History, i. 265.

<sup>2</sup>Merle d'Aubigne i. 130.

and its brilliant prospects, and betook himself to the solitude of an Augustine monastery. Thoughts deeper and mightier than affected others around him were then pressing on his soul and induced this strange step.

Luther had found a *Bible* hid in the shelves of the University library. Till then he had known no more of the Scriptures than what were given in the Breviary or by the preachers. He was at once riveted by what he read. It increased, even to intenseness, the desire of his heart to know God. At the same time he found therein descriptions of man's sinfulness and of God's holiness which awed and alarmed him. *Providential* circumstance thereafter confirmed and deepened the work on his conscience. An illness which had nearly proved fatal brought death to his view. He saw a beloved friend cut off with scarce a moment's warning. He was overtaken in a journey by a terrific lightning storm; and he associated it with the judgment of an angry God, whom he felt unprepared to meet. How shall I stand justified before God? What will it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose my own soul? These were now the absorbing thoughts of his mind. Thenceforth the world was to him as nothing. But while he longed to know God, neither his own understanding nor the philosophy and learning of the University yielded him the light he needed. He longed to propitiate him, but his conscience told him how inadequate for the purpose were his best performances. It had long been a notion that the *convent* was the place where, by *penances and prayers*, the favor of God was most surely to be attained. He gathered his friends around him, ate his farewell meal with them, then sought the monastery. Its gate opened and closed on him. He was an Augustine monk.

But was his object gained? Did he find the holiness or the peace with God that he longed for? Far from it. In vain he practiced all the strictest rules of the monkish life; in vain he multiplied prayers, and penances, and self-mortification. He found that in changing his dress he had not changed his heart. The consciousness of sin remained, its indwelling power, its guilt, its danger. "O my sin! my sin!" he was often heard to exclaim. Pale and emaciated, behold him at one time fallen down in his cell, apparently dead, from the exhaustion of the mental anguish, yet more than of sleeplessness and fasting.

There was a copy of the Bible chained in the monastery. With eagerness he renewed his intense study of it, but still found no consolation. Even the Gospel seemed but to increase his terrors, inasmuch as he found the wrath of God therein revealed against the ungodly.

It was at this time he met with Staupitz, Vicar-general of the Augustines, who at once distinguished from the rest the young monk of Mansfield, with his eyes sunk in their sockets, his countenance stamped with melancholy, his body emaciated by study, watching, and fasting, so that they might have counted his bones. Staupitz could almost divine the cause of such suffering, having himself in secret gone through somewhat of the same conflicts, until in the Gospel, rightly understood, he had found a Savior. He sought and gained the confidence

of Luther. He entered with him on the subjects of his anxiety. The Bible lay open before them; Staupitz unfolded to him from it the love and mercy of God to man as exhibited in Christ crucified. He spoke of *his death* as the expiation for penitent sinners; *his* righteousness and perfect justice of life as their plea and trust – *that* perfect and inherent righteousness being accepted by God *vicariously*, and so called “God’s righteousness,” in place of the imperfect and defiled performance of penitent sinners; just as his death was also vicarious and expiatory of the guilt of their sins.

When Luther still objected his sinfulness, it was answered by Staupitz, “Would you have merely the semblance of a sinner and the semblance of a Savior?” And when he objected again that it was to penitent sinners only that Christ’s salvation belonged, and that how to obtain this he had, with all his self-mortification, sought in vain, Staupitz replied, “It is from the love of God alone that true repentance has its origin. Seek it not in those macerations and mortifications of the body! Seek it in contemplating God’s love in Christ Jesus! Love him who has thus first loved you!”

Luther heard the words, and received them, not as the voice of a vicar-general, but as the Divine Spirit speaking by him. It opened the Gospel to him and showed him the two things he sought – the principle of justification before God and the principle of godly penitence and sanctification within. The light of the glory of God in Christ began now to shine upon him. With the eye of faith he beheld the Sun of righteousness shining on a lost world; and the dark clouds of mental conflict which he passed through served but to reflect, as it were, the rainbow of covenant mercy. In the sunshine of this forgiving love he found sweet sensations. “O happy sin, which has found such a Savior!” The subject of *repentance* was now a delight to him. He sought out in the Bible, given him by Staupitz, all that related to it; and these passages, he said, seemed as if they danced round his emancipated soul.

He was no longer inactive; the love of Christ constrained him. From the view of Jesus he drew *strength* as well as *righteousness*, Inward and outward variations and some severe illnesses confirmed his faith. On one occasion indeed, being sent on a mission to Rome, he had yielded to the influence of early associations, and for a while returned to superstitious observances. He made the round of the churches, celebrating masses in them, as that which might yield a blessing. He even climbed on his knees the Pilate staircase, near the Lateran, brought, it was said, from Jerusalem, to which penance was attached an indulgence and remission of sin. But while in the act a voice as from heaven seemed to him to sound in his ears, “The justified *by faith*, shall live; they, and they only.” He started up, and from that time the superstitions or his old education had never power to obscure his view of the Son of righteousness.

Thus was Luther inwardly prepared to enter upon the work designed for him, as God’s chosen minister, of showing to others what he had himself experienced.

And the way was soon opened. He was nominated by Staupitz to a professorship in the university at Wittenberg, recently founded by the Elector of Saxony. There in A.D. 1512, being appointed doctor of divinity *ad Biblia*, and having to vow on his appointment to defend the Bible doctrines, he received his *vocation as a Reformer*. Forthwith, in his lectures to the students and in his sermons to the people, he began to preach the Gospel that had been opened to him, and to set forth the glory of Jesus, mighty to save. His letters and conversations were imbued with the same subject. "Learn," he would say, "to sing the new song, *Thou, Jesus, art my righteousness: I am thy sin; thou hast taken on thyself what was mine; thou hast given, me what was thine!*" Against the doctrine of man's ability and strength to attain to righteousness he published theses, and offered to sustain them. Thus, as has been well said, he attacked *rationalism* before he attacked *superstition*, and proclaimed the *righteousness of God* before he re-trenched the *additions of man*.

Multitudes crowded to hear a doctrine so new, and maintained with eloquence so convincing. "It seemed," said Melancthon, "as if a new day had risen after a long and dark night."

Hitherto all had gone on without disturbance, the revelation of Jesus being confined to the few at Wittenberg; but now the conflict between Christ and Antichrist was about to commence. Tetzl came with his sale of indulgences near to Wittenberg, and the spirit of the Reformer was kindled. He published his celebrated ninety-five *theses* against indulgences, affixing them, as was customary, on the door of the principal church, and offering to maintain them against all opposed. The truths put forward most prominently were – the Pope's insufficiency to forgive sin or to confer salvation; Christ's all sufficiency, and the true penitent's participation by God's free gift not merely in the blessing of forgiveness, but in all the riches of Christ, irrespective of Papal absolution or indulgence. To these he added other declarations also, as to the Gospel of the grace of God, and not the merits of saints, being the true treasure of the Church, and against the avarice of the priestly traffickers in indulgences; and, moreover, an exhortation to real Christians to follow Christ as their chief, even through crosses and tribulation, to the heavenly kingdom.

The evening of their publication, the 31st of October, All Hallow Eve – has been remembered ever since as the epoch of the Reformation. With a rapidity, power, and effect unparalleled, unexpected, unintended – even as the voice of one mightier than Luther, and so felt by him – the report echoed throughout Christendom. It was felt by friends and foes to be a mortal shock to that whole fabric of error and imposition which had been built up during ten centuries of apostasy, and a mortal blow too, though unperceived by him who struck it, to the Papal supremacy. The minds of men were prepared to recognize Christ's headship and rights in the Church; and it was soon seen that the overthrow of

Papal dominion, and the erection of the Gospel standard (already by the contemporary teaching of Zwingli and other Reformers accomplished in some of the Swiss cantons) would be accomplished in England and some of the Continental kingdoms. Thus was the Angel's placing one foot on land and the other on the sea, and uttering his voice as when a lion roareth, fulfilled. From that time the light increased to the full exhibition of Christian truth, and more especially by the thousands in our own favored land, that tenth of the Papal Kingdom which fell away, to the full *discovery of Christ the Savior*.

2. We have now to consider that which formed the second great movement of the Reformation – the discovery by the Church of Antichrist in the Papal usurper; and this we find prefigured also in the vision before us. “And when he had cried, the seven thunders uttered their own voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their own voices I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.”

What mean these *seven thunders*? The difficulty in the way of most commentators is the command that they *should be sealed*, as if it were the intention that no mortal should know their import. But had this been so, why were they named at all? It is clear that some intimation was by the revelation to be conveyed to the Church, of which John, who heard the sounds, was the representative.

Certain points are here very observable:

*First*, these thunders are said to *utter voices* and to *speak*, evidently in a manner intelligible to the Apostle. This peculiarity distinguishes them from those which are elsewhere mentioned as proceeding from before the throne, and appearing to be the echoes of judgments passing on earth.

*Secondly*, they uttered *their own* voices – not the voice of God, nor of the Angel of the covenant, whose word had just preceded them, but in dissonance with, and opposed to the voice of Christ. Does not this suggest the voice of Antichrist?

*Thirdly*, the prohibition “*Write them not.*” Three times was the Apostle desired to write the words spoken on other occasions. But in every such instance the reason is annexed. The words to be written are “true and faithful;” they are “the sayings of the Spirit” – “the true sayings of God.”<sup>1</sup> The inference, therefore, to be drawn in this place from “*Write not,*” is that the voices of these thunders are not true; they utter their own voices; they are not from heaven, but rather self-called thunders.

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 14. 13; 19. 9; 21. 5.



Doubtless John was but too familiar with the imperial decrees or *fulmina* (thunders), for he was then suffering banishment in Patmos by reason of one of them, he might naturally conclude, from the same quarter these would proceed. May they not be Roman thunders pretending to inspiration, terrific in their threatening and effects? *Again*, why *seven* thunders? Like the *two topped* lightning of the Grecian poets, because issuing from the *two summits* of Parnassus, do not these also point to the locality whence they proceed? And are not the *seven famed hills* of Rome directly alluded to in the seventeenth chapter of this Revelation? The very expression, "A septenary of voices," has been used by Roman poets when speaking of a voice from that city. Clearly, then, we are to regard these seven thunders as fulminated from the mock *heaven* of the Papal Antichrist's supremacy – "The seven thrones of the Supreme Pontificate."

And, *lastly*, the use of the definite article, *the* seven thunders, denotes their *notoriety* and preeminence. The Papal anathemas were emphatically the thunders, and the Pope the thunderer, invested with those terrors of the prevailing superstition throughout the long Middle Ages. Where was the prince or the kingdom that had not trembled before them?

Thus, is the meaning evident. No sooner had the voice of Christ been heard declaring the great truths of the Gospel, and speaking by the lion like mouth of the great reformer, than the Vatican uttered its bulls condemning the bold movement; which, said John, "I was about to write."

And here, in tracing the historical fulfillment, we must bear in mind that the Evangelist witnessed these Apocalyptic visions in a *symbolic* character; not as an individual man. What was seen and heard by him appeared to be that which would be seen and heard by the faithful who should be in existence at the very time of the evolving of each successive scene of the advancing drama. Hence the inference follows that each *particular* seen or done by the Evangelist in vision must be taken to symbolize something correspondent in the views and actions of those Reformers, reawakened at the crisis before us, by the *apostolic spirit* out poured again upon the Church.

Luther was now the leader of the Reformation. We will give his own account of what he felt at this time. "When I began the affair of the indulgences, I was a monk and a most mad Papist. I would have been ready to murder anyone who should have said a word against the duty of obedience to the Pope... The popes, cardinals, bishops, monks, and priests were the objects of my confidence... If I had then braved the Pope, as I now do, I should have expected the earth to swallow me up alive like Korah and Abiram." It was in this state of mind, A.D. 1518, that he thus wrote to the Pope: "Most blessed father! prostrate at the feet of thy Blessedness, I offer myself to thee with all I am and all I have. Kill me or make me live, call or recall, approve or reprove, as shall please thee. I will

acknowledge *thy voice* as the *voice of Christ* presiding and speaking in thee.”<sup>1</sup> Thus when the *seven thunders uttered their own voices*, “I was about to write,” *i.e., recognize, publish, submit* to them, even as if they had been what they pretended to be, an oracle from heaven.

But at this critical point, a *real* message from heaven was conveyed to his mind and preserved him. Summoned to appear before the Papal Legate, when the Pope's judgment was pronounced in favor of indulgences and of the efficacy of the sacraments irrespective of faith in the recipient, he saw its opposition to the word and spirit of the Gospel, and resisted it. It was the Spirit's whisper, “Write not!” Yet more; when, in preparing for a public disputation, he had been under the necessity of examining into the origin and character of the Papal supremacy, the true character of the whole system began to open to his view. Thus he wrote to a friend about the close of 1518, “My pen is ready to give birth to something greater. I know not whence these thoughts come to me. I will send you what I write, that you may see if I have well conjectured in believing that the Antichrist, of whom St. Paul speaks, now reigns in the court of Rome.” The thought was fearful, and sometime after he wrote again, “To separate myself from the Apostolic See of Rome has not entered my mind.” But still the conscience returned. The Elector of Saxony who befriended him was startled with hearing, “I have been turning over the Decretals of the Popes, and would whisper it into thine ears that I begin to entertain doubt (so foully is Christ dishonored in them) whether the Pope be not the very Antichrist of Scripture.” Further study of Scripture, and further teaching of the Holy Spirit helped forward the suspicion; and when in A.D. 1520, the Papal thunders of excommunication were issued against him, accordantly with that monitory voice which had bade St. John “seal them up” (the very phrase of the times for rejecting Papal bulls), Luther electrified Europe. Having summoned a vast concourse of all ranks, he kindled a fire outside the walls of Wittenberg; and by the hands or the hangman, the bull, with the Papal Decretals and canons accompanying, was committed to the flames. In his public answer to the bull he poured contempt on the Papal thunders, calling them *the infernal voices of Antichrist*.

Once convinced, no earthly power could induce Luther to a recantation. When summoned before the Emperor, the Legate, the Germanic princes and nobles at the Diet of Worms, he strengthened the cause by a bold confession. A goodly company had now joined him; Melancthon, Carlstadt, Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, and many others, fathers of the Reformation. In the German towns and universities, by priests, monks, students, and people, the new doctrines were enthusiastically received. The work was fast progressing in Switzerland. The

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<sup>1</sup>Merle D' Aubigne, i. 343.

effect was confessed by the astonished Legate, when in traveling through Germany to Worms, instead of the wonted honors and reverence of his high office, he found himself disregarded and shunned as an agent of Antichrist. A mighty revolution had begun, and who could foresee its issue?

## ***Lecture XVII. The Angel's Oath.***

### **Chronological Notice of the Reformation.**

*Rev. 10:5-7 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, (6) And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: (7) But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

**Another Gracious Announcement**, revealed at the same juncture, proceeding from the same Divine Messenger of the Covenant, and bearing the attestation of his own solemn oath! And to what end? Is it not that they “might have a strong consolation” who have fled to Jesus, the hope *anew* set before them? At a time when truth was struggling to emerge from long continued darkness – when the conflicting principles and forces of Christ and *Antichrist* were gathering for the battle, and fresh trials and tribulations were preparing for the faithful witnesses for Jesus – how consolatory to be assured by God's own Word that the desired consummation was drawing nigh, and that yet a little while, and the great *mystery* of God in *providence* and in *prophecy* shall be accomplished! How solemn and quickening was the thought, for time, it was said, would be extended no further to the Antichristian tyranny whose thunders had just before echoed on the scene; but that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, *at whatsoever time he might be destined to sound*, all would be consummated according to the glad tidings declared to the prophets.

Truly it must have cheered the heart of St. John in this prolonged vision of good overborne by evil, and of the flock of Christ harassed and persecuted by the world of ungodliness, to have been enabled to mark, as it were, on the chronometer of heaven the advance of the hour of deliverance, and to have the assurance of the Lord himself that the longed-for day was approaching. But here as in other places, the Apostle must be considered in his *representative character*; and the inference follows, that there ought to have been at this period, both with Luther and amongst the other fathers of the Reformation, a strong and prevailing expectation of the approaching end. We have seen in former visions how impressions were widely and deeply experienced in the Church that corresponded with the solemn chronological notices on the Apocalyptic scene. According to the intimation under the fifth seal given to the souls under the altar,

the Church at the epoch corresponding did expect, we saw, that a new and distinct period of martyrdom would intervene before the end. Again, agreeably with the cry of "Woe to the earth by reason of the three trumpets yet to sound," occurring just before the blast of the fifth angel, there was at the corresponding date a very general portending of the worlds end, and of fearful trials accompanying it. In like manner, correspondent with the intimation here made to St. John, we learn that a strong persuasion existed just at the time of the Reformation, not only that the era was remarkable, but that a new dispensation was near at hand. The burst of intellect and of literature consequent on the invention of printing, the discovery and so-called Christianization of a new world, excited expectations among all, and Papists said the glory of the Papal kingdom was about to be extended over the entire world.

Very different truly, and grounded chiefly on very different considerations, was the expectation of the true Church, though in it also high expectations were raised. Once that Antichrist had been exposed, and that in strength and power, they looked for his downfall; and now that the Bible was drawn forth from its concealment, they expected that Papal superstition should fall by means of the "breath of the Lord," as well as by the "brightness of his coming," according to the Scriptural predictions referred to in the angel's oath.<sup>1</sup> Especially then did Luther and the *German* Reformers look forward with hope to the fulfillment of these promises; while the Reformers of England and Switzerland seized on this very passage of the Revelation, and, calculating that the chronological place then reached in the prophetic history of the Church was that of the *sixth* trumpet, waited in expectation of the sounding of the seventh, and the consummation consequent upon it.

In answer to the Papal bull of condemnation Luther writes, "Sure that our Lord Jesus reigneth, I fear not thousands of popes. Oh, that God may at length visit us, and cause to shine forth the glory of Christ's coming, wherewith to destroy that man of sin!" Writing to Staupitz the next year he says, "The abominations of the Pope, with his whole kingdom, must be destroyed; and the Lord does this without hand, by his word alone." Again, "The kingdom of Antichrist, according to the prophet Daniel, must be broken without hand; that is, the Scriptures will be understood by and by, and everyone will preach and speak against Papal tyranny from the Word of God, until (and here he quotes St. Paul) this *man of sin* is deserted by all his adherents, and dies of himself." Again, to the Duke of Savoy, upon hearing that, he favored the Reformation; "Let those who sincerely preach the Gospel be protected; this is the way in which Christ will destroy Antichrist by *the breath of his mouth*; and thus, as it is in Daniel, *he shall be broken without hand*, whose coming is with lying wonders." Nor did

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<sup>1</sup>Dan. 7 26; 2 Thess. 1. 8.

the adoption and misuse of the same idea by fanatics alter his views. It only seemed to him quite in accordance with the usual device of Satan to attempt to overthrow truth by counterfeit.

As he advanced in life, he perceived that some things yet remained to be accomplished before the end, some wasting away of the Papal power through the Gospel word, some temporary apostasy possibly of the Protestant body, and consequent brief revival of Papal ascendancy; perhaps, also some confederation of Pope and Turk against Christ's faithful protesting ones. To the last (though baffled in attempting to fix a date in accordance with Scripture), the idea did not forsake him, and this thought cheered him in his dying hour, that soon *the coming* of Christ should appear. Melancthon's views were very similar. Like Luther he explained the apostate *king* of Daniel 11, in respect of his "abomination making desolate," his pride, tyranny, and fated end (as well as the *little horn* of Daniel 8), to mean the popes and Popedom. He also used the chronological argument, long noted before his time by Christians, of the *seven* days of the creation being a type of the duration of the world. "Six thousand years shall this world stand, and after that be destroyed, 2000 years without the law, 2000 years under the law of Moses, and 2000 years under the Messiah." He felt persuaded that the protest against Antichrist, and the consequent Reformation, was that very consumption of the enemy predicted by Daniel and St. Paul to occur just before his end and final destruction at Christ's coming.

The *Swiss* Reformers contemporary with Luther and Melancthon wrote in the same strain. A.D. 1552, Leo Judah, in a commentary on the Revelation, applied the charges of murder, idolatry, sorceries, fornications, etc., in the ninth chapter to the then Church of Rome, and the tenth chapter generally to the Reformation. He writes of the passage before us, "Christ taketh an oath, and sweareth by God his heavenly Father, even with great fervency, that the time of his coming to judge the quick and the dead is now nigh at hand, and that when the victory that was prophesied to be fulfilled of Antichrist (which victory the seventh angel must blow forth according to his office) were once past, then should altogether be fulfilled what all prophets did ever prophesy of the kingdom of Messiah the Savior, which is the highest mystery." Bullinger, in A.D. 1555, speaks in similar terms and with a like application; "Christ swears that there is but one trumpet remaining; therefore, let us lift up our heads, because our redemption draweth nigh."

In Britain, that *isle of the sea*, on which the Angel planted his right foot, we find Bishop Latimer expressing the same hope; "St. Paul saith the Lord will not come till the *swerving from the faith* cometh, *which, thing is already done and past*. Antichrist is known throughout the world. Wherefore the day is not far off." He also takes the chronological view of the world's endurance to be 6000 years, and says, "So there is now left but 448 years."

Another example is furnished by Bale, afterwards Bishop of Ossory. In a commentary on the Apocalypse he applies the passage before us to his own time, A.D. 1545, as being then in the sixth age of the Church, and the seventh trumpet only as being yet to come. Then, on Rev. 20:3, after recounting a list of Christian confessors, including Luther, Melancthon, etc., by whom Antichrist's tyranny had been disclosed, he says, "I doubt not but within few days the breath of Christ's mouth, which is his living Gospel, shall utterly destroy him."

We need not adduce more to establish the fact that, from the time of Luther's and Zwingle's discovery of the Antichrist of prophecy being none other than the Roman Popes, the conviction was strongly impressed on their minds, as by divine communication, that the time of Antichrist's destruction, though not yet come, was not far remote, and therewith an expectation of the coming of Christ's kingdom and the ending of the mystery of God.

Nor did this prophetic chronological discovery die away through the whole of this and the subsequent century. Indeed from it, as from a point of light, Protestant interpreters have made their way to the solution of other parts of the Apocalyptic prophecy, even to the present day.

Not the Reformers only, but numbers of the Lord's faithful and tried servants ever since that time have found in the Angel's information, thus conveyed, a source of comfort and encouragement most influential and practical, suited above all things to animate them for the great work before them, the doing and suffering, in all their subsequent conflicts, as the Lord's witnesses, with Antichrist, the world, and Satan. Must we not see and admire the goodness and wisdom of God in this revelation?

## *Lecture XVIII. The Covenant Angel's Commission.*

### **Ecclesiastical Re-Formation of the Ministry and The Church.**

*Rev. 10:8-11 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. (9) And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. (10) And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. (11) And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

*Rev. 11:1-2 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. (2) But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

**In this passage we have prefigured** the two great steps of advance in the Reformation: first, the recommissioning by Christ of faithful spiritually prepared ministers to preach his Gospel in various countries and languages; next, the authorized constitution of the evangelical and reformed Church, to the exclusion of the apostate Church of Rome.

I. The first is contained in the charge to the saint John, in his *representative* character, “to take and eat the little book” which the Angel delivered to him, and so to go forth as the Lord's *ambassador* and *preacher* to all people. The word “*prophesy*,” too frequently understood only in its restricted meaning of *predicting future events*, has far more significance: both in Hebrew and in Greek the term implies to *tell forth*, *announce*, *speak as an ambassador*. Thus it includes the making known God's mind and will, the explanation of his mysteries, the pleading his cause, and in this, the exhorting, instructing, reproving, warning, and reason with a rebellious people. In the New Testament the same meaning is attached to it; and it is specially applied by St. Paul to the expounding the written Scriptures and exhorting from them.<sup>1</sup> This general signification of preaching the Gospel is that which is here intended and made clear from the symbolic act connected with it: the taking up and digesting the little book as the

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<sup>1</sup>1 Cor. 14. 3.



subject matter of that preaching. Just as in the parallel instruction given by the Lord to the prophet Ezekiel;<sup>1</sup> as also in the case of Jeremiah,<sup>2</sup> the “little book” in the present instance was the doctrine committed by Jesus to his disciples, the New Testament which they were to *preach to every creature*; and which injunction, both as to reading and expounding amongst heathen and Christian congregations, continued to be observed for three centuries as the constant part of Christian Sabbath worship, until in progress of time, the professed Church could no longer *endure sound doctrine*, and, as they departed from the faith, discontinued the practice.

At the end of some four hundred years, Christianity, as we know, became nominally the religion of Christendom. Two centuries later the Goths, who had invaded as heathen or Arians, settled down into orthodox Christianity. Thus the world was in outward profession identified with the Church. And what then followed? By degrees the Scripture lessons were abridged; *legends of saints* were introduced in the place of the Bible; the Psalms, the chief Scripture lessons remaining, were *chanted* by the priests, instead of being read to the people; and, as language changed, owing to the inter-mixture of the Goths with the Romans, the services, being in Latin, were no longer understood. *Preaching* also became rare. For though to certain of the deacons and presbyters in the cities permission to that effect was given, yet was it considered that the *obligation* appertained only to the *bishop*; consequently the bulk of rural population was left in ignorance. Homilies from the early Fathers, translated by the bishop or other more learned person, were for a while enjoined to be used instead of sermons; but even these were after a while neglected. Besides which, a restriction was imposed on the free preaching of the Gospel, no *presbyter* being allowed to preach unless expressly *authorized* by the bishop; and further, even bishops being required by the canons to avoid broaching any opinion diverse from what was *received as orthodox* or from “*the divine tradition of the Fathers.*” In the ministration of sacraments and ordinances the essential duties of the priesthood were considered to terminate. The invention of *transubstantiation* but increased the evil, and confirmed the clergy more than ever in their neglect of the work of evangelist. What need to preach the Gospel of salvation when at any time the priest could offer up Christ anew as a real and sufficient atonement for sin?

And so darkness grew on in the Middle Ages. Here and there we read of some attempts to revive *preaching* – as in England by King Alfred, and by Archbishops Egbert, Elfric, and Peckham. About one hundred years later came Wickliffe. Regarding this neglect as the “*foulest treason*” to Christ, he not only

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<sup>1</sup>Ezek. 2 3–8.

<sup>2</sup>Jer. 15. 16.

himself set the example of preaching, but he translated the Bible into English, and sent forth poor priests for missionary work. As Wickliffe in England, so Huss in Bohemia. But both Hussite and Wickliffite preachers were soon excommunicated as heretics, and nearly suppressed by the terrors of the sword. And so this most important part of the Christian minister's duty – the addressing the hearts and consciences of the people from the Word of life, the setting forth of God's grace and love through a dying, risen, and interceding Savior, was again neglected, and all but unknown, until the close of the fifteenth century, and until Luther began the Reformation. At this very period the word went forth, as from the Angel to St. John, "Thou must prophesy again," etc.

It is true that at Luther's ordination as deacon, an old and primitive custom had been followed. The *book* of the Gospels being placed in his hand by the bishop, he was charged thus: "Take authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God;" and words were added respecting his not only "assisting the priests in ministrations at the altar," but also of "declaring the Gospel and other Scriptures of the New Testament, and of preaching the Word of God." Although afterwards, when ordained a *priest*, the paten and the chalice were given to him, and he was empowered to sacrifice (i.e., in private masses and the sacramental rite) for the living and the dead – a higher function generally thought to supersede the previous charge – yet did he deeply feel his Scriptural obligation to preach. What to him that the common practice was for the deacon to read a few words in an unknown tongue; had his priestly office annulled his deacons vow? He felt not as others felt. Taught by the Spirit of God, he looked through the appointment by man to *Him* in whose name he was ordained; and from his earliest call, and with but partial enlightenment from above, he recognized the duty, and gave himself to do the work of an *Evangelist*, as one appointed even by the Lord Jesus himself. The Vicar-general's order encouraged and confirmed him in his plan; and so the Church of Wittenberg, as before observed, heard the strange sound of revived Gospel preaching.

Luther not only preached, but he circulated evangelic writings and taught by personal communications. As the Vicar-general's substitute he held a visitation of the Augustinian convents in electoral Saxony, and in this way was unconsciously preparing other monks and clergy to become preachers in the Church soon to be established. No sooner did he discover the Antichristian tendency of the restrictions relative to preaching, which we have noticed, than he set them aside. In his final letter to the Pope he declares, "There must be no fettering of Scripture by *rules of interpretation*. The Word of God must be left free." And both he and his brother Reformers acted on the feeling.

When Luther had proclaimed the Papal oracle to be the voice of Antichrist, and persisted at Worms before the Emperor in rejecting it, the severest condemnatory decrees were issued against him and his fellow laborers. By these they

were *excommunicated* from the Roman Church and degraded from their ministry in it; and on pain of confiscation of their goods, imprisonment, and even death, they were interdicted from preaching the Gospel. Luther was outlawed; and his friend, the Elector of Saxony, to save his life hid him in a lonesome castle in the forest of Wartburg.

In this remote solitude, he called his Patmos, he had time to reflect, and to devise what could be done for the cause and Church of Christ. Would he now bow to the storm and abandon the work? Let us but follow out the Apocalyptic figure. "The voice said, Go, *take the little book* out of the Angel's hand." Luther's chief occupation in his year of exile was the translation of the New Testament into German. He felt this was needful to spread the light of truth among ministers and people, and for the overthrow of Papal superstition.

It was a work in which he delighted, and he expressed annoyance whenever controversial writing obliged a temporary interruption. He might be said to *taste its sweetness*, however bitter to him personally might be the immediate consequence of preaching it. It was now with him as with John the revelator, when having *ate the little book*, he found it *in his mouth sweet as honey*.<sup>1</sup>

*Thou must prophesy again*. Full well did Luther feel that the Gospel was still instrumentally the power of God unto salvation; that to its long neglect was owing the establishment of the great apostasy; that by the renewed preaching of it (*prophesy again*) that apostate power was to be broken; and that on them who had been spiritually enlightened with divine truth devolved the obligation of accomplishing a *Reformation*. Could the Pope annul his ministerial orders or alter the obligation consequent upon them? Could Antichrist cancel what Christ had communicated? Tracing upwards, Luther felt it was from Christ his commission had come, and that its revocation by the Pope was impossible. Nor could his deference to "the powers that be" move him on this point, so that the Emperor's interdict was ineffectual. Confined in his Patmos, regardless of royal and papal orders against preaching, he wrote urging Melancthon and his fellow servants forward, and to continue to exercise their powers in *evangelic preaching*. It was the repetition of the angel's command, *Thou must prophesy again*.

No sooner was the translation of the New Testament finished, than he himself felt he could no longer remain silent. A crisis had arrived which seemed to call for his assistance. Persecution had begun against his fellow laborers in Germany; besides which, a sect called Anabaptists had arisen, styling themselves

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<sup>1</sup>There is a passage in Bilney's life which pointedly illustrates this idea. His biographer quotes one of his letters, which says, that being in distress of mind he opened on the text, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Then, he says, the Scripture became sweeter to him than honey in the honeycomb, and he prayed that, being so comforted by Christ, he might be strengthened by his Spirit to teach sinners the way.

Christians, but in truth bringing discredit on the name they professed. Melancthon urged his return, with a view to heading the little body of Reformers in the fulfillment of their ministerial, it might be said their *apostolic*, commission. At the risk of his proscribed life, as if impelled by a voice from above, he returned to Wittenberg. In excuse he wrote to his patron, the Elector, "*The Divine will is plain, and leaves me no choice: the Gospel is oppressed and begins to labor.*" Again, "It is not from men I have received my commission, but from the Lord Jesus Christ. Henceforth I wish to reckon myself his servant and to take the title of *Evangelist*."

In pursuing the history, we find how successful was the aid which Luther gave on his return, and how God opened the door for the spread of the Gospel, whether by means of the translated *Word* or by his *preaching*. It was in A.D. 1522 that Luther arrived in Wittenberg; and within the two or three years the message of salvation was heard by princes and people, not in Germany only, but in Sweden, Denmark, Pomerania, Livonia; in France, Belgium, Spain, and Italy also, though with less general acceptance, and, last mentioned but not least, in England. Preachers were raised up on every side, and translations of the Scriptures were multiplied. The prediction was in course of fulfillment. *Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and languages, and kings.*

And here occurred an important point for decision; on which the continuance of this renewed evangelic preaching materially depended. Cut off from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, from whose hands were the ministers of the Reformation to receive ordination? Was the work so happily begun to cease for want of pastors? Surely not. Luther felt that where Scripture had not shut up the apostolic ministry of the early Church by an *express prohibition* of other non-episcopal ordinations, the very necessity of the circumstances justified a departure from the usual practice. He renounced the title of priest and doctor given him by Papal authorities, and styled himself simply, preacher, A.D. 1523. A year or two later, the function of ordination was formally taken into their own power by the Reformed Churches. In the German Churches it was vested in superintendent presbyters; in the Swiss Churches simply in the presbytery.

On the other hand, in England, through God's providence several of the bishops having united themselves with the Reformed Church, the regular medium of ordination was continued; all, however, in Christian fellowship with their reformed sister Churches on the Continent. Of course the want of direct episcopal ordination in some cases, and the previous excommunication of the ordaining bishops in others, raised a cry amongst critics as if the Reformed Church

had no regular ordination for its clergy.<sup>1</sup> Regarding, however, this interpretation of the passage before us to be the right one, we have in the fact of St. John's being made the *representative* of the faithful ministers of the Reformation a direct intimation of their being all *in the line of apostolic succession*; and in the *angel's* words, "Thou must prophesy again," of their being commissioned by Him who commissioned the Apostles – the Covenant Angel, The Lord Jesus.

One remarkable change in the ritual of ordination was now introduced by the Reformers. Instead of the words, "Receive thou authority to *sacrifice* for the living and the dead," as was the Romish form, a solemn charge was given to "*preach the Gospel*." Preaching had been so long neglected that they must begin again the preaching of Christ.

There was a change of *symbol*, too, as well as of words, the presentation of a *chalice* and *paten* being abolished, and instead thereof in many Churches being substituted the delivery of the New Testament, or perhaps of the whole Bible, now through the art of printing made a *little book*. Our English ritual especially – in the authority presented to deacons and priests "to read" or "to preach the Word," and the injunction to bishops to "take heed to the doctrine" and to "think on the things contained in this book," may be said to perpetuate the Apocalyptic commission. Surely the fact is remarkable. Nor would it be uninteresting for such as are ordained to remember this pre-enactment of their ordination in the visions of Patmos. They might not only thus derive strength and comfort in the consciousness of a *direct divine commission*, but, moreover, be wholesomely impressed with the duty of making the Gospel the grand subject both of their personal study and of their public preaching, and of maintaining a constant and faithful testimony against all superstition, sin, and error, especially against those of the *apostate Church of Rome*.

II. The latter part of the Covenant Angel's charge is contained in that which appears with our Bibles as the *first* verse of chapter 11, but which is evidently a continuation of the same scene as that with which the tenth chapter closes; the same Angel continuing to speak to St. John, and giving him a further direction. The temple, which we have already shown to represent the Christian Church, is again introduced with a new feature super added, its *outer court*, or *court of the Gentiles*. The altar-court is still used as the symbol of that part of the *Church visible* which faithfully adhered to the true worship indicated by the altar; while the outer court (which under the former dispensation was given to such heathen as professed Judaism, but too often apostatized) is now applied to represent

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<sup>1</sup>Macaulay says that there is not a minister in Christendom who could trace his spiritual genealogy as far back as the Conquest. Neither the Romish or English Church can prove their apostolic succession with anything approaching to certainty. See Archbishop Whately's *Cautions for the Times*, chap. xvi.

those who, while they professed Christianity, had virtually adopted an idolatrous worship.

It would almost seem impossible for the Apostle not to view, in these outer court worshipers, that line of apostasy described in earlier visions, which in one scene, under the name of Christ's Israel, had been satisfied with another life giving, another sealing than that of the Angel of life; which in another is described as forsaking the great altar of sacrifice, and again, as rejecting Christ's reconciliation and adopting other mediators; and yet once more – when the third part of men had been slain, as continuing in demon worship and heathen idolatry, that line against whose head the cry of the Angel had gone forth in majestic wrath, and from whose seven hilled metropolis had issued forth, in defiance of it, the seven Antichristian thunders.

This premised, the meaning of the clause will readily approve itself. St. John, representing at this epoch the Reformed Church, was desired to “Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles.”

These *four* several points would seem to be signified, 1. that Luther and his brother laborers were directed, as from heaven, to a *reconstitution* of the Reformed Church, for the measuring implies the edification and constitution, as well as definition, of what is measured; 2. that they should define as the proper members of the Church such only as in public profession recognized the doctrine of *justification through the alone efficacy of the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and through Christ's alone mediatorship*; 3. that the Romish Church must thence be *excluded* or *excommunicated* as apostate and heathen; 4. that for this purpose a *certain ecclesiastical authority* would be officially given to them, it being said, “There was given me a reed *like unto a rod*.” The more frequent use of this word *rod* in the New Testament is as the ensign of *official authority*. On two occasions when the Jewish temple worship had become corrupt and needed reform, under the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, it was the royal mandate that empowered the priesthood to carry out the purification. The original call was, of course, from God; but it was the regal authority which immediately enforced the act. Agreeably with these precedents, in a reed like unto a rod, which was given to St. John, was shadowed forth the support which Luther and his fellow reformers would meet with from the royal and other ruling powers of those times.

And now for the historical fulfillment of this part of the vision. March 1522, upon leaving the castle of Wartburg, to resume his ministerial labors, despite the interdicts of Pope and Emperor, the established religion in Saxony was still the Roman Catholic. Nor did Luther at that time wish for much more than the liberty of preaching the Gospel, expecting that this in itself would be sufficient for the overthrow of error, and that consequently the Papacy would fall to ruins.

The measuring rod had not yet been officially given to the Reformers to authorize their reconstitution of the Church.

But it soon became evident that some plan of ecclesiastical discipline must be observed for the proper ordering of the Reformed services, the prevention of possible divisions, and the general support of religion. Luther's personal influence was, as yet the only visible cement of union. He had appropriated to the maintenance of ministers, hospitals, and schools the revenues of certain old canons of Wittenberg lately become vacant. Still *authority* was wanted. After another year, the Elector Frederick, convinced that the Reformation was accordant with God's will, determined to give the required sanction; but before it was done he died. His brother and successor, the Elector John, assuming that supremacy in ecclesiastical matters was the right of every lawful sovereign, as maintained by the Reformers alike in Germany, Switzerland, and England, proceeded at once to exercise that right by forming *new ecclesiastical constitutions*. New forms of worship were introduced, drawn up by Luther and Melancthon on Scriptural principles. Romish images and superstitions were removed; the ecclesiastical revenues of the electorate were appropriated to the support of the Reformed religion; and a fresh supply of ministers received their ordination, altogether independent of the Roman hierarchy, about A.D. 1525. Soon after a general visitation of the electorate by Luther and other Reforming fathers was made on the Prince's order, to see to the execution of the new system, and to complete the establishment of a *separate evangelical Church*.

The example was followed by the ruling powers in the Reforming states of Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and soon in England. And here let us notice that the principle acted upon in them was precisely that which was laid down by the Angel in vision for the measurement of the Apocalyptic temple, to make salvation through Christ's meritorious death and mediatorship (that which the Jewish *altar* symbolized), the prominent characteristic of Reformed worship; and to exclude those who, forsaking that altar had made to themselves another method of salvation, and given themselves to heathen superstitions and idolatries; in other words, the votaries of the false Church of Rome. Charged by the Romanists as *schismatical*, the principle was solemnly avowed and justified. At the first Diet of Augsburg, A.D. 1525, a Defense, or *Apology*, written by Melancthon, was presented by the Elector, in which the following points were insisted on:

First, that every minister of God's Word is bound by Christ's express precept to preach the leading doctrine of the Gospel, *justification by faith in Christ crucified, and not by the merit of human performances*; whereas men had by the Roman doctrine, been drawn from the cross of Christ to trust in their own works and in superstitious vanities.

Second, that it became the princes (to whom authority rightly belonged) to consider whether the new doctrines were or were not true, and if true, to protect and promote them.

Third, that the Pope, cardinals, and clergy did not constitute the *Church of Christ*, albeit there were some apparently amongst them who opposed the prevailing errors, and really belonged to the *true Church* – the latter consisting of the faithful, and none else, who had the Word of God, and by it were sanctified and cleansed; while, on the other hand, what St. Paul had predicted of Antichrist's coming and sitting in the temple of God had its fulfillment in the *Papacy*. Which being so, and God having forbidden, under the heaviest penalty, every species of idolatry and false worship, of which class were the sacrifice of the mass, masses for the dead, invocations of saints, and such like, things notoriously taught in the Church of Rome, the Reformers were not guilty of *schism* in having convicted Antichrist of his errors, or in making alterations in their church worship and regulations, whereby Romish superstitions were cast out.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the manifesto of the Reformers to the first Diet of Augsburg. In the second Diet, A.D. 1530, the celebrated articles and *confessions of faith* were presented to the same effect. These and other confessions which were elsewhere adopted differed, as might be expected, in some nonessential matters; but they agreed in all main points: the *preaching of the Gospel* being charged on their ministers; *justification by faith in Christ* being held forth as the only true method of salvation; and a *separation* from the Romish Church being indispensable.

Bearing in mind that all this wonderful and blessed consummation was being effected just at the period of that memorable scene, the Papal triumph at Rome, described in a former lecture, let us observe how every point of triumph displayed by the Usurper was met and counteracted by Him whose place he had so usurped.

The Bible, condemned to be shut up, was now translated, printed, and circulated. The Gospel, forbidden to be preached, was now, freed from all the glosses of the priests, proclaimed by hundreds. The Pope himself was openly declared to be Antichrist, which name he had forbidden to be named; and the day of judgment was held forth as a day fixed and coming, when his reign and power would terminate. As he too had excommunicated the Reformers, the true followers of Christ, so was *he*, and his whole religious system and retainers, now cast out of the real Church.

The wretched Leo lived not to see the separation accomplished, as we have described. But he lived to hear his bull against Luther met with stern defiance by this champion of truth. "As they curse and excommunicate me for the holy

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<sup>1</sup>Milner, p. 916.



verity of God, so do I curse and excommunicate them: let Christ judge between us, whose excommunication, his or mine, shall stand approved before him." He lived to see the failure of every means set in order to stop the progress of the Reformation. It remained for his successors to see this great revolution ecclesiastically and politically accomplished, a pledge of what yet awaits the Papacy, when "He that shall come will come," and by "the brightness of his coming" at once totally and forever destroy the *man of sin* and his whole kingdom.

## ***Lecture XIX. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses.***

### **Early History of the Eastern and Western Lines.**

**A.D. 600 – 1000.**

*Rev. 11:2-6 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. (3) And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. (4) These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. (5) And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. (6) These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

**We now commence an account** given by the Covenant Angel of certain *witnesses*, who throughout the long-continued apostasy would have kept up a testimony for him and his truth. The review is brought before the Evangelist just after his receiving the reed for the measurement of the mystic temple. And on looking to history, we find that it was precisely at the period following the actual reconstitution of the Church (so symbolized) that the attention of the Reformers was directed retrospectively to the investigation of the same subject. Many learned researchers began then to appear, unfolding the history of the martyrs of the past dark ages: How they had maintained the truth with fidelity and boldness, and sealed their testimony with their blood. So chronologically accurate is the agreement of the facts with this wonderful prophecy.

In the Angel's description of the two witnesses we remark:

1<sup>st</sup>. Both the term designating them and the actions ascribed to them, imply that they are persons, and not merely things inanimate. There can be no reasonable doubt that *living confessors* were intended.

2<sup>nd</sup>. The speaking of them by the Angel as “*My witnesses*” points out that the Lord Jesus himself was the subject of their witnessing – his glory, his grace, his salvation; even as it is said of the faithful seed in the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, “*which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.*”

3<sup>rd</sup>. They are described as “the two *olive trees*, and the two *candlesticks*, that stand before the Lord of the whole earth.”

The *candlesticks* are explained by Christ himself to symbolize *Christian Churches*, i.e., communities, large or small, whether as nations or families,

which unite together in true Christian profession and worship. In the present instance the description indicates scarcity of number and suppression.

The *olive trees* are the emblems of all faithful *ministers* and *preachers* who supply the needful spiritual nourishment to the Churches, inasmuch as from the olive was derived the oil that supplied the temple lamps. To this effect is the explanation given of the emblem in the Prophet Zechariah.<sup>1</sup> From the union of *lamps* and *olive trees* in this vision we may infer that both *preachers* and *Churches* were alike included in the Apocalyptic witnesses.

4<sup>th</sup>. The *number, two*, would seem to indicate, in accordance with the requirement of the Mosaic law of testimony, that while their witness would be sufficient to bear evidence to the *truth*, their number would be the *smallest* that was admissible for such evidence. As in other parts of the Revelation the *representative* system is followed; not two individuals, but *two separate lines* of witnesses being intended.

5<sup>th</sup>. "They shall prophesy *clothed in sackcloth*," that is suffering and tribulation; sackcloth being with the Jew the universal emblem of *mourning*. We may well suppose that their righteous souls would be vexed with the prevalent apostasy and irreligion around them: besides which the cruel persecution they would suffer from the enemies of Christ's truth might properly give occasion for a garb of woe.

6<sup>th</sup>. We may observe also the *avenging* power given them against their enemies. Like the supernatural power that attached to God's eminent prophets of old: like Moses and Aaron, who turned the Nile waters into blood; and to Elijah, who commanded fire from above, and who stayed the clouds of heaven that they gave no rain for three years and a half, so these figures apply to the spiritual, and perhaps national judgments, which should follow upon the rejection and persecution of Christ's witnesses, sooner or later.

7<sup>th</sup> and lastly. The *commencing time* of their 1260 days testifying in sackcloth, coinciding as these evidently do with the forty-two months of the apostasy and treading under foot of the Holy City, must be dated from the rise or establishment of that dominant system of error about the close of the *sixth* or the opening of the *seventh* century. Which having premised, we turn from the figures of the vision to the facts and first historical notice:

#### I. The Earlier Western Witnesses.

A.D. 600. About this date we properly begin our search for the *true apostolic succession* of faithful men who should continue Christ's witness throughout the dark fated 1260 years. Sufficient evidence remains to prove that the doctrine of God's free grace which Augustine had advocated, and the firm protests which

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<sup>1</sup>Zech. 4. 11 – 14.

Vigilantius had maintained against the encroachments of error, exercised a powerful influence for truth in Western Christendom. After the failure of the Gothic scourge to induce repentance or amendment, it needed to unite, in a measure, the doctrine and the spirit of these two eminent men of God for a testimony in years following – the clear spiritual discernment of Scriptural truth which Augustine so richly experienced and exemplified, and the godly jealousy of evil which induced Vigilantius to denounce the fast multiplying abuses of the Roman apostasy. The principles of the former had taken deep root in the *south of Gaul*: the Gallic Churches of *Languedoc*, extending eastward to *Dauphiny* and the *Cottian Alps* beyond, so famous afterwards as the seat of the Waldenses, were the sphere of the latter's bold protestation.

Nor were there wanting men of high position in the Church to uphold their tenets. About a century after Augustine we find Caesarius, Bishop of Arles, in Dauphiny, uniting with twelve other bishops in laying down on the ground of inspired Scripture, as the *healing* doctrine for man's soul, the truth as held by Augustine. His Christian excellence did not exempt him from trial and persecution. At one time he was slandered as a traitor, and imprisoned; at another he was suspended from his bishopric; in either case his innocence was soon acknowledged. He spoke of the world as a wilderness, and thirsted for a draught from the water of life.

Nor should we omit the similar contemporary witness of Fulgentius, and many other African bishops and ministers. On occasion of the Arian persecution by the Vandal Hunneric, from their exile in Sardinia they wrote a letter of joy, they said, and sorrow. Joy, because those they addressed held fast the true view of God's grace in Christ; sorrow, because others exalted against it man's free will. They concluded with urging the study of Augustine, and asserting his doctrine – that God gives his elect grace and perseverance, so that in the way of grace they receive eternal life. We do not hold up all the views of these men as perfect, but in these essential doctrines they maintained a witness for Christ amid the prevailing darkness.

Proceeding with the *seventh* century, at the outset we meet Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, protesting against image worship, and ordering the destruction of the images set up in the churches of his diocese. From this time we find this species of worship becoming the popular error of the apostasy; as if Satan had discovered how the presenting distinct human forms to the eye of the worshiper would serve better than relics to gratify the imagination, to turn the thoughts from the disembodied and the spiritual, and to chain the affections to earth. Images likewise gave to the priesthood the opportunity of playing off their deceptions on credulous devotees, even as did Pagan priests before.

As by Serenus in Southern France, so by the ancient Church in *Britain* was a long protest kept up against this particular innovation. After the Anglo-Saxons

had received the form of Christianity reintroduced from Rome, the Britons refused either to eat or drink with or salute them; "because they corrupted with superstition, images, and idolatry the true religion of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

A.D. 650. We have certain obscure but interesting notices of "*heretics*" from beyond the seas, convicted of that crime by the bishops near Orleans, although with difficulty, and finally expelled. The progress of opinions opposed to the image worship of Rome had made such progress about *Chantilly*, near Paris some time after that, a Council was there convened expressly to discuss the subject.

A.D. 794. In this year was held the great Council of Frankfort, under Charlemagne, when in opposition to the Papacy, no less than three hundred bishops joined with the Emperor in protest against image worship. Nor was this all. By the Council's reception among its members of Alcuin, preceptor of the Emperor, and its eulogy upon him contained in its canons, it identified itself with his published opinions; in which there was set forth, says Bishop Newton, "doctrine respecting the sufficiency of the Scriptures, the worship of God alone, prayers in the vulgar tongue, the Eucharist, justification and repentance, pretended visions and miracles, and other like points, such as a Papist would abhor and a Protestant would subscribe," adding that in his writings, and in those of Louis the Pious, there was enjoined the reading of the Scriptures as the sole rule of faith, without regard to human and apocryphal traditions, and the forbidding of private masses and other similar superstitions. With these sentiments, therefore, we may consider the bishops of Western Christendom to have admitted their agreement at this Council of Frankfort. One of these, *Paulinus* of Aquileia, had previously set forth the true doctrines of Christ, after the model of Augustine; and several others named, all of whom, seeing that the errors they opposed were upheld by the power and influence of Rome, must have exposed themselves to persecution. The witnesses must needs have *prophesied in sackcloth*.

A.D. 810-841. The testimony of Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, is worthy of record among the witnesses of Jesus. His protestation against image worship was but a small part of his evangelic Protestant doctrine. An able treatise against the *invocation* of saints, in which he supports the dogma that "there is no other mediator to be sought for but he that is the God-man," has long received the distinction of a place in the Roman *Index Expurgatorius*. In one treatise, "Against Antichrist and the Merit of Works," he combats error with the zeal and force of Calvin. Of another, "On the Truth of the Christian Faith," it has been well remarked: "It has Christ for its subject." His general uprightness, abundantly evidenced, could not save him from the consequences of his faithful reproving of the growing apostasy. He experienced, as he himself declared, the

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<sup>1</sup>Welsh Chronicle preserved at Cambridge, cited in Hearn's *Man of Sin*, p.21.

truth of Scripture, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution."

A.D. 817-839. But the most conspicuous of the witnesses of that age was Claude, Bishop of Turin, called by way of eminence the *Protestant of the ninth century*. Charged by his enemies with the accustomed crime of heresy, he has left writings sufficient not only to refute the charge, but to prove him a true, fearless, enlightened, and spiritual witness for Christ's truth and honor against the superstition and the wickedness of his times. "It is no marvel," writes he, in the bold style of Luther long after, "that Satan's members should say these things of me, since they proclaimed our very Head himself to be a seducer and a demoniac. I who hold the unity, and who preach the truth, am teaching *no new sect*... Sects and schisms, superstitions and heresies, through God's help, I will never cease to oppose... But when, finding all the churches at Turin stuffed full of vile and accursed images, I alone began to destroy what all were sottishly worshiping, therefore it was that all opened their mouths to revile me. And, truly, had not the Lord helped me, they would have swallowed me up quick." But while he declaimed against all the leading errors of Romanism, the *written Word* was, with him, the one standard of truth. The least departure from a simple and spiritual interpretation of it was the essence of heresy in his sight. On that *Word* he wrote several commentaries. From that *Word* he loved, and labored beyond all things, to set forth *Christ, and divine grace through Him*, as the all in all of man's salvation. He constantly represented Christ as very God, and as the one Head of the Church. The great doctrine of justification he taught with clearness, fullness, unreserved. At the same time he enjoined the duty of practical godliness. "Christ Jesus did not command us to *worship* the cross, but to *bear* it – to bear it by renouncing the world and ourselves." Nor has his own personal holiness ever been questioned. Opposed as Claude was by bitter and powerful foes, which marked his *prophesying as in sackcloth*, he yet escaped the extremity of death, which in a later age, and in a country more exposed than Turin was to the tyranny of Rome, had been the unfailing attendant upon the faithful martyr. Perhaps too, under God, the protection of the French court saved him from violence. Whatever it was, he died in peace. But the effect of his labors and the influence of his ministry were felt, as said his opponents, through Italy, Germany, and France, and survived, we have reason to believe, centuries after in the Waldensian Churches of Piedmont.

A.D. 846. It was in or about this year that Gotteschalculus left his monastery at Orbais with the object of preaching the Gospel. Born in Germany, he had been from early life a monk, and had devoted himself to theological studies. The writings of Augustine deeply interested him, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit he cordially embraced the doctrines of grace. On his return from a missionary expedition in Pannonia, he seems to have given free expression to his sentiments before certain ecclesiastics, who unfortunately possessed the

power to persecute what they had not the wisdom or the grace to value or understand. Willfully or in ignorance, they charged Gotteschalcus with opinions which he never held, and these obtained his condemnation. Sent back to the North of France to answer before his own bishops to the heresies which were laid against him, he was again condemned, degraded, beaten with rods, and imprisoned. Here this faithful witness of his Lord endured further tortures and trials, and lingered for twenty years, constant amid his sufferings to the truths he maintained. In vain his persecutor, Hincmar, urged him to retract when at the point of death; the cruel Archbishop's only satisfaction was in denying the martyr a Christian burial. It is of this period that the historian Milner writes, "The spirit of Christianity was much decayed, but there were doubtless a number of persons to whom Christ and his grace was precious, and the influence of evangelical truth was still so strong, that all the cruelty, activity, and artifice of one of the most subtle politicians of that age – for such was Hincmar – were not able to extirpate it."

A.D. 855. While Gotteschalcus lay in his prison there were many who remonstrated loudly against the barbarity with which he was treated. His doctrine gained him followers. Many distinguished ecclesiastics espoused his cause, among others Remigius, Archbishop of Lyons, who with his whole church vindicated his opinions. The controversies to which this gave rise led to the assembling of the Council of Valence in Dauphiny the same year, where the Augustinian doctrines of *grace* and *election* were solemnly reasserted and approved. And the subsequent Councils of *Langres* and *Toul* seem to have confirmed the same, and to have supported the cause of the persecuted Gotteschalcus.

A.D. 909. It is worth remarking that at the *Council of Trosly*, near *Soissons*, in the year specified, a confession of faith was set forth which included none of those superstitions which constitute the essence of Popish error.

A.D. 945. About this time also there is mention made of certain *heretical* teachers, popularly known by the name of *prophets*, who, as Atto, Bishop of Vercelli, near Turin, complained, "Taught diabolical error, inducing men to forsake their priests and their Holy Mother, the Church." In the estimate of divine truth how very different was judgment concerning these maligned persons – *witnesses* faithfully dispensing to the multitudes in heathen darkness the light of that Gospel which had made its way to their own hearts; possibly the followers of Claude of Turin, scattered in the rural districts of Piedmont and Lombardy.

A.D. 1030. At Turin; of which it is said that they received the Holy Scriptures alone as the rule of doctrine, rejected the formal observances and rites of the Roman Church, followed a strict rule of life, and suffered even unto death in witness to their faith. Nor must we overlook such men of discernment as Arnulphus of Orleans, president of the *Council of Rheims*, who feared not to affirm that the Roman Pope, when elated with pride on his throne of state, was

Antichrist sitting in the temple of God. Of these in most cases their Roman enemies have been the only historians; and careful are they to set down the sore punishments inflicted upon the heretics. But what were these if not the cruel persecutions which marked how truly and constantly the witnesses *prophesied in sackcloth?*

Having thus brought down our notice of the early Western witnesses to the close of the *tenth* century – a period which has been sometimes styled the *ultimate point of Christian depression* – we shall return to take a view of that separate line of confessors for evangelic truth, who, during the same time, had kept up a testimony for Christ and God's Word in the *East*, and who, about the eleventh century, appear to have migrated and intermingled with their *brother witnesses* in the *West*.

## II. The Earlier Eastern Witnesses.

It was in the year 653, soon after the Saracen conquest of Syria, that an Armenian named *Constantine of Samosata* received from a deacon to whom he had showed hospitality the present of two volumes, then very rare, the one containing the four Gospels, the other the Epistles of St. Paul. The perusal wrought a total change in his principles and course of life. Separating from the Manichean heresy, to which, as some say, he was attached, as well as from the apostate Greek Church, he applied himself to form a distinct Church of such as like himself, might be willing to found their faith and practice on the simple rule of those sacred books. In his indefatigable missionary labors he likened himself to a disciple of *St. Paul*. Hence the name, which his disciples thenceforth assumed, of Paulikians. It was a noble purpose: we can readily conceive how it must have exposed him to persecution. But the bitterest trial was to have his sincerity impeached, to be deemed a hypocrite, and to have it asserted that his secret object was to propagate the more easily his former heretical principles. Nevertheless, his enemies admit that while he burnt his old books he made it a law to his followers that they should read no other than the New Testament Scriptures; and, moreover, that these were preserved amongst them perfect and unadulterated.

For thirty years Constantine continued his ministrations. Then at length the increase of the sect attracted notice. An edict was issued against him and his followers, the execution of which was entrusted to an officer by name Simeon. Constantine was stoned to death, an apostate from his Church giving the mortal blow. He prophesied in sackcloth. But observe the providence of God! As from the stoning of the first martyr, Stephen, so now from that of *Constantine of Samosata* a new witness arose to fill his place. Simeon returned to his home deeply impressed with the evidences of divine grace in the sufferer; and, after three years of retirement, presented himself as a new head to the Paulikians, under the name of Titus. After some time, during which he ceased not diligently to teach, the cry of heresy was again raised; and not far from a heap of stones



which marked the spot where his predecessor suffered, Simeon and his disciples, refusing to renounce their opinions, were burnt alive!

Again, as from the ashes of these martyrs, the heresy, as it was called, revived. One Paul, who with his two sons contrived to escape, and after him other teachers, perpetuated the sect through the eighth century, during which it is worthy of remark these Paulikians originated the great movement against image worship, which soon became general. At the close of this century a teacher appeared more eminent than any before, named Sergius. His conversion from the established, but now apostate religion, is attributed to the pointed appeal and arguments of a woman, who accosting him while yet a young man, inquired of him why he read not the sacred Gospels, and boldly charged upon the priest, the willful perversion of Scripture and the putting themselves in the place of the Savior. "In this way, running through sundry passages of the Gospel," says the historian Petrus Siculus, his bitter enemy, "she gave a perverted sense, and so corrupted his mind as to render him in no little time an apt instrument of the devil." The same writer says of him: "His worst point was his semblance of virtue, the wolf disguised as a sheep, a tare like wheat."

For thirty-four years did Sergius, by the name of Tychicus, expound and propagate the doctrines of truth. So laborious were his missionary exertions that in one of his letters, written in later life, he thus expressed himself: "From east to west and from north to south I have run preaching the Gospel of Christ, laboring upon my knees." This expression his enemy adduces as a proof of his boasting; at the same time that he bears this testimony, that the object of Sergius was to deliver his countrymen from what he considered their *fatal error*, and that success attended his labor and thus the sect multiplied greatly.

About A.D. 830. A severe persecution began against these Christians by the imperial command and instigated by the patriarch. Retiring into Cappadocia, the Paulikians, now grown numerous, resisted. In this they derived protection from the Saracens, who, be it remembered, were designed to be a scourge only to those who "had not the seal of God upon their foreheads."<sup>1</sup> Sergius earnestly dissuaded his followers from resistance; but he was himself accidentally killed by the axe of a woodcutter – "a just punishment" observed the bigoted Petrus, "for one who had divided the Church of Christ, besides the greater punishment of being sent into unquenchable fire."

The trials which the Paulikians endured from the death of Constantine have been acknowledged by *Milner* in his *History of the Church*: – "For an hundred years these servants of Christ underwent the horrors of persecution with Christian patience and meekness; and if the acts of their martyrdom, their preaching, and their lives were distinctly recorded, there seems no doubt but this people

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. ix. 4.

would appear to have resembled those whom the Church justly reveres as having suffered in the behalf of Christ during the three first centuries. During all this time the power of the Spirit of God was with them; and they practiced the precepts, as well as believed the precious truths, contained in the doctrines of St. Paul.”

Again, a persecution yet severer visited this people after the death of Sergius. By direction of the Empress Theodora, the great patroness of image worship, Asia Minor was ransacked in search of them; and she is computed to have killed by the gibbet, by fire, and by sword, 100,000 persons. Then, at length, their faith and patience foiled. They fortified themselves on Mount Tephric in Armenia, and maintained a war of various success, until at length reduced by Basil I. And is it to be wondered at if they sometimes retaliated the cruelties of their injurers? Multiplied, as they had now become, into a powerful community, there were doubtless very many among them who had lost the spirit of true religion. *They only* can be properly set down as Christ's witnesses who still acted, like Sergius, in the true evangelic spirit.

The subsequent history of the Paulikians is European. From time to time they had detached colonies with missionary objects to Thrace, where “they still *corrupted many with their heresy*.” At length the rest, about A.D. 970, were removed by the Emperor Zimisce across the Bosphorus, and the city and district of *Philippopolis* was given to them in possession. There they are described as residing in the twelfth century, when attempts were vainly made to reconvert them to the Apostate Church. There in A.D. 1204 the Crusaders found them, under the name of *Popolicani*. There, about the valleys of Mount Haemus, a part of them existed even to the end of the seventeenth century; but others of them, migrating to the West, had already, at the commencement of the eleventh century, under the appellation of *Publicani*, begun to excite the attention and to draw on themselves the persecutions of Western Europe. Of these persecutions, says Gibbon, “the flames which consumed twelve canons at Orleans (A.D. 1022) was the first act and signal.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus have we brought down this sketch of the two lines – of the Western and the Eastern witnesses – to the same epoch. We shall now have to trace, in the records of these lines conjoined and intermixed, the further history of Christ's two witnesses – still, prophesying in sackcloth.

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<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, x. 186.

## ***Lecture XX. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses.***

### **Middle Age History of the Joint Lines.**

**A.D. 1000 – 1200.**

*Rev. 11:3-6 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. (4) These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. (5) And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. (6) These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

**There were not wanting during** the eleventh and twelfth centuries eminent Christian teachers to bear witness to the truth, some of whom appeared publicly as professed confessors for Christ before the several Councils of *Orleans, Arras, Toulouse, Oxford and Lombers*. With respect to some of these, their *Paulikian* origin is undoubted, being decisively marked. Most probably the Paulikians, migrating from the *East*, intermingled with similar reputed *heretics* of native *Western* growth, the descendants of those who had adopted the views of Claude and others already mentioned. Some distinct notices of them will be interesting, it being remembered that they are wholly derived from the reports of their *enemies*.

Of those who witnessed before the Council of *Orleans* in A.D. 1022, the heresy it is said, originated from a woman of Italy, who exerted such singular influence as to seduce not only simple persons, but even the more learned of the clergy to her opinions. During a temporary sojourn at Orleans she corrupted two canons of high repute, who in their turn, endeavored with zeal to propagate the new creed. The report of these things having reached the ears of a certain knight of Rouen named *Arefaste*, he with the sanction of the king and clergy, went to Orleans, feigned himself a disciple, and was admitted among the community, the better to betray it. The instructions he received from them were based upon the words of God's own book, the Bible. They taught him, amongst other novelties, that baptism had no *sacramental* efficacy to wash away sin, that the word of the priests could not convert the *elements* into Christ's body and blood, that prayers to *saints and martyrs* were vain, and all attempts to purchase heaven by merit were superfluous. "How then," asked Arefaste, "can I be saved?" They told him that it was in their power to point him to a way whereby he would be cleansed from every spot of sin, revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures;

whereby also he would be spiritually enlightened, have fellowship with God, and never know want again.

Information of these things being given by the false knight, a Council was convened, and the two canons summoned before it. Confronted with Arefaste, they confessed their faith; while ten or twelve other clergy eagerly pressed forward to declare their accordance with them. Neither arguments nor threats of a torturing death could induce recantation. They asserted their confident belief that sooner or later all the world would acknowledge the truth of their doctrine. Their final answer to the Council is full of life and character, "*Ye may say these things to those whose taste is earthly, and who believe the figments of men. But to us, who savor nothing but what we have learned from God, ye speak in vain. Put therefore an end to your words. Do with us even as you wish. Even now we see our King reigning in the heavenly places, who with his right hand is conducting us to immortal triumphs and heavenly joy.*" On this, after insult and violence from the people – and especially from the Queen herself, who was present, and with a stick struck out the eye of one of these martyrs, formerly her own confessor, they were stripped of their clerical vestment! and burnt at the stake. From twelve to fourteen suffered; two only recanted. At the same time the corpse of another canon, who had died three years before in the same heresy, was by the bishop's order exhumed, and, in token of indignity, cast in the highway.

Before the Council of *Arras* in A.D. 1025 certain illiterate persons were brought and examined. They stated themselves to be the followers of one Gundulph from Italy, who had instructed them in the precepts of the Gospels and Apostles. When questioned respecting the established religion, they declared themselves opposed to the efficacy of sacraments and penances to atone for sin, to the doctrine of purgatory, and the use of masses for the dead; that they disapproved of the adoration of images, relics, saint worship, altars, incense, bell tinkling, and chanting – in short, of the priesthood, doctrine, and discipline of the Romish Church. "One rule of life," they said, "is to renounce the world, to restrain the lusts of the flesh, to injure none, to show love to all." whatever were their sentiments, these simple people failed of being *witnesses* for Christ, as either from ignorance or fear, they signed, it is said, a confession of faith drawn up by the Bishop of Arras, and were dismissed in peace. Others holding similar doctrines were condemned at the Council of *Charroux* in A.D. 1028, and that of *Rheims*, A.D. 1049.

It was in A.D. 1045 that the celebrated Berenger first excited attention by opposing the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. He was a man of brilliant talent, learned, pious, and eloquent, esteemed by the clergy and venerated by the people. His opinions were condemned by different Councils, and he was deprived of his benefice. Still, however, professing and promulgating his doctrine, he was summoned in A.D. 1055 to another Council at *Tours*, where the

famous Hildebrand attended as Papal Legate, at which he seems to have retracted. The retraction, in terms more or less dubious, was repeated a second and third time in the course of the thirty years following – not from conviction, but under the influence of fear. In every case he reasserted the same doctrine after quitting the Council, employed poor scholars to disseminate it through France, and died in 1088, a penitent and in sorrow – not, as it has been said, on account of his heresy, but on account of his retractions.

From notices in the history of *Aquitaine*, and in that of *Treves*, we hear of like doctrines prevalent in A.D. 1101.

In A.D. 1126 Peter de Bruis was burnt to death near Toulouse, and “so passed,” says his *charitable* historian, “from temporal to eternal fire.” The account is given by the Abbot of Clugny. The charges brought against him are much the same as those previously laid against others: the futility of sacraments without personal faith, and the unscriptural nature of most of the prevailing and established practices of the Church of Rome. After his death his opinions were propagated by one named Henry, an Italian by birth. With flowing eloquence, and admitted sanctity and benevolence, this man went through *Provence* and *Languedoc* preaching everywhere – the Whitfield of his age and country. So great was his success, that when the noted Bernard was called in to stem it, he found, to adopt his own words, “the churches without people, the people without priests, the priests without reverence; churches reckoned but as synagogues; the sacraments not held sacred; pilgrimages, invocation of the saints, oblations for the dead, and festival days neglected; infants being unbaptized precluded from salvation, and men unshrived dying in their sins.” Bernard was successful in restoring the Romish faith. Henry was seized and convicted, and soon after died; whether by a natural death or by the flames, is a point disputed.

The year of his death, A.D. 1147, was signaled by the burning of other heretics also at *Cologne*. The inferior members of the sect had declared that, if their teachers failed to make good their cause, they would return to the Catholic Church. Accordingly, two of these teachers maintained their heresy before the assembly from the words of Scripture so successfully, that the greater part continued steadfast. Three days afterwards these faithful confessors were brought to the stake. “And what is most wonderful,” writes Evervinus to St. Bernard, “they entered to the stake and bare the torment of the fire, not only with patience, but with joy and gladness. Holy Father, wish your explanation how these members of the devil could with such courage and constancy persist in their heresy, as is scarcely to be found in the most religious of the faith of Christ.” These witnesses, it is clear, were all a part of the same great family of *Paulikian* origin, afterwards known as the *Cathari*. Continuing to abound in the neighborhood of Cologne up to the year 1160, they were persecuted without mercy by those who were unable to reply to their Scriptural arguments, and endured death with a martyr's constancy.

The account given by *William of Newbury* of the *Publikani* condemned by the Council of Oxford, A.D. 1160, is to this effect: "About the same time certain vagrants came into England of the class called *Publikani*, in number about thirty. They entered the country peaceably; their object however being the propagation of their pestilent heresy. One *Gerard* was looked up to as leader: the others, both men and women, were illiterate rustics, of Teutonic origin. They could not long be hidden. Being foreigners, they were seized and kept in custody. The king, unwilling to punish them without trial, ordered a Council to assemble at Oxford. Being brought before it, they answered rightly indeed concerning the *substance of the Heavenly Physician*, but perversely concerning the *remedies* whereby he deigns to heal man's moral infirmity: the divine sacraments; expressing detestation of holy baptism, the eucharist, marriage; and wickedly derogating from the Catholic unity to which these divine assistance attach... When urged to retract, do penance, etc., and be united to the Mother Church, they rejected the advice, applying to themselves our Lord's words, Blessed are they who suffer persecution for righteousness sake, since theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Then, the bishops having pronounced them heretics, they were branded on their foreheads, beaten with rods (their garments being cut down to their girdles), and whipped out of the city. Nevertheless they went with light steps, rejoicing; their teacher at their head singing, Blessed shall ye be when men hate you. After which, through the inclemency of the weather, they perished wretchedly."

Another company of Paulikians, denominated *Boni Homines*, were condemned at the Council of *Lombers* in A.D. 1165. Their examination and confession but little varied from that of their predecessors; but the general accordance of their doctrines with the evangelical standard of the Scriptures enables us to regard them as a part of this line of *faithful witnesses for Jesus* – not *abominable heretics*.

And now as to the Waldenses, called by some the *Poor Men of Lyons*. It has been often stated that they derived their name from *Peter Waldo*, a Lyonnese merchant, who, about A.D. 1170, having sold all he had and distributed to the poor, became head to certain bands thence called *Waldenses*. Recent examination however of the earliest and best authorities has proved that the merchant's appellation was not *Peter Waldo*, but *Peter Valdes*; which word *Valdes* is not a proper name, but a designative of country or religion, precisely corresponding to *Valdenses*. Whence *Peter* derived this does not appear. It was possibly from the *Pays de Vaud*; possibly from some religious sectaries already bearing the title. However this may have been, the fact of *Peter* having himself become in heart and mind a true Bible Christian is not in doubt. And what he had learned himself he resolved to impart to others. So he became a missionary evangelist. In his ministrations he made the Scriptures the sole ground of his teaching, and effected for his followers a translation into their own language. The numbers thus congregated began to attract notice. Persecution followed so severe that

Valdes and his disciples were driven from Lyons. But the consequence was the further dissemination of evangelic truth. Anathematized by the Pope, the reformer labored with such success, that, ere the end of the century the *Waldenses* or *Leonists* had formed churches of proselytes in Spain and Italy, and throughout France, Flanders, Germany, and Bohemia: in which last country Peter Valdes himself, about the year 1180, is said to have ended his truly apostolic career.

After his death, the Word of God, by the agency of the Waldenses, grew and multiplied. Under different appellations, as *Vaudois* in the valleys of Piedmont and Lombardy, or *Albigenses* when united to the descendants of the Paulikians near Albi and Toulouse, or again as *Bohemians* in the land or Bohemia, they spread abroad the Gospel. But the sufferings they everywhere endured marked their *prophesying as in sackcloth*. Yet “neither fire nor sword, nor the most cruel inventions or merciless persecutions, could damp their zeal or entirely ruin their cause.”<sup>1</sup> Along *the Rhine* the Gospel was accompanied with a powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit, which drew down on this people the vengeance of the enemies of truth. At *Bingen* thirty-five persons were burned in one fire, and at *Mentz* eighteen. No less than eighty suffered in like manner at Strasburg. These died praising God, in assurance of a blessed resurrection. In some instances, statutes were enacted forbidding under severe penalties the showing any hospitality to a Waldensian. Throughout Europe their doctrines spread and followers multiplied; at one time diffused over Northern Italy, they made Milan their headquarters; but as the persecution grew fiercer, they drew again towards their Alpine valleys, still constant and faithful to their witness for Christ.

As to the *doctrine* of the Waldenses, while the *inconsistencies* of the slanders brought against them are a sufficient refutation in regard of these, their own writings will be the best evidence of their real opinions. Many interesting manuscripts were brought to England by Cromwell's ambassador in A.D. 1658. Others exist in Geneva. Of these the most remarkable is a poem called “*The Noble Lesson*,” which in its commencement gives evidence of its date, that it was written somewhere between A.D. 1150 and 1180:

“Well have a thousand and a hundred years been full accomplished Since it was written that we are in the last times.”<sup>2</sup>

It is written in rhythmical verse, like the Provencal romances of the Troubadours, and sets forth with much simplicity and beauty their Scriptural tenets, the fall of man by Adam's sin, and redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ; the cooperation of the three persons of the Godhead in man's salvation; the spirituality and obligation of the moral law; the duties of prayer, watchfulness, self-

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<sup>1</sup>Mosheim, Cent. xii., ii. v. 12.

<sup>2</sup>The entire poem is given by Mr. Elliott in an Appendix to the *Horae Apocalypticae*.

denial, unworldliness, humility, and love as “the way of Christ” – enforced moreover by the prospect of death and approaching judgment; by the narrowness of the way of life and the fewness of those that find it; as also by the hope of glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Besides which, it contains a protest against the Romish system, as one of soul destroying idolatry; against masses for the dead, purgatory, the confessional, and the asserted power of priestly absolution – with an expressed suspicion that *Popery may be one form of Antichrist*.

This last point is yet more fully treated in another of their writings, *A Treatise on Antichrist*, in which they charge the Papal system with the guilt of *defrauding God of his worship* by rendering it to his *creatures*; of *defrauding Christ* by attributing justification and forgiveness to other saviors; and of *defrauding the Holy Spirit* by the invention of sacramental regeneration and sanctification. The origin of this system they trace to the infancy of the Church in apostolic days; but now increased to full manhood, they regard it as being sustained by the covetousness of the priesthood. Nevertheless they regulated the internal government of their own body by the Scriptural precedent of bishops, presbyters, and deacons: they held needless divisions and schism to be a great evil; and that even separation from Rome was only admissible on the principle that what agreed not with the Word of God was to be rejected and avoided.

To these religious views of this remarkable people we have only to add that their practice was unimpeachable, their enemies themselves being judges. *Reinerius*, a Dominican and Inquisitor-General, speaks thus of their moral character: “They are sedate and modest. They have no pride in clothes. They avoid falsehood, oaths, and frauds. They do not multiply riches, but are content with what is necessary. They are chaste and temperate. They avoid revelry, restrain anger, abstain from levity, and are always at work, learning or teaching.”

The Bishop of *Cavillon* at one time commissioned a monk to go amongst the Waldenses in order to convince them of their errors. But the monk returned in confusion, owning that he had never known in his whole life so much of the Scriptures as he had learned in the few days passed amongst these “heretics”. One of the confessors of Louis XII was so struck with the holy character of this people, whom he had visited by the king's order, that he declared, in the hearing of many persons, how he wished he were as good a Christian as the worst inhabitant of that valley. Another writes, “When they sit at table they bless thus, *He who blest the barley loaves and fishes to his disciples, bless us. And after table, Blessing, and honor, and wisdom, and glory to God for ever*; always holding their hands and eyes lifted to heaven.”

Nor could they be thought of as poor ignorant people. Far from setting aside human learning, the choicest of their young men were sent to Paris for instruction, the better to meet their enemies on their own ground in argument, and to propagate more soundly and efficiently the doctrines of God's Word. As time



passed on, God raised up protection for them, by not a few Counts and Barons of Southern France and Lombardy espousing their cause. So was the prophecy fulfilled, "I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy" – albeit *in sackcloth*, owing to the number and hostility of their adversaries.

Thus, as in a former lecture, we showed that there was in the Paulikian sect a line of witnesses for Christ's truth of *Eastern* origin from the year 653, who testified against the prevailing apostasy; as also that there was a witness-line of Christians in France, Germany, and North Italy of *Western* origin, who bore their testimony for Christ: moreover, that the oneness of these in spirit was proved by their occasional intermingling, once as early as the eleventh century, and again more markedly about the end of the twelfth century; at which time, as one body, they obtained the name of Waldenses: So in this lecture we have shown how, united they continued to bear the marks which Scripture ascribes to the two witnesses: their protestation against the apostasy; their holding the Scriptures as the rule of faith; and their sackcloth clothing, a state of mourning or depression proceeding from their comparative smallness of numbers and their bitter persecution from the Church of Rome.

We may finally mention that a curious illustration of the fact of these Waldenses constituting in part the predicted Apocalyptic *witnesses* is presented in the circumstance that the heraldic arms of the people, and of their chief town! *Lucerna* (thence also so nominated), was the precise Apocalyptic symbol of a *lighted* candlestick amid surrounding night, with the motto, "The light shineth in darkness."

## ***Lecture XXI. Retrospective View of the Two Witnesses.***

### **Papal War Against Them. Their Death and Resurrection.**

**A.D. 1163 – 1530.**

*Rev. 11:7-12 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. (8) And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (9) And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. (10) And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. (11) And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. (12) And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

**The same voice of the Lord Jesus** himself, as the Angel of the Covenant, must still be considered as addressing the Evangelist: St. John, still in his representative character at this time as if one of the Reformers receives from him retrospectively the history of the struggles and sufferings of Christ's faithful witnesses.

*"The beast"* is evidently the same as that mentioned afterwards in chapter 13; identical also with *that Beast* long previously represented to Daniel in vision as constituting the last and most fearful form of the Roman Empire, the persecuting Papal power. Of this *Beast*, more hereafter.

The time and occasion of the war against the witnesses, *"when they shall have completed their testimony,"* has occasioned no small trouble to expositors. In the authorized version, as above, the words *"finished their testimony"* would seem to refer to the end of the 1260 years of witnessing; but that this cannot be the meaning is clear, inasmuch as that duration would bring them to the end of the Beast's reign, when he would have no longer power to persecute. May we not rather regard it as having respect to *the individuals*, their witness and full protestation against *all* the leading errors of the great apostasy; the putting the *sacraments* in the place of the Holy Scriptures as the source of life and light to the soul; the substitution of the *mediatorship of departed saints*; the idolatry, demon worship, sorceries, thefts, fornications, and murders; and the *headship* of the system in the Pope of Rome, with his seven thunders and *voice of Anti-christ*? We have already traced the noble protests maintained by both Eastern

and Western witnesses against all the former of these errors; but against Rome and its bishops as head of the apostasy, for centuries they protested not. By degrees the Christian mind was prepared for this last step; and ere the termination of the twelfth century, the Antichrist was fully developed before their eyes, and the united Paulikians, Waldenses, and other sectaries boldly denounced the man of sin, and the Babylon and harlot of the Apocalypse. Then did the Papacy, as a body, rouse itself against them, and proceeded to declare and to wage a war of extermination.

It was not until the religious supremacy of Rome was established in every state of Christendom, and the temporal power subjected to its spiritual domination, that Rome could command the secular sword, and use it to the striking down whatever they called *heretic*. Old as its *pretensions* were, it was not until the eleventh, or the beginning of the twelfth century, that Papal supremacy was universally established. Then did this *ten horned Beast*, wielding the power of the ten kingdoms of Christendom, appear in his maturity; then was he openly testified against by the Christian witnesses; and then did he turn in fierce rage upon his bold assailants.

A.D. 1163. – First, at the Council of Tours, Pope Alexander III., after noticing the detestable Albigenian heresy was everywhere spreading, interdicts to all: against yielding the heretics refuge; from buying or selling, or otherwise holding converse with them.

A.D. 1179. – Next followed the decree of the third Lateran General Council against Cathari, Patareni, Publicani, and all other heretics, pronouncing anathema, and forbidding that any should harbor them, or when dead should give them Christian burial.

A.D. 1183. – A bull was issued by Lucius III., denouncing them and all that should favor them; giving them over for punishment to the secular arm, and directing that *inquisition* (a fearful word, now first broached) be made for their detection.

A.D. 1198. – Innocent III., in the very first year of his pontificate, addressed letters to various prelates, charging them to gird themselves for the work of extirpation, and to employ the arms both of princes and people. Then followed his mission of *inquisitors* to Toulouse under *Dominic*, the *sainted* founder of the accursed *Inquisition*; then, at a few years interval, the proclamation of a *Crusade* with all its horrors. A specimen of these *horrors* may be seen in the storming of *Beziers*. To one that asked how *Catholics* were to be distinguished from heretics in the massacre about to take place, “Kill them all,” was the reply; “God will know his own;” and 7000 of all persuasions indiscriminately suffered.

A.D. 1215. – The fourth Lateran General Council revived all former plans of extirpation, and gave new powers and privileges to the Crusaders against heretics, the same as to those who joined in the crusades to the Holy Land. The

Councils of Narbonne and of Toulouse followed, in which besides other methods of detection, even children were compelled to inform against heretics; and besides other methods of suppression, the Holy Scriptures were strictly forbidden to the laity.

Continuing throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth century the same Papal cause continued without cessation: Bulls, councils, inquisitions, crusades, Dominicans, and Franciscans everywhere pursued and tracked with bloodhound spirit these faithful martyrs of Jesus, not in Piedmont and Dauphiny alone, but in Spain and Calabria; in Germany, France, and Flanders; not the Waldenses only, but Wickliffites and Lollards in England, and Hussites in Bohemia. And yet, in spite of racks and prisons, of the sword and of the flame, their voice was still raised in protestation against the lies of Popery, and for the truth as it is in Jesus. At length, however, towards the close of the fifteenth century, after a furious crusade against Waldenses and Hussites, the Papal object seemed almost attained and its triumph complete. The prediction was about to be verified, "The Beast from the abyss shall overcome them and kill them."

There is, by the common consent of historians, but one period in European history in which the voice of Anti-Papal testimony was wholly suppressed, and the symbol of DEATH might be properly taken to describe the complete stillness that prevailed. It was the opening of the sixteenth century, just before the Reformation, In vain the Bohemian Churches sent deputies to search through Europe for any of kindred feeling whom they might hail as brethren. The deputies returned unsuccessful. They had only, it is related, to implore God's mercy on fallen Christendom. "The prospect," says Milner, "was most gloomy in the eyes of every true Christian. Europe, though Christ's name was everywhere professed, presented nothing that was properly evangelical. The Waldenses were too feeble to stand against Popedom, and the Hussites, divided and worn out by contentions, were at length reduced to silence."

But it must needs be that "their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city," wherein "for three days and a half" they of the people and nations should see the dead bodies of these slain witnesses. The character of this passage is evidently shown by the word "spiritually," as *figuratively* applied to the description of this Sodom or Egypt. This *great city* is clearly the same which is afterwards called Babylon, the city which then reigned over the kings of the earth, i.e., that Roman ecclesiastical empire comprehending its ten kingdoms subordinate to its sway. The very terms *Egypt* and *Sodom* had often been applied to it by Romanists themselves, as well as by the early witnesses and later Reformers – the former name on account of its sorceries, darkness, and oppression of God's people, the latter because of its moral impurity and abominations. But the name which this great city assumed for itself was that which properly had belonged to *New Jerusalem*, the holy city, in marked contrast with which it is in-

troduced in the Revelation; the resemblance, however, only holds good to *apostate* Jerusalem, in that it is the scene in which their Lord (i.e., the witnesses Lord) has been continually “crucified afresh.”

In this last remark we may see an intimation of *their Lord's* sympathy with *their* sufferings – even as if he regarded himself as crucified again in *them*, his members. Have we not also, in the resemblance of the great city to Egypt, Sodom, and apostate Jerusalem, an intimation of its impending punishment – Jerusalem's *curse*, Egypt's *plagues*, and Sodom's *burning*?

By the “street” (lit., *broad place* or *open square*) of this great city, the place of concourse, we must understand the chief seat of the Papacy, The Vatican, to be pictured. Here the defeat and death of the witnesses was to be publicly exposed, and rejoicings in consequence to take place amidst assemblages from all nations.

Marvelously does the history of the period bear out the symbolic statements of the Apocalyptic vision. Such a gathering of the deputies of “people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations,” were met together in this city of Rome upon occasion of the Lateran Council held from A.D. 1512-17 under the pontificates of Julius II. and Leo X. One of its principal objects was the total extirpation of heresies; and upon Pope Leo's accession no time was lost in proceeding against the only heretics supposed to be surviving – the *Bohemian Hussites*. By a Papal bull these were summoned to appear before the Council at its next session, and the 5th of May 1514 was fixed for that important event.

Thus was the crisis come which was to try the faith of this little remnant of witnesses and exhibit its vitality or death. And would they then face their Lord's enemies? Would they brave the terrors of death and plead his cause, like many of their noble predecessors, before the Legate and the Antichristian Council? Alas! No. The day arrived. The Council met. But no officer announced the arrival of deputies from Bohemia to plead before it. Not a whisper was heard from any quarter in support of the long continued heresies. No *witness* appeared. The orator of the session ascended the pulpit, and, amidst the applause of the assembly, uttered that memorable exclamation of triumph – never heard before or since – “There is an end of resistance to Papal rule and religion: there is none to oppose.”<sup>1</sup> And again, “The whole body of Christendom is now subjected to its *Head*, i.e., to *Thee*.” Alas! there was but too much cause of triumph. The witnesses were silent! They were dead! From this day, for *three and a half years* (i.e., prophetic *days*), were the maintainers of the truth of Christ to be as dead corpses in the face of apostate Christendom. Let the day be remembered. It was May 5th, 1514.

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<sup>1</sup>“Jam nemo reclamavit, nullus obsistit.” – Harduin, ix. 1763.

From the well known and customary punishment of heretics was literally enjoined in an edict issued on that very day for the exclusion of their corpses from burial – the figure taken to signify keeping before the public observation, during that interval, the fact of the death of the witnesses or of the suppression and defeat of all so called heretics. Every means was adopted of preserving the recognition of the fact by the mutual congratulations of the members of the Council, by the making merry and interchange of gifts. And here we have again only to open the page of history in order to see how all this was fulfilled. The magnificent Eastern presents to Leo, the gift; of the golden rose to the king of Portugal, the splendor of the festivities of the cardinals at the close of this Council, unequaled since the days of Rome's ancient greatness, is specially recorded by the historian of Leo.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the joy of their triumph told most plainly how the memory of past vexation and injury from the testimony of these faithful men of God still troubled and disturbed these *dwellers on the Roman earth*. Loud indeed were their congratulations, but not long continued.

The next thing we behold is the wonderful Resurrection of the Witnesses. "And after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet."

As to the great event to which this figure applies, history admits of no doubt or hesitation. Never, save in the resurrection of Christ himself, has there been such an instance of the sudden and triumphant resuscitation of his cause and Church from deep depression as was exhibited in the *protesting voice of Luther* and the burst of the glorious *Reformation*. The sudden contrast forces itself both on Romish and Protestant writers. One of the former complains: "The fire, ill-smothered. at the close of 1513 and 1514 (in allusion to Leo's Council), was blown up again by Luther's bellows, and spread its flames far and wide, more than ever before." A modern writer, *Mr. Cunningham*, whose prophetic view accords not with ours, thus describes the transition, "Europe reposed in the deep sleep of spiritual death, under the iron yoke of the Papacy; when, suddenly, the voice of an obscure monk was heard, the sound of which rapidly filled Saxony, Germany, and Europe itself, shaking the very foundations of the Papal power, and arousing men from the lethargy of ages."

But does the chronology suit? For *three days and a half* the witnesses were to be looked on as dead. In other words, there was to be an interval of *three and a half years* between the *public recognition of their extinction and their revival*. That memorable day of the ninth session of the Lateran Council on which the orator exulted over all extinguished opponents, was, as we have seen, May 5, 1514: the day of Luther's posting up his theses at Wittenberg (the well known epoch of the Reformation), was October 31, 1517. The interval is *precisely, to*

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<sup>1</sup>Roscoe.

*a day*, the period predicted in this wonderful prophecy. Then “the *breath of life* from God entered into the slain witnesses, and they stood upon their feet!” One hundred years before, the martyr Huss, foretelling from his dungeon the future progress of the Gospel, spoke: “And I, *awakening* as it were *from the dead* and *rising from the grave*, shall rejoice with exceeding great joy.”<sup>1</sup> Strange that Leo's successor, Pope Adrian, should have used the like expression: “The heretics *Huss and Jerome* are now *alive again* in the person of *Martin Luther*.”

“And great fear fell *on those that beheld them*,” it is not said, *on them that killed them*. The Council had separated before Luther's protest appeared. Pope Leo, in his regal palace, treated at first any disturbance arising from so base an origin as a mere passing expression of feeling on the part of the monk of Wittenberg. Not so Tetzel, Eck, and others, who looked on with trepidation. They perceived that the very foundation of the Papal system was assailed, and there was a power in the movement that they could not withstand.

Pope Leo, as we have said in a former lecture, at last realized the danger, and his seven thunders were issued. Need we again to recount how the intrepid Reformer disregarded danger and threats; how Gospel preaching was again resumed, the Romish Church declared apostate, and a pure Reformed Church established with the rod of civil power in various countries of Europe. At each step in its advance, the fear of those who beheld it increased in anxiety; nor was it allayed when, after ten years of opposition, the Reformers united themselves together at *Smalcald*, under the glorious name of **Protestants**; a name which, according to its Latin etymology, signifies **Witnesses**!

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<sup>1</sup>Merle d'Aubigue, i. 77.

## **Lecture XXII. The Witnesses Ascent, a Great Earthquake.**

### **Political Establishment of the Reformation.**

#### **Separation from the Papacy.**

**A.D. 1552 – 1790.**

*Rev. 11:12-14 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. (13) And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. (14) The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

**The Angel of the Covenant, having** brought his retrospective account of the two witnesses down to the point of his own intervention, has ceased to speak. Excellent manuscript authorities, instead of the expression “they heard,” read “I heard,” in the first person. This reading seems preferable; and hence we infer that at this place the Apocalyptic figurations were resumed before St. John in their former regular course. The direct series of visions, as at the end of our Nineteenth Lecture, and this supplemental narrative of the Angel, present to our view the witnessing Reformers in a firm attitude of consolidation, united in a public Confession of Faith, under the well chosen name of Protestants. This was their situation at the close of the year 1530, and continued to about A.D. 1543, when the prophecy unfolds further particulars, to which we now proceed.

#### **I. The Witnesses Ascension to Heaven.**

Judging of this symbol by former prophecies, before explained, we take the “*heaven*” here mentioned to denote some political ascendancy, to which at that time the witnessing body should be advanced; and the call, “Come up hither,” as proceeding either from Divine Providence, or from persons in a position of high political authority and eminence. That the *heaven* of their elevation is only figurative seems plain from what is afterwards said of them, namely, “Their enemies beheld them.” But could it be that men so lately objects of extermination should be called, as with an audible voice through Europe, to political ascendancy? Such was indeed the fact, and that within little more than twenty years from the anti-Protestant decree of Augsburg. We will briefly notice the means which God's all ruling providence made use of for the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Upon Charles V, head of the Germanic Empire, did the Popes mainly trust to crush the rising heresy; and had the state of affairs continued as it had been,



there was both inclination and power on his part to gratify them. But a threatened Turkish invasion of the Empire made it a point of necessity to reconcile the Protestant states, and induced from the Emperor and Diet a decree called *The Pacification of Nuremberg*, by which full toleration was given to Protestantism until the assembling of a General Council. "Thus," says Robertson, "from having been viewed hitherto only as a religious sect, the Protestants came thenceforth to be considered as a political body of no small consequence." It was their first step, at the imperial call, to political ascendancy. Other embroilments of nations and invasions succeeded, and hindered the embarrassed Emperor from calling the expected Council; concurrent with which was the reluctance of successive Popes to the convening such an assembly at the time. Thus for thirteen years toleration prevailed. But when peace was resumed amongst the contending nations, all was again changed. The Emperor now deemed that the time was come for putting down the Protestants. Their requisition for *permanent* toleration was rejected, and a hostile decree soon followed. The Council of Trent assembled, and a month after Luther died the threatened war broke out: The Protestants were defeated, and their chief supporters, the Saxon Elector and Landgrave of Hesse were made prisoners. All these things seemed against them. But, as not infrequently is the case, the time of depression is but the introduction to a more conspicuous elevation, through God's gracious overruling for his people. New agencies appeared. Maurice, Duke of Saxony, who had previously betrayed the Protestant cause, was now led to espouse it.

This turned the tide of war. Then followed the surprise of the Emperor at Innsbruck and his rapid flight; consequent upon which was the *Peace of Passau* in August 1552 – that celebrated peace whereby the fullest toleration was secured to the Protestant body. Equally with Romanists, they were admitted to sit as judges in the Imperial Chamber. This was their political ascension in Germany. And almost contemporaneously they attained like privileges in Saxony, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark. It is written also, "*Their enemies beheld them.*" And truly it was so. At the passing of each decree by which they rose to ascendancy, in the Diet and in the Council, their enemies were present and beheld them. As they sat in the supreme chamber, they beheld them. The song of thanksgiving from these ascending witnesses may be likened to that of another witness for God in far earlier times: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."<sup>1</sup>

But what of *the cloud* in which the witnesses ascended? For in the original Greek the definite article is used – "*the cloud.*" Now as the only mention of a cloud has been that in which the Lord Jesus, the Covenant Angel, had been *clothed* in his *descent from heaven*, in the first verse of the tenth chapter, must

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<sup>1</sup>Ps. 23. 5.

we not take this to be the same? But for what can this have been so specified? Probably – 1. To show that the witnesses ascent was the direct result of Christ's special intervention; and, 2. To identify yet further the cause and triumph of the *witnesses* with that of the *Reformation*.

II. The Earthquake that followed is the next point to be noticed. "And at the same time there was a great earthquake." The adoption and established profession of Protestantism by different countries must have involved a considerable separation from the Papacy. In Saxony, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark the Reformed doctrine became the state religion. But all these countries lay beyond the north boundary line of the old Roman Empire. They constituted no part of the ten kingdoms, of which, in Apocalyptic prophecy, *the great city* was composed. We are therefore to look elsewhere for that which is represented in the vision: "*The tenth part of the city fell.*"

It is true that history records *the falling away* of one of the original ten kingdoms of Papal Christendom from the Roman Church, over thrown by Protestantism. Surely it points to *England*, one of the most notable of those ten parts of the great apostate city. The story of this revolution may be told in few words. Certain Lutherans had visited our shores soon after Luther's departure from his Patmos, by whose teaching, with that of the surviving *Lollards* and *Wickliffites*, the smoldering sparks were rekindled, and mens minds prepared to seek a change. Outwardly the *political* preceded the *spiritual* movement here. By the passions of men God was working out his great designs. The imperious and licentious Henry VIII was king of England when Luther began the Reformation. He had even come forward to dispute with Luther as the champion of the Papacy, for which the Pope honored him with the title of *Defender of the Faith*. Ere ten years had passed other motives swayed him. Dissatisfied with his queen, Catherine, he sought from the Pope a divorce. This being refused, he summoned his Parliament, and the memorable Act was passed by which Papal supremacy was renounced in England, and the king declared temporal head of the Church. As yet, however, the Reformation was not established. During Henry's reign Popery lay in ruins, but no evangelical Protestant edifice was erected in its stead. But in Edward's reign, which succeeded, this was effected; and though for a few years threatened again by the efforts of the bigoted Mary, was, thanks be to God, fully organized and established. Thenceforth the Protestant or *Witness Church of England* has been fixed in the heaven of political exaltation.

But another result of the earthquake is given: "There were slain seven *thousands* (chiliads) names of men." Observe, that it is not the numeral adjective that is here used, but the substantive *chiliads*. The term is originally Jewish,

denoting a subdivision of a tribe. "So Moses chose able men, rulers of *thousands*,"<sup>1</sup> etc. Henceforth the *chiliad*, being about one fiftieth of a tribe, became noted as a subdivision in Israel. To these *chiliads* land was afterwards allotted; and each became a *district*, like the hundred in an English county, and gave "a name," or *distinctive title*, to its chief ruler.

Bearing therefore, in mind that the whole population of Roman Christendom had been symbolized in the Revelation by the figure of *the twelve tribes of Israel*, we have only to turn to history again, and to see whether any subdivisions of Western Christendom were in fact separated from Papal Rome, and so might be considered politically destroyed at the time Papal England *fell*, and by the same agency of Protestant principles. What then do we find? We read that during the reign of Elizabeth the *seven Dutch United Provinces* were emancipated from the Spanish yoke, and at the same time the Papal rule and religion were destroyed in them.

The first constitution of these as *provinces* was at the time Roman Gaul was conquered by the Franks. The *Netherlands*, including French and Dutch Flanders, formed part of the Frankish Empire. They were divided into seventeen provinces, each being a territorial domain assigned to some chieftain, like the territorial chiliads assigned to Israel on their settlement in Canaan. In the course of the seven hundred years between Charlemagne and Charles V many changes occurred affecting them. Having been transferred from one emperor to another, they passed to Charles V, and from him to Philip II of Spain.

Into these provinces of the Netherlands Protestant doctrines had soon found their way; and here also martyrs, to the number of 100,000, sealed the truth of what they preached with their blood. The arm of power and dread of the Inquisition long prevented an open outbreak. But under Philip II political was added to religious oppression, and war commenced in A.D. 1569. Thus the earthquake, under which England, the tenth kingdom of the Popedom, had just fallen off, began to threaten its supremacy in these lesser districts. While some of the provinces adhered to Spain and the Papacy, some separated; and the union of the *Seven United Provinces* in A.D. 1579 was formed by deputies from Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel, and Guelderland. Their success against Philip might well have appeared hopeless. His was the mightiest monarchy in Europe, and they but a small people in territory and population; besides being badly organized and indifferently armed. But the energy and fortitude imparted to them by religion was not to be overcome; nor was the purpose of God to fail. After a thirty-seven years war, the impossibility of recovering the seven provinces to itself and the Popedom was recognized by Spain. The

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<sup>1</sup>Exod. 18. 25.

*seven chiliads* of the Papal city were overthrown; and out of their ruins arose the Protestant Republic of Holland.

Such were the two principal and permanent changes that rose out of *the earthquake* attendant upon the Reformation. It was fondly hoped by the French Protestants – when Henry IV of France obtained the crown, he too being Protestant – that such also would have been the result in that kingdom. But no prophecy had foretold such an event. On the contrary, Henry, after his accession, abjured Protestantism; and though by his *Edict of Nantes* in A.D. 1598 civil liberty and rights were secured to the Protestants, yet the restrictions were such that it could not be said that *there* the witnesses had ascended into the political heaven. Ere the predicted results had received their full accomplishment in Northern Germany and England, this Edict of Nantes was revoked by Louis XIV., and Protestants were thenceforward put out of the protection of the law in France. In Germany also the Emperor Frederick II issued an edict in A.D. 1629, by which Protestants were required to restore to the Church of Rome all the possessions they had become masters of in that country in consequence of a religious peace concluded in the preceding century. This was called the *Restitution Edict*. A war thereupon arose in defense of Protestant liberties, in which Gustavus Adolphus fell victorious at Lutzen, A.D. 1632; but it was not till 1648 that Protestant rights were firmly established by the Peace of Westphalia.

In England, Charles II, and still more his brother, James II, made efforts to restore Popery; until in 1688 through God's gracious favor to this island, William of Orange superseded James, and the Protestant ascendancy was permanently confirmed in England, and eventually in Holland also.

In every case, whether in England or Holland, “the remnant,” *i.e.*, the Papists who remained, “were *affrighted*.” Penal enactments were passed against Romanists. The popular tide of feeling set in against them. At times they dared scarcely be seen, and soon large numbers conformed to Protestantism.

On the other hand, the *ascended* Protestants everywhere “gave glory to the God of heaven.” In England again and again sounded forth the thanksgiving song: On the death of the persecuting Bloody Mary and the ascent of Elizabeth to the throne; on the defeat of the Spanish Armada sent to re-subjugate the kingdom to Rome; and again long after; on the commencement of the third William's reign, solemn thanksgivings, individual and national, were rendered, not as hitherto to the Virgin Queen or to the saints, but to the *God* of heaven. Sovereign and people in each case publicly acknowledged that it was The Lord's doing, and gave Him their praise. As in England, so in Germany and Holland also were offered by the Protestants thanksgiving for the successes given to them. The expression of the text marks a sign of the times – a sign that the vindication of God's honor had begun.

Nor did the sound cease till the echo of thanksgiving reached west and east to the continents of America and Asia. Commercial power soon flowed in on

England and Holland after their overthrow of the Papal religion; and numerous and large dependent colonies were formed in those distant regions. We may now see why the rainbow crowned Covenant Angel had in his descent set *his right foot on the sea* as well as his left on the mainland. Insular England was, even in Elizabeth's reign, the bulwark of Protestantism; and seemed preparing, too, as a colonial power, to be the chief propagator of its doctrines beyond the seas, in opposition to that of the numerous Romish missions. At length, in William's reign, was established the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, being the first Protestant Missionary Society. We might go on and show how, a century later, on a scale as mighty as that of the Papal Antichrist's pretensions to universal dominion similar societies were multiplied, which carried far and wide the claims of the name of Jesus, as of him to whom every knee should bow. This was the highly favored island's work, the severed tenth of the Roman Empire: as if the impulse of the angel's foot-press still continued, and there had never ceased within it the influence and blessing of his visitation.

But though in the ascendant, the sackcloth robe of the witnesses had not been entirely put off. The 1260 days were not finished. In Italy, Spain, and Portugal the Inquisition might still count its thousands, barbarously murdered. Neither in Austria was toleration fully granted till A.D. 1783. In France the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in A.D. 1572 showed the feeling of kings and nobles, priests and people, against the Huguenots or Protestants; and sad indeed is the picture of their miseries up to the year 1788, just before the Revolution. England and Holland could not be said to have put off their somber garments while ever their sister Churches were thus oppressed. One member of the body suffering, all sympathized with it.

One only subject remains here for consideration: "*The second woe is past.*" We have already had occasion to observe how the Saracen and the Turkish woes had been designed against "the men that had not the seal of God upon their foreheads." Mahomet's asserted commission had been against *idolaters*; and as such, the apostate nations of Christendom (especially in the *Eastern third* of the Roman Empire) had been chiefly exposed to the shocks. We have also observed how the Turkish irruption, which had threatened the Emperor Charles V., had in a remarkable manner, served to protect and advance the interests of the Reformation. But no sooner is the Reformation accomplished than the agency of judgment begins to be removed. It was in A.D. 1571, just a year or two after the severance of the Seven United Provinces from Rome, that the great naval battle of *Lepanto* interposed an effectual barrier to the Turkish arms; and this was followed, about thirty years after, in their ejection from Transylvania. It was not, however until the latter end of the seventeenth century, and the victories of *John Sobieski* and of *Prince Eugene*, that the woe could be regarded as near its end. This latter was immediately consequent upon the final settlement of the Reformation in England on the accession of William III. Thenceforward the decay of

the Turkman power progressed. The next war of A.D. 1770, signaled by victory after victory on the part of the united forces of Austria and Russia, proclaimed to the world, in language not to be mistaken, that the Turkmen were no longer a *woe* to Christendom, but Christendom to the Turkmen, The second woe had passed away.

Then follows, in the Apocalyptic prophecy, the announcement of a rapidly changing future. No new external judgment, no changes worthy of prefiguration were to intervene before the breaking forth of the Third Woe – that woe of the Last Trumpet. Into the particulars of this part of the prophecy we shall have to enter at length when it will come again in course before us. And since the *unfulfilled future* is beyond the purpose of our lectures, we shall close, for the present, with the words of the vision:

*...the third woe cometh quickly. (15) And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. (16) And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, (17) Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. (18) And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. (19) And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. (Rev. 11:14-19)*

### *Lecture XXIII. The British Church amongst the Witnesses.*

Having, in the preceding lectures, confined our view of the *Witnesses* to the twofold *Eastern and Western lines*, illustrated in the history of the Paulikian, Waldensian, and other confessors of Christ, it may be interesting to the English reader to digress<sup>1</sup> from the direct course of Apocalyptic inquiry, and examine what may have passed during the long period reviewed by us in the religious history of Britain.<sup>2</sup>

In our primary lecture we alluded to the fact that Popery was not the *first* form of Christianity introduced into England, but that previously there existed an Apostolic Church in these islands; and that consequently the Reformation was but the rooting out of those noxious weeds which had overrun and all but choked the plant of true Christianity.

We have already supposed that St. John, from his lonely isle, taking a survey of the religious state of the surrounding world, might have seen a hint of light on his distant horizon, which had told him that *British Isles* had received the Gospel, and might already be numbered amongst the rising Churches.

The first introduction of Christianity in all probability was early effected in apostolic times, and as such, partook of primitive purity and simplicity. Sometime previous to the birth of Christ, Julius Caesar had by conquest opened an intercourse with Britain and numbered it amongst the provinces of the Roman Empire. A door was thus providentially opened, which doubtless the missionary zeal of early Christians was not slow to take advantage of. Whether *Thomas* or *Paul* first preached the Gospel here is a point undecided; but tradition more usually attributes it to the former. Eusebius merely states that “some of the apostles crossed the ocean to the British Isles.” There are sufficient notices on record that Christianity had made considerable progress as early as the middle of the second century.

A.D. 167. – The Venerable Bede, whose Church History is well known in our own days, records that a British king called Lucius was in this year converted, and exerted himself for the dissemination of the Scriptures, which, we are also told by Prideaux, were in use in A.D. 168.

A.D. 234. – Origen writes: “The power of God our Savior is even with them in Britain, shut out from our world.” A similar observation was made by Tertulian of places of the British Isles inaccessible to the Romans, but which had

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<sup>1</sup>This lecture is not taken from the *Horae Apocalypticae*, but is deemed advisable as a continuation of Church history.

<sup>2</sup>King's Primer of Irish History.

become subject to the dominion of Christ; and by Chrysostom, "that even the British Isles have felt the power of the Word, for there too Churches have been raised up."

Of the consideration to which the British Church had attained early in the fourth century, evidence exists that its bishops appeared as deputies at several of the councils. Thus at Nice, A.D. 325, in the reign of Constantine, we find a British bishop; also at Sardica in the year 347, and at Ariminum in 359. But perhaps a still surer test of its progress is in the circumstance of its having been called to endure persecution. Thus, at the beginning of the fourth century, in the reign of Diocletian, thousands of the British perished. And what persecution had begun the Saxon invasion well nigh finished. Dean Waddington says of the year 542, "The Saxons almost swept Christianity from Britain."

A.D. 432. – But the truth, while it declined in England, flourished in Ireland. *Succathus*, better known as *St. Patrick*, appears about this time, as an Irish bishop, to have founded the See of Armagh, which has ever since continued as the Primacy. His missionary labors, with the assistance of many who united with him in the work, were crowned with success; the Church was enlarged, and numerous bishoprics and churches were founded. Though in later days erroneously supposed to have been a maintainer of the superstitions of the Romish Church, his "Confessions" show that he held the pure faith of the Gospel, and he specially enforced the importance of making the Holy Scriptures the foundation of Christian doctrine. He died in A.D. 492.

Many other preachers and missionaries are recorded as laboring during this century; in the latter part of which, a Briton, named Pelagius, is said to have introduced opinions which still bear his name, and which deny the inheritance of a sinful nature from Adam (Pelagianism). From this heresy, which for a long time troubled the British Church, one good at least arose; inasmuch as it led to the establishment of schools for instructing the people in the nature of the true religion.

One eminent man, *Columba*, long remembered in these isles, after having founded many churches in Ireland, he preached as a missionary in Scotland, up to that period in Pagan darkness. There he founded a college in Iona, near the Isle of Mull, which was resorted to for education until the eighth century, and then destroyed by the Danes. The ruins still remain, and were surrounded with a wall by the Duke of Argyll about fifty years since. Columba made copies of the Scriptures, and circulated them; insisting in his preaching "that they must be held as the rule of faith." He died in A.D. 551.

During this sixth century there were good men and bishops also in Wales, amongst whom *St. David* of Caerleon and *Julius* were preeminent. Pelagianism, Arianism, and superstition had not left those British Churches altogether untouched; but we have no proof as to what extent they were infected.



In A.D. 635 we read that Oswald, king of Northumbria, sent to Scotland for teachers to instruct his people in religion. Accordingly *Aidan*, a Scotch bishop, who had been educated in Ireland, fixed his residence at Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland, accompanied by two of his countrymen. It was by their means that the North of England was evangelized. That which now constitutes the diocese of London was Christianized by the exertions of a British bishop called *Chad*. In fact, every county from Edinburgh to London, Norfolk and Suffolk excepted, owes the first light of the Gospel to the ancient British Church, independent of all connection with the Roman Church.

It was about the year 570, while a pure doctrine was being extensively preached in Ireland, as also in Wales by *Kentigern* and *Asaph*, that Bertha, a Christian princess of France, was married to Ethelbert, king of Kent. Under her influence, when a Romish missionary from Pope Gregory, Augustine, arrived in this country, the king received him favorably. *This was the first introduction of Popery into England*. Augustine came in the full pomp of Papal authority: a crucifix was carried before him, and twenty monks waited on him with devotion. The king of Kent was baptized, and 10,000 of the people were in one day admitted by the same sacrament into the nominal Church of Christ. After establishing the Romish religion at Kent, Augustine went through the country, endeavoring with zeal worthy of a better cause, to convert the inhabitants, and to bring their clergy and bishops into union with Rome. Towards Wales the Popish missionary bent his course, and on his way stopped for some time at Worcester, where he called a synod. It is said that several English bishops were present, and they silently waited for this Augustine to begin. After some deliberation he demanded with a haughty air, "Whether they were prepared to concede three points to Rome? First, that Easter should be kept as at Rome; secondly, that baptism should be according to the Romish ritual; thirdly, that there should be a union with the Popish missionaries in preaching to the Angles."

To these demands the English bishops replied that they were willing to render equal submission to the Pope as to any godly *person*; but that they were under the Bishop of *Chester* as their overseer, "to cause us," they said, "to keep the way spiritual."<sup>1</sup>

The irritated missionary revenged the insult when opportunity served. He stirred up the king of Northumbria against them. A battle ensued, and 2000 of the British clergy were massacred on one occasion, surrounded with their flocks who tried to defend them; the clergy, by prayers and exhortations, encouraging them to hold out to the last.

The bad leaven introduced by the monk Augustine rapidly worked its way, and Southern England, with but few exceptions, joined Rome. Although much

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. C. Collins's *Lost Church Found*, p. 96.

might have been wrong *in practice* before he came, the Bible had been nevertheless upheld as the standard of faith. But thenceforward the adoration of images, saints, and relics, with all the other marks of apostasy, began by degrees to be visible in England's churches.

In A.D. 854, King Ethelwulf, hoping thereby to win the favor of Heaven, settled a pension on the Pope out of the royal domains; and would have given over himself, his kingdom, and people to the same control, had not his subjects risen up indignantly and dethroned him. This gave a check to the Romish encroachments; and *Alfred the Great* succeeding, refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, and disallowed all the Papal pretensions. He read the Scriptures himself, and wished them to be read by the people. One error he made, however, in the case of Oxford, which from an early date had been a seat of learning. The Saxons having pillaged and burnt it, King Alfred rebuilt several of the colleges, but retained the Romish monk Grimbold, as a professor, which caused much dissension, and was finally obliged to retire. Until then the university was uninfected by Popery, but from that time it partook of the general corruption.

William the Conqueror, in like manner, withstood the claims of Rome's supremacy. When summoned to do homage for his kingdom, he declared that he held it from God and *by his own sword*.

When William Rufus came to the throne, though he rejected Popish interference, he hesitated not to sell the vacant benefices, bishoprics, and abbeys to the highest bidder. At length, in the reign of Henry II., the triumph of Rome was complete. Having quarreled with Thomas Becket and degraded him from his archbishopric of Canterbury, the latter appealed to the Pope and fled from England. Henry at first renounced the Pope's authority and resisted his interference. But when, on the assassination of Becket, the kingdom was placed under an interdict, the king made full submission, and was reconciled to Rome.

The degrading humiliations to which the king of England submitted make us turn with indignation against Popish assumption, the more ascendant its grasp, ever the more intolerant and mean in its tyranny. Some of the conditions on which absolution was obtained were these: — 1<sup>st</sup>, Never to oppose the Pope's will; 2<sup>nd</sup>, never to hinder appeals to Rome; 3<sup>rd</sup>, to unite in crusade to the Holy Land; 4<sup>th</sup>, to restore the property taken from the clergy. Further, to walk barefoot to the tomb of Becket, there to receive on his bare shoulders five stripes from each of the five prelates, and three stripes with knotted cords from each of the eighty monks of Canterbury. He was then required to kneel on the cold stones for the length of a day and night clothed in sackcloth. To all this Henry yielded; and thus the Monarchy and Church of England, after nearly a thousand year struggle *became part and parcel of the Papal Roman Empire*.

The Papal triumph was still incomplete while *Ireland* remained unconquered and free in government and religion. The Church there had long kept up a protest against Rome's pretensions, and the Sacred Scriptures were freely read. Bishop Bede (who afterwards translated the Bible) says in his History, "That the knowledge of Latin was kept up in that country by the meditation of the Scriptures."

Henry having resolved to add Ireland to his dominion, the Pope readily gave his sanction. We have seen before that, as *Vicar of Christ*, he deemed himself entitled to give any part of the world to whom he pleased. Pope Adrian IV thus writes to Henry of England, A.D. 1172: "Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our well beloved son in Christ, the illustrious king of the English, etc. ... Your highness, in contemplating the laudable design of gaining fame on earth and augmenting the recompense of bliss awaiting you in heaven. ... We cannot but hope success will attend your mission. Certainly *there is no doubt*, but that Ireland, and all the islands on which the Sun of Righteousness hath shined, do belong *of right* to St. Peter, and the holy Roman Church: for which reason we are the more induced to introduce into them a holy stock, etc., etc, ... You have signified your desire to enter Ireland, and your willingness to pay St. Peter an annual tribute of one penny for every house there, and to preserve the ecclesiastical rights of the land uninjured, etc." Then follow good wishes for success, concluding thus: "That you may so obtain a higher recompense from God, and upon earth a name of glory to all generations."

The story is well known how Henry conquered the country and returned not to England until the Irish Church, long since deteriorated and fast waning in light and truth, had been formally made over to the Church of Rome. The priesthood, infected with superstitions introduced by Popish emissaries from England, were but too ready to betray their trust; and having convened a synod, agreed to yield the required submission. Whereupon the Pope wrote a letter of congratulation to the Irish *bishops*, in which he declared himself "thankful to God, who had *granted such a noble victory* to his dearly beloved son in Christ, the king of England."

Years passed on, and for nearly two centuries no *protesting* cry was publicly heard against Popery. Rich and poor, laics and churchmen, were devoted to the building of churches; and monasteries, nunneries, abbeys, convents, and cathedrals studded the kingdom. The reason and conscience of the *nation*, it might be said, were enslaved.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century a cry rose from Oxford of loud opposition, the echo of which died not away until it was lost in the still louder raised voice of opposition to Popery at the Reformation. Edward III of England demurred to the Pope's asserted right of naming the clergy to fill the vacant benefices, and refused to do him the homage that John had consented to render. John Wickliffe, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, had supported the king by

writing in favor of his views. On his return from a personal interview with the Pope's Legate, he boldly proclaimed the Pope to be the *man of sin* spoken of in Scripture, and denounced him as Antichrist.

Wickliffe was accused of heresy, and again and again the University received the Pope's order to deliver him up. On its repeated refusal, Wickliffe fearlessly appeared at St. Paul's, where a council had been summoned to condemn him. But the council suddenly broke up, and no sentence was pronounced. A spark of inquiry, however had been struck, and persecution fanned it into flame.

Wickliffe translated the Bible, and copies in manuscript were circulated; but though the price was too high for the middle and lower classes, this did not stop the progress of truth. A load of hay, or its worth, was not infrequently given for even a small portion of the Holy Book.

Ever jealous of the circulation of God's Word, Popery opposed its progress by all possible means, in vain. The people had begun to feel its value; and hiding the pages, used to meet together at night to read it in secret.

After withstanding all the endeavors of the enemies of truth to crush him, Wickliffe was allowed to retire in old age to Lutterworth, and there died. The doctrines of the Lollards, now identified with his followers, continued to take root and spread; his writings also were circulated and translated.

A.D. 1399. In the subsequent persecution which raged against these witnesses, many were burnt alive, amongst them *Lord Cobham*. Inquisitors being sent to Oxford with special orders to destroy all the books of the heretics, numbers of these were found and committed to the flames. But while the wrath of man was destroying, the providence of God was preparing a new means of advancing the circulation of His Word; and the art of *printing* from its first invention, gave a mighty impulse to the cause of the Gospel. No sooner had the Reformation begun to move the minds of men in Germany, than its doctrines were openly professed also in England. Persecution revived, and the fires of Smithfield blazed again and again around God's faithful martyrs. But the spirit of resistance to the Roman tyranny was by God's goodness implanted in the breasts of our countrymen; and the throwing off of the Papal yoke was the first national evidence of that Christian liberty which had once been the glory and safeguard of Britons.

The Reformation might be said to have been finally accomplished when the people were enabled to approach God in public worship *in a language which they could understand*, and when a liturgy was adopted which, retaining a form of sound words, directed the worshiper to the inspired volume, as to the source from which it in spirit derived its origin and excellence. The Book of Common Prayer was compiled, partly indeed from whatever little was found Scriptural in the Roman Missal, but still more from the Ancient British Liturgy, and from the spiritual writings of the German Reformers. Thus, purified and refreshed

from the corrupt inventions of Papal priest craft and the formation of dark superstition, pure Christianity shone forth again, had free course and was glorified. The prediction of the divine revelation was fulfilled; and England ceased to be numbered among *the ten kingdoms* of the great Apostasy.

Before we close our notice of the witnessing Churches, it may be well to remark that there were other parts of the world in which, while they cannot be included amongst our *lines* of witnesses, being beyond the pale of Romish usurpation, there yet were to be found, not only individuals and families, but even communities and regularly formed Churches, which would appear to have from a very ancient date held fast the pure truth of Christian doctrine. As an instance of this, we know that a large Church existed in India at the end of the fifteenth century, with its congregations and pastors, its sacred buildings and pure sacraments, which never had, at any time, connection with the Church of Rome. The number of these Syrian Christians then amounted to 300,000 souls.<sup>1</sup>

Upon the discovery of the Malabar coast and the landing of the Portuguese, the latter proceeded to claim these churches and countries for their own, in the name of the Pope and by virtue of a deed of gift from him. The asserted pretensions of an ecclesiastical potentate of whom they had never before heard was at once resisted by the whole body. Their own apostolic *orders* they considered as derived from the Apostle Thomas; a tradition which subsequent researches seem to confirm. Their manuscripts are evidently of great antiquity.

It was not long ere the usual means for forcing submission to the Papacy were largely brought to bear on this simple people. The burning of their books, persecution to the death, and finally, the establishment of the Inquisition at Goa, at length effected *to a small extent* the required obedience. Nevertheless, at a Council held A.D. 1599, at Diamper, near Cochin, the following among other particulars, were laid to their charge: That they received no images; that their priests had wives; that they acknowledged but *two* sacraments; that they neither invoked the saints nor believed in purgatory.

Dr. Buchanan, in his "Researches," about the beginning of the present century, gives a full and interesting account of these Christians. Albeit the leaven of superstition has worked much mischief among them, they have continued, as a Church, to maintain their independence.

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<sup>1</sup>Yates's *History of the Indian Churches*, p. 111.

## ***Lecture XXIV. The Great Red Dragon.***

### **Supplemental History of The Adversaries of The Church.**

#### **The Satanic Agency of Pagan Rome**

*Rev 12:1-17 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: (2) And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. (3) And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. (4) And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. (5) And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. (6) And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. (7) And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, (8) And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. (9) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (10) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (11) And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (12) Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. (13) And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. (14) And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. (15) And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. (16) And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. (17) And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

**In Revelation 11:7, we have seen** mention made by the Covenant Angel of “*the Beast that ascendeth, out of the abyss.*” But it was requisite, in order to St. John's understanding who this enemy was, that a supplemental and more explanatory prophecy should be given. Almost as the history of the witnesses is finished, this supplemental prophetic sketch is supplied, and with a view to greater distinctness, it is introduced by a preliminary notice of the chief previous enemy which the Church would have for its persecutor, namely the “seven headed Dragon,” or the *devil* inspiring and acting in the *Pagan Roman Empire*. As the seven sealed book originally seen in the hands of Him who sat upon the throne, and which contained the whole fateful prophecy respecting the destined fortunes of the Church and the world, was described as a *scroll* written *within* and *on the outside*, so we may justly suppose this supplemental prophecy to have occupied the outside of the scroll. It will be presently seen that it involves the same famous prophetic period of the 1260 days or *years*, which the continuous prophecy of the seals and trumpets had done before.

Opening beautifully with the vision of a *woman clothed with the sun* in the Apocalyptic heaven or sky, the *moon* sandalling her feet, and a coronet of twelve stars upon her head. She evidently represents the *faithful Church*, being defined as the mother of “those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” But wherefore so exalted in the figurative vision does history record such exaltation? The state of things depicted answers to the time when Constantine had become the supporter of Christianity and of the Christian Church. Then for the first time she appeared before men with the luster of the *imperial power*, like as of the sun in the heaven; having the moon, or *other chief rulers* in the empire, subordinate to her; while the stars that crowned her head may be explained to be the *ministers* or *bishops* of the Churches, now recognized as dignitaries before the world: the number twelve corresponding with that of the *twelve* tribes of the symbolic Israel.

As to the *man-child* which the woman was about to bring forth, its meaning is well explained as defining the line of Christian emperors, by the language of ecclesiastical writers of the time to which we refer the vision. They styled the emperor, when baptized, a “*son of the Church.*”<sup>1</sup> And it was just at the crisis when Constantine was about to be baptized, and so before the world to become professedly the son of the Church, that Roman paganism, through the instrumentality, first, of the Emperor Maximin, then of Licinius, made its last attack on the Christian cause.

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<sup>1</sup>The Anti-christian Church afterwards applied this title in their addresses to emperors and kings; – e.g., the king of France is styled the eldest son of the Church.

And this too is strikingly prefigured by the other great symbol in the vision: the *seven-headed ten horned Dragon*, which was represented as seeking to devour the woman's man-child as soon as born. For we must needs assign to the seven heads and ten horns, when *upon the Dragon*, the same explanation as that which was given of them afterwards by the angel in chapter 17, when they appeared (with a certain small and defined difference) on the *Beast*, the Dragon successor. This explanation was to the effect that the seven heads had the double mystical meaning both of Rome's *seven hills*, and of the *seven ruling beasts* that in succession comprised the supreme power of the Roman Empire. These were *Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome itself* being thus the *sixth*, head, agreeably with the angel's statement (Rev. 17:10.) that "five are fallen and one is." It was added by him that a *seventh beast* should appear, which must be the future Two Horned Earth Beast of Rev. 13, simply because it is the only additional beast mentioned in the scripture, whose power should continue but a short time at the end.

It is seen, on referring to history, that shortly before the last persecution of Christianity by Pagan Rome a change was made in the form of government; instead of one sole emperor as heretofore, four being constituted joint rulers, each with his own division of the empire, but with Rome as the common capital. It appears, moreover, that the *diadem of pearls* was then adopted as the chief imperial badge, instead of the *laurel crown*, and very remarkable it is, and very confirmatory of the view here given, that in the Apocalyptic vision the Dragon was pictured with *diadems* on his heads, not crowns. There is yet a third very curious coincidence between the representation of the Dragon and the facts of history to which we refer it: that first Maximin, and then after him Licinius, were rulers over the Eastern third of the Roman Empire; and there persecuted the Christian ministers and bishops, while they made war against the advancing Christian army from the West just as the Dragon, in double position of attack, is said to have drawn with his *tail* the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth, when standing in hostile attitude before the woman with intent to *devour the man-child* that she was about to bring forth.

The result, as *prefigured*, was that the man-child was born, and caught up to what is called "God's throne," with the destiny assigned to him of after a while "ruling the Gentiles with a rod of iron."<sup>1</sup> The result, *as realized in history*, was, that Constatine, after conquering Licinius, and so becoming ruler over the whole Roman Empire, was baptized, and thus recognized before the world as a *son* of the Christian Church; that in this character he and other orthodox Christian emperors after him, especially Theodosius, professed, like David and Solomon, to be seated as his earthly vicegerents on the Lord's throne; and that at

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<sup>1</sup>The Greek verb literally construed means "is about to rule."



length, with the severest laws, they oppressed, and ere the end of the fourth century all but extinguished, the Pagans and Pagan worship throughout the Roman world.

Before the Dragon's prefigured downfall, however, there was to be "war in heaven." And accordingly under Julian, called "the apostate," from having renounced Christianity for Paganism, there was renewed the struggle against the true Christian cause and Church. But it was not of long continuance as Julian's reign lasted scarcely a year and a half. Moreover, after his fall the Dragon is said to have "persecuted the woman that brought forth the man-child;" a statement fulfilled in the fact of the *Arian persecutions* of the orthodox Christian Church and its chief champions, such as Athanasius;"<sup>1</sup> for the spirit of Paganism was declared by both Christians and Pagans to have revived in Arianism. And now, both on this account, and on account of the superstitions which began also at this time very manifestly to corrupt the doctrine and practice of professing Christians, there was fulfilled the symbol of the woman, or faithful orthodox Church, seeming to "fly" more and more from the visible scene "into the wilderness." Against Arianism, Theodosius, with the help of a great general Council gathered from the two great divisions of the empire (like the "two wings of the great eagle" in the vision), effectually helped the Church. But superstitions continued to strengthen and multiply.

While the woman was thus retiring towards the wilderness, the "flood" was sent forth by the Dragon.<sup>2</sup> This symbol was fulfilled in the fact of Emperor Valens and others of the Pagan or Arian remnant inviting *Gothic hosts* into the Roman Empire, thus endangering the faith newly established. But the "earth helped the woman, and swallowed up the flood." These nations one after another became nominally Christian. In fact, the mass of the inhabitants of the Roman world, more numerous by far than their invaders, remained firm in their adherence to the orthodox faith; and at length, as the fifth and sixth centuries passed, the flood of *Pagan and Arian venom* was swallowed up.

But "the woman" the faithful, united, and spiritual Church – though preserved alive, was to pass away for a long season from observation. She was to remain "in the wilderness for 1260 *prophetic days*," *i.e.*, for so many *years* was she to be *insulated from the world, obscure and desolate* (the expression in the fourteenth verse, "for a time and times and half a time," being, as in Daniel, used to denote the same period). Of such being the state of the true Church of Christ during the many dark centuries that followed, we have already shown that history furnishes abundant evidence. The outward progress of ecclesiastical

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<sup>1</sup>The Athanasian creed in our Church service was called after Athanasius, because it was written in direct opposition to Arian doctrines.

<sup>2</sup>The crocodile and others of this tribe are known to act so towards their enemies.

rule and ordinances was by no means a criterion of its real condition. The distinction between the *sealed* and the *unsealed* henceforward became more important, as we have traced in our Eighth and Ninth Lectures. Milner states that the impression left on his mind from the account which Eusebius gives is, that the general appearance of the Church did not present much of a spirit of godliness. "If we look," he says, "at the external appearance of Christianity, nothing can be more splendid. Pompous apparatus, augmented superstitions, unmeaning forms of piety, much show, but little substance. ... External piety flourished; but faith, love, heavenly-mindedness appear very rare. The doctrine of real conversion was very much lost, or external baptism placed in its stead; and the true doctrine of justification by faith, and the true practical use of a crucified Savior for troubled consciences, were *scarce to be seen* at this time. ... While superstition and self-righteousness were making vigorous shoots, the real Gospel of Christ was *hidden* from the men that professed it."<sup>1</sup> Again, speaking of the Council of Antioch during Valens' reign, at which 146 bishops were present, "These pathetically bewailed the times, and observed that the infidels laughed at the evil; while true Christians, avoiding the churches as being now nurseries of impiety, *went into deserts* and lifted up their hands to God with sighs and tears."<sup>2</sup>

Where was our religion before the Reformation? We have here the answer. The very question implies what prophecy had declared – its temporary *invisibility*. It was *in the wilderness*; hidden, but not lost; cast down, but not destroyed; exhibited amongst the few; known to God, though mostly unknown to men; like the seven thousand whom Elijah knew not of, who had not bowed the knee to Baal: some in secret, insulated from those around, even as in "a barren and dry land where no water is," pouring forth their fervent prayers, sighing and crying to God; some, fewer still, prepared to act a bolder part, and stand forth as Christ's confessors and martyrs rather than submitting to false Christendom. The Romish Church maintains its own *ubiquity* and *visibility at all times*; consequently, never having experienced this predicted wilderness life, it could not *for this very reason* be the true Church of Christ.

While history, moreover, tells of the songs "in heaven" the triumphant rejoicings and congratulations with which the *high places of the Roman world* exulted in the overthrow of Paganism and the establishment of Christianity under Constantine, and to which exultation the previously suffering Christians were publicly exhorted by the imperial decrees of that day – we are enabled likewise to understand the force of the added warning, "*Woe to the inhabitants*

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<sup>1</sup>Milner, Cent. iv., ch. ii.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, ch. xi.

*of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*” While the mere outward and earthly minded observers were indulging in anticipations of external power and glory for the Christianized Roman world, the heavenly and spiritually minded might foresee predicted times of coming judgments – Arian heresies and Gothic scourges, wherewith the devil would seek to revenge himself on those who had not only terminated his long maintained Pagan ascendancy, but had even numbered the days of Pagan toleration.

## ***Lecture XXV. The Beast from the Sea, Etc.***

### **The Two Horned Earth Beast. – The Image of the Beast Supplemental, History of the Adversaries of the Church Continued**

*Rev 13:1-18 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. (2) And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. (3) And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. (4) And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (5) And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. (6) And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. (7) And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. (8) And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (9) If any man have an ear, let him hear. (10) He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (11) And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. (12) And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. (13) And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, (14) And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. (15) And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. (16) And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: (17) And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (18) Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

*Rev 17:1-18 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: (2) With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. (3) So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. (4) And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: (5) And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. (6) And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. (7) And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. (8) The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. (9) And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. (10) And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. (11) And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. (12) And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. (13) These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. (14) These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. (15) And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. (16) And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. (17) For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. (18) And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

**The preceding chapter represented** Satan, the animating spirit of old Paganism, as in great wrath, plotting the destruction of Christ's Church. Though

he had failed in a *direct* attack upon the divinity of the Lord Jesus, he had *indirectly*, by means of superstition, succeeded in driving the true and primitive Church into banishment. This furnished him with a new plan of attack, which we shall find developed in the figurations of this 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, and also in the further description given in chapter 17. This latter vision we have also prefixed to this lecture, though it forms rather the subject of *unfulfilled* prophecy.

I. The symbol of the “Beast rising out of the sea” is one of the most important predictions of the Revelation. We shall endeavor, in the first place, to treat of the prophetic symbol itself, and then to set forth its historical fulfillment.

The description of this Beast, with its “seven heads and ten horns,” would seem to mark a certain resemblance with that of the Dragon in the twelfth chapter. Thus, we would view the present figuration as depicting the same beast yet further developed. Identifying it, as there is evident reason to do, with the scarlet colored Beast from the abyss, mentioned afterwards in the seventeenth chapter, we treat of the several visions together; and we behold in them the same persecuting heathen-like power which we have already seen described in Rev. 11:7 as making war upon and killing the two witnesses. This Beast then, the same with Daniel's *fourth beast*,<sup>1</sup> and the little horn with St. Paul's man of sin,<sup>2</sup> we hold to signify that masterpiece of Satanic craft and enmity: The Antichrist that was to come: who (according to the strict meaning of the word *Antichrist*), while *assuming the character, occupying the place, and fulfilling the functions of the Savior as a Vice-Christ*, was to do more than any other adversary toward injuring the cause, and practically denying God, as to all real spiritual effect, and as to the very essence of the Christian system.

As the Dragon symbolized the *Pagan imperial dominion* of Rome to the time of its overthrow by Constantine in this beast, so in the present symbolic period of the Sea Beast we have indication of the Roman Papacy at its head; to which the Dragon or Satan gave “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” As the seventeenth chapter describes the Beast as emanating from the abyss or “bottomless pit,” thereby showing the true infernal origin from which it took its rise; so here this beast is regarded in respect of the apparent circumstance from which the establishment of its dominion arose “the sea,” or the “many waters” being defined in that very chapter as “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” representing the *Old World* locality of the Roman Empire and all of the previous sea beasts from Daniel chapter 7.

There is a second mystical signification assigned to the “seven heads” of the Beast by the interpreting angel in Rev. 17., the *seven hills* on which the woman

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<sup>1</sup>Dan. 7. 8, 20.

<sup>2</sup>2 Thess. 2. 1-12.

carried by the Beast was seated. And since the woman is there designated as “the city which *at that time* ruled over the kings of the earth,” these hills could only mean the far-famed seven hills of Rome. In this we have consequently a corroboration of the sense in which we apply this symbol of the Beast to the *Pontificate* of Rome.

But a further point which we have to notice in the description is the mention of “the ten horns” of the Beast, representing, as we are taught at chapter 17:12, certain *kings or kingdoms* of the Western Roman territory, which were to be established about the same time that the *Man of Sin* should enter on his dominion. Looking at the state of Roman Christendom – after that the Western Empire had been extinguished by Odoacer, and when, in the subsiding of the Gothic flood, there began the reappearance of order and settled government, ere the irruption of the Greek imperial army had again unsettled that arrangement by the setting up the Greek Exarchate of Ravenna, we observe *ten distinct kingdoms*, into which the Western Roman Empire had been resolved about the period A.D. 532. These ten kingdoms were the *Anglo Saxons*, the *Franks*, the *Al-emani*, the *Burgundians*, the *Visigoths*, the *Suevi*, the *Vandals*, the *Ostrogoths*, the *Bavarians*, and the *Lombards*. These Gothic kingdoms were governed by their own several kings, who, in token of distinct sovereignty, had assumed the *diadem*, with which each of the ten horns appear crowned in the Apocalyptic vision. But while each claimed a distinct political independence, they were all avowedly subservient to *one Head*, which henceforth continued to arrogate universal supremacy, the Pope of Rome. Such is Muller's testimony: “With the exception of the *Papacy* they had *no point of union*.”<sup>1</sup>

We have now to observe how fully the character ascribed in vision to this Apocalyptic Beast has been exhibited in the pretensions and actions of the *Papal Antichrist*.

I. “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.” This was surely fulfilled when the Pope assumed the title of *Christ's Vicar* on earth. For let us see what it involved. Could he who represented the Judge of all be amenable to man's judgment? No, he was above all law.<sup>2</sup> And this privilege was claimed from an early date. At a Council convened by Theodoric at Rome, A.D. 501 to consider certain charges against Pope *Symmachus*, it was ruled that the Council was incompetent, the accused being above all jurisdiction. Another synod, soon after, at which *Symmachus* presided, solemnly

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<sup>1</sup>Muller's Universal History, i. 412.

<sup>2</sup>2 Thess. 2. 8, “That wicked” (*lit.*) lawless one, – whom no law could reach.

adopted the assertion that “the Pope was Judge in place of God, and could himself be judged by no one.” The claim was maintained by the Popes of succeeding ages.

Again, could he regard the kings of the earth as his equals? Was he not *head* over all, supreme? It was his to make and *unmake* kings. So *Zachary* proceeded to depose the race of *Clovis* of France, and *Gregory VII* took the Empire from *Henry* and gave it to *Rodolphus*. The Pope's exaltation above all royal majesty was said to be “as the sun above the moon;” and princes were expressly required to kiss his feet. Perhaps the most remarkable instance of arrogance was that of *Celestine III*, A.D. 1191, at the coronation of the Emperor, Henry VI, “The Lord Pope sat in the pontifical chair, holding the golden imperial crown between his feet, and the Emperor bending his head received the crown, and the Empress likewise, from the feet of the Lord Pope. But the Lord Pope instantly struck with his foot the Emperor's crown, and cast it upon the ground.”<sup>1</sup> Nor was our own country exempt from like assumption. “Is not the king of England my bond-slave?” was the demand of *Innocent IV*. And in this spirit one Pope pronounced the deposition of King John, and another Pope fulminated his bull against Elizabeth, declaring, “God hath set me as prince over all nations, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to build.” The very promises of millennial glory made to Christ were cited as made to *this* king of kings, “All kings shall fall down before *him*, all nations do *him* service.”

As the impersonator of Christ, every prerogative, office, and title of the Lord was appropriated by the Pope Julius, in his bull to the fifth Lateran Council, he styles himself *the good shepherd*. Paschal II is named *the door of the sheep*. Was Christ “the Truth”? The canon law asserts the Pontiffs power of deciding contrary to both New and Old Testament decisions, “Holy Scriptures deriving their authority from *him*.” Was Christ “the Holy One”? So was *his Holiness* pronounced by the Council of Rome to be “*pure from all sin*.” Was Christ the “Husband of the Church”? The marriage ring of his inauguration declared him the same, even, as Bellarmine explains, “*to the exclusion of Christ*.” As “the Lamb of God,” he “takes away sin” by the efficacy of his Papal *indulgence*; even, as was asserted by Tetzels, “surpassing Christ in the range of his mercy.” As with the power of “all judgment committed to *him*,” he by his anathema doomed rebels to hell. Angels were by Clement VI “*commanded*” to do *his* bidding; and saints, canonized at his will, were made objects for living men to “*venerate and adore*.”

Nor did these “great things and blasphemies” stop here. The sacred name of God must be adopted by this Antichrist. Not only were men taught to style him “*our Lord God the Pope*,” not only was an inscription permitted to be graven

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<sup>1</sup>Roger de Hoveden; Baronius.



on the gate of Tolentino, "To Paul III, the best and greatest God on earth;" but Papal decrees expressly argued his right to be called God, "*God*, as being the vicar of God."<sup>1</sup> And so the Papal casuists, "The honor which is due to Christ, inasmuch as he is God, is due to the Pope." Repeatedly did the Roman Pontiff suffer himself to be addressed by the name of *the Lord's Christ*; and men were specially required to "bow at *his* name, as at the name of Jesus;"<sup>2</sup> while the canon law enacted, and Pope Sixtus distinctly affirmed, that "to bring an accusation against the Pope was to *sin against the Holy Ghost*." Such *was*, and such still *is*, the arrogant claims of the *Roman Antichrist*. Behold him on the day of his consecration sitting upon the *high altar* of St. Peter's to receive the adoration of mankind, "sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Verily, great was the *mystery of godliness*, God Humbling Himself to be man! Great, too, is the *mystery of iniquity*, – Man, Sinful Man, Exalting Himself to be as God!

2. But will men yield submission to pretensions so arrogant and impious? Even so; for it was written, "These *kings* have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." And again, "All the world wondered after the beast;" and "power was given him over all kindreds and nations." Already in the eighth century this was Gregory II's boast to the Greek emperor, "All the kings of the West reverence the Pope as *a God on earth*." Nor was this boasting vain; for when Pope Stephen entered France, Pepin and his subjects received him, we read, "as a *Divinity*." Kings and even emperors bound themselves by their coronation oath to "*be submissive to the Pope and Roman Church*." They took from his hands their crowns, and at his word again resigned them. They hold his stirrup, and lead his palfrey. They prostrate themselves, and kiss the foot he offers. Who has not heard how the Emperor, Henry IV, was driven by Papal interdict to humble himself, barefoot and in sackcloth, three wintry days and nights, without the city gates, till the proud Hildebrand relented? And as with princes so with people. It was ruled by the bull of Boniface VIII, "That it was essential to the *salvation* of every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." And so men believed. The people, said Gerson, "think of the Pope as the one God, who has all power in heaven and earth." Look at the thronging thousands on pilgrimage to Rome seeking his salvation. See the hard earnings of the poor given in the purchase of *his indulgences*. Behold the Sicilian ambassadors prostrate at *his* feet, crying to *him*, "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!"

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<sup>1</sup>Decretals of Innocent.

<sup>2</sup>Southey's Book of the Church, p. 190.

3. But what of those excepted from this prostration, “the remnant of the woman's seed,” God's “*tabernacle*,” “whose names are written in the *true* Lamb's book of life”? It was given to the Beast to make war with the saints and to overcome them. How relentless and cruelly, this part of his character he has sustained, the history of the Inquisition, of the *crusades against Christ's witnesses*, and of the *murder* of French Huguenots on *St. Bartholomew's Day*; also the many *martyrdoms* faithfully recorded, may tell in part, for these were done in public; but who can tell the countless many heart rending scenes of sorrow, suffering, and shame which have embittered *private* life, shut out from human eye and sympathy, but recorded by Him who is and ever has been the grand object of the hatred and wrath of Antichrist? “Shall he not visit for these things?” “Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” “If any man have an ear, let him hear.” For this is the word of the Lord concerning the Beast and his accomplices: “He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.” “He goeth into perdition,” – “cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

II. A second beast appears: The Two Horned Earth Beast; subordinate to the former, but exercising his authority, and by force and fraud causing men to worship the first beast.<sup>1</sup>

At the close of the final edition of his *Horae Apocalypticæ* about 1862, E. B. Elliot could not have guessed that America in the next century would develop to fulfill every description of the *Two Horned Earth Beast*, including making an *Image* of the *Sea Beast* – the *United Nations*, which Image has now fully begun to wield World Governing Authority under the auspices of the head wounded by the sword at the end of its 1260 year reign about 1798, but now healed of that wound since 1929.

On the union of Church and State taking place in the Roman Empire, we find in history the Vatican lost that temporal power ending its 1260 year dominion when Napolian's General Berthier was left in charge of the army after the Treaty of Campo Formio. He was in this post in 1798 when he entered Italy, invaded the Vatican, organized the Roman republic, and took Pope Pius VI as prisoner back to Valence, France, where, after a torturous journey under Berthier's supervision, the pope died, thus dealing a major blow to the Vatican's political power. Revelation 13 prefigures this as a head “wound by a sword” and records *it* “did live” because later its “deadly wound was healed.” So the history fits perfectly with the symbol of the *sword wound* inflicted by military conquest.

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<sup>1</sup>Editors note: In the prior edition the authors move to put the clergy: cardinals, bishops and priests up as candidate for this earth beast, because they cause worship of the first beast, however they are an integral part of that same beast... which we truncate here to insert our updated version.

The Lateran Treaty was one of the Lateran Pacts of 1929 or Lateran Accords, agreements made in 1929 between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, settling the “Roman Question”. They are named after the Lateran Palace, where they were signed on February 11, 1929. Italy was then under a Fascist government, but the succeeding democratic governments have all since upheld the treaty. In 1947, the Lateran Pacts were incorporated into the democratic Constitution of Italy with recognition of the Vatican as an independent state, Prime Minister Benito Mussolini agreeing to give the church financial support in return for public support from the pope at the time.<sup>1</sup>

The Vatican celebrates its re-ascendancy to sovereign state status every February, and now has treaties or Accords with almost every nation on Earth. As the Holy See she is prominent in policy making with Observer Status in the United Nations which is the *Image* of the *First Beast* created by the *Second Beast*, America. America as prophesied of the Earth Beast has since World War II acted as the world’s policeman, “exercising all the power of the First Beast before him” which power it is slowly transferring to the Image where the First Beast may vicariously continue its rule of the entire world until it goes into perdition as also demonstrated of the Mystery Babylon Image of Daniel Chapter two and confirmed at Rev. 18:21.

Two points only remain to be noticed – the “number” of the Beast, and the commencement of the 1260 years of his foretold duration. Of the many solutions proposed for “the number 666,” that which (following Irenaeus) applies it to the word *Lateinos* (*the Latin man*), expressed in Greek numerals, appears the true one. And when we remember how the Romanists “*Latinize* everything, mass, prayers, hymns, litanies, canons, bulls, yea, even the Scriptures,” we shall see a peculiar appropriateness in the use of the word to characterize the Beast with the Papal Man of Sin.

With respect to the other point, we adopt the principle of taking “days” in prophetic language to denote *years*: and we would mark as the *primary* commencement of the Papal Beast’s years of supremacy by subtracting the 1260 years from its termination, the date its Papal head received its wound by the sword, to arrive at the beginning of its reign in 538 AD upon Emperor Justinian’s decree, found in the Code of Justinian, that the bishop of Rome be the supreme head over all the churches, definer of doctrine and corrector of heretics.

This decree, although promulgated about 534, could not be given effect immediately, because several groups warred against the bishop of Rome still, including the Ostrogoths, the Vandals and the Heruli. After the latter two were dealt with, the Ostrogoths besieged Rome in 537 with the pope inside the city walls. Thus, the pope was effectively imprisoned by the Ostrogoths, who were

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<sup>1</sup>A History of Western Society (Tenth ed.). Bedford/St. Martin’s. p. 900.

certainly intent on overthrowing him. But in 538, Belisarius lifted the siege of Rome and the pope was rescued. In that year, also, Justinian replaced the deposed Silverius with Vigilius as the new pope, and gave him military protection. Thus the decree and the church-state alliance achieved effective status. 1260 years later Napoleon took away by decree, the pope's temporal authority and power to persecute. A few years after, the papal estates were restored, but not the persecuting power nor the universal power over doctrine for Christendom.

## **Lecture XXVI. The Song of the 144,000.**

### **Supplemental History of the True, As Distinguished from the Nominal, Reformed Church.**

*(Rev 14:1-20) And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. (2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: (3) And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. (4) These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. (5) And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. (6) And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, (7) Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (8) And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. (9) And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, (10) The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: (11) And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. (12) Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. (13) And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. (14) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. (15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. (16) And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. (17) And another angel came out*

*of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. (18) And another angel came out from the altar; which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. (19) And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. (20) And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

**The series of supplemental visions**, written as it were on *the outside* of the Apocalyptic scroll, which we noticed in our Twenty-fifth Lecture as entered upon at the beginning of Rev. 12, is continued to the end of chapter 14. While the usurper of Christ's supremacy, had been exalting himself against God and blaspheming, – with Rome for his capital, and the world wondering after him, worshipping him, and receiving his mark – there were all the while in existence, though trampled on and oppressed, another city and another people, the followers of the Lamb, with their Father's name upon their foreheads. They had been, on the commencement of the Apostasy, depicted as the subjects of divine grace, elected out of the symbolic Israel, and sealed as the 144,000. Preserved amongst the judgments of false Christendom, and witnessing against the evils that increased around them, they yet remained indestructible, and were ultimately triumphant. These 144,000 are now again pictured to St. John, presenting a beautiful and animating contrast to the visions of the Antichristian Man of Sin and his people. While the latter gather around their Romish Babylon and the great Image of the Beast, and do worship also the work of their own hands, the true Church is represented upon Mount Zion in the presence of the Lamb himself, singing and harping before the throne of God.

We have before observed how that upon “the cleansing of the figurative temple at the Reformation and the ascent of the witnesses, a voice of thanksgiving arose from the redeemed and “gave glory to the God of heaven.” It was the same occasion and the same song which is here again described. We have heard how Luther sang it: “Thou, Jesus, art my righteousness; I am thy sin: thou hast taken on thyself what was mine thou hast given me what was thine.” It was this doctrine of our sinfulness and Christ's righteousness and blood atoning that was introduced, as their very essence, into the ritual and services of the Reformed Churches, and was their distinctive characteristic. Taking then this as the Reformed Church's song, what are we to understand by there being *some* who could not “learn it”? Does it not seem to imply that there would still continue that *nominal* profession, distinct from real religion, which had before the Reformation marked the course of the Church's progress? Let us then test this from the history of the Protestant Churches, from that period to the time of the French Revolution in the end of the eighteenth century.

We pass over Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, countries where the Protestant church was never established, but was expelled as soon as discovered by the Papal weapons of the Inquisition, fire and sword, and we pause for a moment on *France*. Here the Reformation had been introduced under fair condition, and Protestants had for more than a century been tolerated and protected. Henry of Navarre, who, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, had renounced the Reformed religion, and so procured for himself the crown, had nevertheless, by the well known Edict of Nantes (A.D. 1598), confirmed to the Protestants, who now formed a third of the kingdom, the utmost security and freedom. But the revocation of this edict in A.D. 1685 by Louis XIV, at the instigation of the Jesuits, withdrew this protection, and exposed them to prison and to death. Forty thousand took refuge in England, while those who remained in France for the most part were obliged to conform to the Romish Church. This persecution did not, however, take place until the religious fervor of the Reformed Church had declined, and it had become in character more of a chivalrous than of a Christian body. But what of the countries where the Reformation had been cradled and established? What of Northern Germany, Denmark, Holland, England, and the Reformed cantons of Switzerland? Alas! in each of these we shall find the predictive clause but too well verified.

Take the case of *Germany*. Though the protest against Rome was distinct, and though much orthodox religious profession continued, yet real vital piety waxed colder and colder, and there was little of the holding forth in spirit and in act the word of life. So that, when the Thirty Years War had desolated Germany from 1618 to 1648, and Protestant thought itself was periled, it was confessed that the judgment was righteous and well deserved. But no revival took place. Greater energies were developed, but they were the energies of a bold and intellectual spirit, judging of Scripture truth by weak philosophy, and tending to skepticism and apostasy. The *rationalist theology* of the latter half of the eighteenth century was its consequence. Could there be, amongst those who held these views, any understanding of the "*new song*" of redemption and justification through the Savior's blood and mediation? Certainly not. The doctrine had been cast off as the creed of a bygone age, and the Gospel itself, its inspiration denied, was considered as a book adapted only for Judaic times, and having but little to do with eternal truth or eternal philosophy.

It has been said that the want of liturgies, and creeds, and church establishments had somewhat to do with this decline of piety on the Continent. But if so, what shall be said of *England* and England's Church, with her Liturgy and ritual embodying in its services and creeds all the essential doctrines of salvation, and ministered by a regulated and supported clergy? As the eye rests on the two and a half centuries alluded to in a former sketch – from the time when, under Edward VI, the Reformation was perfected, and the Liturgy, services, and articles were arranged by Cranmer and others – and contemplates the efforts made by

Bishop Land to corrupt that ritual by mixing up with it a pure worship, mysterious Popish rites and ceremonies, then the fanaticism of Cromwell's time, then the skepticism and levity of the laity in the reign of Charles II, and then observes the heartlessness and utter want of spirituality in the century following, especially amongst the clergy; the inference seems plain that no human means can give real piety of heart. God's Spirit must renew and sanctify the spirit of man, or man's heart and man's systems must fail. Such we infer to be the lesson taught in the vision before us, in that "*no man could learn that song but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth.*"

There were many eminent men who during this dark period were used by God as instruments to help forward the light of truth and keep alive the fire of true devotion. In *Germany*, for example, Arndt, Spener, and Franck of the Lutheran Church, besides many in the Moravian body. In *England*, within the Established Church, Hooker and Kenn, Usher and Hall, Leighton and Beveridge, Hopkins and Walker, Newton and Venn. Amongst the Nonconformists, Baxter and Howe, Watts and Doddridge; Whitfield and Wesley. These with many others, and "of honorable women not a few," stand out in relief as honored by God in the promotion of his glory. America also had its burning and shining lights.

Doubtless there were many more during these years of comparative darkness, unmarked by any save by the Eye which sees all, of whose character the Scripture gives beautiful testimony; as to purity of heart and holiness "they are virgins," the Lamb's affianced Bride; as to active, practical, and self-denying conduct, "they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." These, if they did not suffer under the hostility of Popish adversaries, were yet oftentimes compelled to "go without the camp, bearing the reproach" of Christ their Lord. He that "knoweth them that are his" in this place pointedly marks his approval: "In their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God." Their record was on high. But justice has in our days been done to them. We rejoice to think that with numbers their writings are now esteemed and their memory is blessed.

As the eighteenth century advanced the voice of the 144,000 waxed fainter and feebler, and their existence might to the outward eye of man appear a doubtful matter, especially in the Continental countries and churches. In Germany *rationalism* ruled supreme; and its spirit extended to the kindred Churches of Sweden and Denmark. In Holland a lethargy that denoted the absence of all spirituality and life was the prevailing character of the Protestant religion. In Switzerland, Unitarian thought with its paralyzing influence had blighted the true doctrine which Calvin had once so fully confessed and taught.

Thus, though symptoms were not wanting which showed that Popery was becoming aged and reft of much of its former vigor, yet, in case of any new attack upon Gospel truth such as might arise from threatening infidelity, there appeared in the declining state of piety on all sides but little zeal or power to



oppose it either amongst the Protestant or the Romish Churches. In England almost alone, it seemed the salt had not absolutely lost all savor. The light, well nigh extinct, began to burn brighter; elsewhere the darkness thickened.

Could it be that the blessed Reformation had ended in failure? If such a doubt had crossed the mind of St. John at this point, the next vision must have dissipated it, when the missionary angel was seen to fly in the midst of heaven giving glorious token of revival and triumph to the Church, as also of warning to those who either opposed or still neglected the message.

When Jesus at the synagogue of Nazareth opened the Bible to Isaiah 61 and read the verse, "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord," he closed the book, and giving it to the minister, he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled;" announcing himself as the appointed prophet to deliver this message from God. To preach "the day of vengeance" was not his commission: the Gospel he declared "must first be published among all nations." Here then, ere "the end" come, we have the angel commissioned again with the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and bidding every nation and kindred and tongue and people "fear God and give glory to him." He announces also the startling fact, "the hour of his judgment is come." He claims the reverence due to omnipotence as God's right: "Worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

This vision, however, as also the two following, are in this supplementary, or *without written* series, given only in brief; and each is taken up afterwards in the regular, or *within written* course, as a separate and distinct occurrence: the former we shall have to notice in a following lecture; the two latter belong to *unfulfilled* prophecy, and are consequently beyond the scope of our present design. Meanwhile there are words of comfort given to the children of God at the very first announcement of the vial-judgments.

The first angel brings with him the Gospel, or glad tidings to all, before pronouncing the woe that must follow its rejection. The second angel announces the speedy fall of Babylon, that enemy and rival of the Christian Church; while a third pronounces woe upon those who still remain in her once the call is gone forth, even the wine of the wrath of God and fiery destruction; adding, "Here is (or will be shown) the patience of the saints." Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Before announcing the awful *final* judgments, another angel or voice from heaven declares, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord;" and the Spirit of God himself gives the encouragement, "They rest from their labors and their works follow them." How terrible, and yet how precious, is the Word of God according as it is addressed to the unbelieving or to the faithful! Like the "pillar of fire," it is a "cloud and darkness to *them*, but it gives light to *these*."

## ***Lecture XXVII. The Seventh Trumpet. – The Vials.***

### **Era of The French Revolution.**

**A.D. 1789 – 1830.**

*Rev. 15:1-8 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. (2) And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. (3) And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. (4) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. (5) And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: (6) And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. (7) And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. (8) And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*

*Rev. 16:1-21 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. (2) And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. (3) And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. (4) And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. (5) And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. (6) For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. (7) And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. (8) And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. (9) And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. (10) And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, (11) And blasphemed*

*the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. (12) And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. (13) And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. (14) For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. (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. (16) And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. (17) And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. (18) And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. (19) And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. (20) And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. (21) And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

**It will be remembered that the** several visions, which have intervened between the end of chapter 11 and this chapter 15 now before us, have been regarded as supplemental – added, as it were, on the back or *outside* of the Apocalyptic seven-sealed scroll. The original and direct *within written* series is now about to be resumed at the historic point at which it had been broken off, *i.e.*, the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

Before entering, however, on the explanation of that vision and the eventful accompaniments therein foretold, our attention is directed to the position occupied by God's *elect and faithful* people during the destructive action of the seven vials. A sea as it were “of glass mingled with fire;” is seen appearing probably like vitrified lava, such as would be the effect of a volcano. It is doubtful what locality is represented; but as the Babylon of the Revelation is shown to be destroyed by fire, it may designate some part of the territory of the Beast. Moreover, it is intended to show the safety of the Church of God during the political eruptions of the *French Revolution* – that great event which, in its several developments, presents the solution of the symbol of *the seven vials*. The harpers, standing upon the margin of the sea and singing thanksgiving to God, would seem to represent the *spiritual Israel*, upon their escape from the figurative *Egypt*, as the literal Israel did of old when delivered from the judgment plagues

and from the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh. And the songs of confidence and triumph which they sung, under the guidance and direction of Moses, are here taken to express the faith in which the true believers repose in the strength of Christ, their Paschal Lamb, and the hope in which they anticipate their speedy establishment in the Heavenly Canaan – the land of his promise – when “all nations shall come and worship before him.”

And now, as was also depicted in Rev. 11:19, the “temple” is visibly “opened” in heaven, and the ark of the covenant appears, indicating that at the time there would be a *manifestation of the true Church of Christ* before the world as to character, principles, expectations, and influence, so as it had never before been exhibited; yet was the confluence of the nations into it, in the full extent of the promise, to be yet deferred till the vial-plagues had been first poured out. For this purpose *seven angels came forth from the temple*, denoting that all the approaching political convulsions of Christendom were ordered by *the Lord's providence*; and inasmuch as the “vials of wrath” were put into the angel hands by one of the “living creatures,” it is implied that the *vindication* of their wrongs and injuries is the design and intent of these judgments.

The “vial” or cup is often introduced in Scripture to represent God's judicial infliction upon his enemies. Thus, “In the hand of the Lord is a *cup*, and the wine is red. It is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out.”<sup>1</sup> Again, “Behold, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling; I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee.”<sup>2</sup>

The similarity of the *four first* vials to the *four first* trumpets cannot escape observation. The *localities*, as well as other figures, are almost identical. The earth, *the land division of Western Roman Christendom*; the sea, *its maritime colonies*; the rivers, *those two boundaries, the Rhine and Danube, and their valleys*; the sun, *the ruling emperor of one third of the Roman earth*, all these symbols and their significations remain pretty much the same.

The time to which the prophecy appears to point as the period of the seventh trumpet sounding is at the outbreak of the French Revolution in the year 1789. This was preceded by a short interval of warning, from the passing away of the Turkish woe about A.D. 1774, marked out by the prophetic notice, “The second woe is past; behold, the third woe cometh quickly.”

The general tranquility of Europe in that interval indicated to ordinary view no sign of approaching disturbance. Russia, although it comprehended those wilds whence long since the barbarian scourge of Christendom had poured forth,

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<sup>1</sup>Ps. 75. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. 51. 22.

was now a civilized empire. Modern Germany, with its 2300 walled towns, presented obstacles to invasion unknown in earlier ages. The rancor of religious differences had all but subsided; and a balance of power forbade the idea of either party being strong for aggression. The late democratic revolt of America would have, it was thought, no effect on European principles; and the peace of Versailles in 1783 was supposed to bode a long repose to Europe.

There were, however, two opposite classes who watched the tendencies of events with interest. The one was that of the *Infidel philosophers* in France, headed by Voltaire, men who, aided by wit and science, left no means untried to effect the object for which they conspired – the overthrow of Christianity. Republican clubs and cheap infidel revolutionary publications served under their direction to undermine the principles of the different ranks of society; and without religion to control them, the mass of the people were ready for any outbreak against government and social order.

The *Christian philosopher* also foresaw an outbreak, not such as the former looked for, but one of wrath and judgment. The abounding iniquity must needs meet with punishment.

“He heard the wheels of an avenging God  
Groan heavily along the distant road.”<sup>1</sup>

The unwonted convulsion of the elements which just then occurred drew the notice of thoughtful observers, and filled them with fearful forebodings. Tempests and volcanoes, earthquakes and hurricanes, ere long, destructive, and frequent.<sup>2</sup> It was in allusion to this unnatural state of the elements, and especially with reference to an earthquake which lasted three years,<sup>3</sup> from 1783 to 1786, that Cowper writes –

“The world appears  
To toll the death-bell of its own decease,  
And by the voice of all its elements  
To preach the general doom.”

Thus, as in some other parts of Sacred Scripture, the literal and figurative seemed alike joined in the prediction: when the seventh trumpet sounded, “there were lightnings, thunderings, an earthquake and great hail.” Then the French Revolution broke out. In the meeting of the National Assembly the Republican Party gained the ascendancy, and at once proceeded to abolish the laws, rights, and customs of the French nation. The privileges and titles of the nobility, the

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<sup>1</sup>Cowper's *Task*.

<sup>2</sup>In Iceland and the West Indies occurred volcanic eruptions and hurricanes; and in France, in the autumn of 1788, such a hailstorm and tempest as to destroy whole towns and districts.

<sup>3</sup>At Calabria.

tithes of the clergy, and the supremacy of the king were sacrificed to popular power and caprice. All that might have appeared most stable in Church and State was overthrown. It is at this period the vial judgments may have been supposed to begin.

First Vial. – “And the first (angel) went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast,” etc.

One of the plagues of Egypt was a noisome ulcer. Here then of the *spiritual Egypt* the same expression is used. The angel of the *first trumpet* sounded, and fire fell on the *earth*, on the same locality. The “sore” indicates the outbreak of some corruption which had been festering within, and which, breaking out, would spread its infection and produce great distress. And so it was. A tremendous outbreak of social and moral evil, democratic and popular fury, atheism and vice, characterized the French Revolution. From France, as a center, the plague rapidly spread through its affiliated clubs, and the whole of Papal Christendom soon imbibed the poison and shared the punishment.

At the first its character was by many mistaken, and the movement was hailed as the harbinger of liberty and the overthrow of despotism. But it quickly unfolded itself. First came the atrocious assault upon the palace of Versailles and the forcible abduction of the monarch. Then the National Assembly's declaration of the *rights of man*, a code of open rebellion against all order and rule; followed by the confiscation of the Church estates and the ascendancy of the Jacobin clubs to power. Then another and more ferocious attack on the palace, the dethronement of the king, the massacre of the Swiss guards and of five hundred Royalists! Soon followed the trial and execution of both king and queen, with that of other royal persons, and the avowed declaration of war against all authority.

Then came the *reign of terror* under Robespierre; the Revolutionary Tribunal; the horrid massacres at La Vendee and Lyons, men and women drowned in couples, and vessels filled with captives and then sunk; which atrocities they termed *republican baptisms and marriages*; to say nothing of the innumerable multitude shot down, roasted alive, and drowned in the moss. Lastly, as the acme of iniquity, the threat of *dethroning the King of heaven*; the public renunciation of Christianity; the worship of an abandoned woman as the Goddess of Reason; the abolition of the Sabbath and all other institutions connected with religion; the sacraments profanely travestied – a sacramental cup with wine being brought into the street, and an ass made openly to drink of it! Such was the development of the real character of the Revolution. Surely, “the whole head was sick, the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there was no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” It was as if God had said of it, as of Ephraim, “He is joined to idols; let him alone.”

It was upon “men having the mark of the Beast” that this vial was poured out. The clergy were Romanists, and suffered fearfully, as did the Romish laity. But independently of this, the conduct of these Republicans was but the recompense of what they had learned to esteem of Popish tyranny; and it was now turned against those who had long and diligently sowed the seeds of oppression.

Second Vial. – “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea,” etc. Again, the *second trumpet* gives the clue to the local scene of this judgment. There was destruction of the *maritime power and commerce* of the colonies of Papal Christendom. The democratic revolutionary spirit of France and the naval force of England contributed to effect the purpose of Divine Providence. First, the Isle of Haiti or *St. Domingo*, the most flourishing of the French colonies, being infected by the like infidel principles, was lost after a servile war of twelve years, in which 60,000 blacks were slaughtered. Then, for twenty years, the fleet of England (preserved and directed by the same good providence of God) wasted in all directions the ships, commerce, and maritime colonies of France, and of her allies, Holland and Spain. Their fleet was destroyed in 1793, at Toulon, by Lord Hood; by whom also Corsica, and nearly all the Spanish and West Indian Islands were taken in 1794. In 1795 followed the naval victory of L'Orient, and the capture of the Cape of Good Hope. The victory in 1797 off Cape St. Vincent was quickly succeeded by that of Camperdown over the Dutch fleet. Then followed Lord Nelson's three mighty victories of the Nile in 1798, of Copenhagen in 1801, and in 1805 of Trafalgar.

Viewing the losses suffered by France from 1793 to the end of 1815, we find that near 600 vessels of war, besides numerous ships of commerce, were destroyed, together with a large proportion of their officers and men. The world's history does not furnish another such period of naval war and bloodshed. “The sea became as the blood of a dead man.” Finally, when the maritime power of the Papal nations had been swept away by English victories, the Spanish colonies of South America threw off their allegiance, after another scene of carnage, only paralleled by those before described; the Brazils also were separated from Portugal, and so the prediction was complete: as regarded the Papal European colonies, they became “dead.” Doubtless the judgments on many of these colonies might be considered retribution for the cruelties practiced in their exercise of the slave trade.

Third Vial. – When the *third trumpet* sounded we found that the locality described was “the rivers and fountains of waters,” *i.e.*, the Alpine fountains and streams, and the boundary rivers, the Rhine and Upper Danube. We have the same locality specified in this third vial “And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood.” According therefore, to the analogy of the former explanation, this judgment was to take place on those countries watered by the Rhine and Danube, as well as upon Northern Italy. Even so it fell out. During the year 1792 war was declared by

France against Germany, and the next year against Sardinia; consequently all those towns watered by the Rhine and Alpine streams became scenes of carnage. Metz, Worms, Spire, the towns formerly desolated by Attila, suffered. Another French army entered upon the countries situated on the Meuse, a branch of the Rhine; a third advanced into Piedmont, the Alpine frontier. In 1793 and 1794 war still raged in the same quarters. The French advanced to Holland. In many places the success fluctuated, but in most instances they were victorious. At last Charles of Austria drove their generals, Moreau and Jourdan, and their armies back to the Rhine.

In A.D. 1797 Bonaparte attacked the Sardinians and Austrians. The course he tracked was from Alpine river to river through Northern Italy, till he reached Venice. Every river was a scene of carnage, and he crossed seven in succession. The Alpine rivers were turned to "blood." It was in 1797 that Bonaparte uttered the remarkable threat, "I will prove an Attila to Venice." Before peace could be restored Austria was forced to submit; and the treaty of Campo Formio stipulated that *the valley of the Rhine*, one part of the prophetic scene, together with the Austrian Netherlands and Palatinate *on one side of the Rhine*, and Wurtemberg, Bavaria, Baden, and Westphalia *on the other*, should all be made over to France.

Again in 1799 the "fountains of waters" were dyed with blood, the French having suffered reverse and been driven out of all the places they occupied in North Italy with much bloodshed.

The war soon recommenced: In 1800 that terrible and decisive battle of Marengo was fought, and the *Danube* became the scene of judgment. One victory after another succeeded, till the memorable battle of Austerlitz completed the overthrow of the Austrian power.

The reason given by the angel for the judgment is remarkable, "They are *worthy*, for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink." Was it not so that the cruelties – of the French and Piedmontese and the rulers of Savoy against the Waldenses and Albigenses, the Huguenots and Calvinists, from the end of the thirteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, and of Austria against the Hussites, the Waldenses and Lutherans in Lombardy, Moravia, and the Netherlands already related *did* call out for retributive justice? "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

Fourth Vial. – "And the fourth angel poured out his vial on the sun," etc. The *fourth, trumpet* again helps us to the meaning of the symbols. "The sun, moon, and stars" were on that occasion represented as being smitten by the judgment, and *the Roman emperor* and *the subordinate authorities* were the real sufferers. Even so at this time. In 1806, the year after the battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon required the sovereign of Austria. to *renounce his title* of Emperor of Rome and Germany. So the *imperial sun* of Papal Christendom was darkened. Most of the



independent sovereigns of Europe were revolutionized, and their *light eclipsed* in the political heaven. Bonaparte exercised his assumed office of king-maker much to the distress these nations. The King of Prussia was shorn of half his dominions, which was assigned to a new made king of Saxony. Westphalia; Holland, Spain, and Portugal, and Naples were apportioned, the three former to his brothers, the latter to his general Murat. Never had there been such a subversion of old dynasties – such a shaking of the powers of heaven. And when in 1809 the Austrian emperor made a desperate effort to regain his lost honors, he signally failed; and only purchased peace by giving his own daughter, Maria Louisa, in marriage to the oppressor, and thereby implied acquiescence in the tyranny.

The “scorching with fire” we may refer to the *sufferings* of the countries which were exposed to these fearful troubles. The accounts which we have received enable us to appreciate the point and truth of Napoleon's own observation, “The *genius of conquest* can only be regarded as the *genius of destruction*.” Conscription,<sup>1</sup> taxation, loss of life, pillage of property, devastation and ruin, marked his course and sullied the glory of his exploits. Men were “scorched with great heat.”

The Fifth Vial. – “And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the Beast.” We have already seen how in the Revolution the Romish clergy suffered. Their means of support was withdrawn by the abolition of tithes, the confiscation of the Church lands, and the destruction of monastic houses. This was followed by the national abolition of the Romish religion and the razing the churches to the ground. So was the whole French ecclesiastical establishment broken up. Twenty-four-thousand of the clergy were massacred with horrid atrocities; the terrified remnant fled.

So much had the anti-Papal spirit increased, that the French army urged their march against Rome itself, and the Pope only saved himself by the surrender of several towns and the payment of a large sum of money and the best treasures of the Vatican.

At length the decree went forth for the humbling of the Beast himself. In 1809 Napoleon declared *the Pope's temporal dominion at an end*. The estates of the Church were annexed to France; and Rome was degraded to be the second city of the French Empire. Surely on “the seat of the Beast” the vial of wrath had been poured out.

Subsequently this Pope was brought prisoner to France, and there, as a pensioner, he received a stated salary. True he afterwards gained back the privilege

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<sup>1</sup>Alison computes conscription in France for the support of its armies, from 1793 to 1813, to have amounted to 4,103,000 men.

of fixing his seat at Rome. But the world had seen his weakness, and a precedent was established for the benefit of future generations.

In France the Romish religion continued only to be tolerated on an equality with other religions; in Portugal and Spain church property had been lately confiscated; and in Italy still later events have shown that the Papal authority, if unsupported by temporal power, has not any longer in itself that which can maintain its supremacy.

"They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and repented not of their deeds." Here, too, history shows the truth of the prediction. Neither in Rome, Spain, France, or Italy has there been any *national return* to the true God. They felt the bitterness of revolution and bloodshed, but felt it only as coming from man. They soon revived the old superstition. The reinstated governments of Southern Europe proceeded to restore the power of the Pope, agreed again to give him support, and to consider him as their ally. To regain his favor the Bourbons dedicated the kingdom to the Virgin Mary, the Jesuits were reintroduced, and Protestants again oppressed.

In *Spain* the Inquisition was re-established, and the blood of *heretics* flowed afresh at the stake. In *Austria* the Jesuits were again active, and in all the other countries the mummeries and lying wonders of Romanism once more had place. The desecration of the Sabbath was continued, and no improvement appeared either in devotion or morality.

The Sixth Vial. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates," etc. The introduction again of this symbol<sup>1</sup> directs us at once to the Turkman empire as the subject of this visitation. The Turks had long ceased to be a terror to the nations; the woe had passed. During the revolutionary wars they had been comparatively uninjured, but now their time of judgment was come.

The first appearance of trouble was in the revolt of Ali, pasha of Yanina, who, asserting independence, opened the way for the *Greek insurrection* of 1820. Its successful issue is well known. The annihilation of the Turkish army in the Morea and the uniform superiority of the insurgents over the Turks by sea had nearly completed their freedom, when the tide was turned against them by the Egyptian armament of Ibrahim Pasha. The battle of Navarino, however, in 1827, in which the fleets of England, France, and Russia were combined, destroyed the Turco-Egyptian fleet and saved Greece.

The revolt of the Janizaries followed, which led to the massacre of 30,000 of those ancient troops and the consequent weakening of its power. Yet was it just then that, in its infatuation, Turkey hurried into a disastrous war with Russia.

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<sup>1</sup>See Lecture xiii.

The armies of the Czar were everywhere victorious, and Constantinople was threatened with investment, when ambassadors interposed and peace was made. In the same year, 1829, the French landed 40,000 men in Africa, took Algiers, and, by converting that province into a colony of France, *dried up* another of the sources of Turkish power.

Then came the rebellion of the Egyptian pasha, *Mehemet Ali*, who attacked and conquered Syria, thrice defeating the Sultan's armies at Hems, Nezib, and Iconium. The union of the great powers of Europe, it is true, soon drove the Egyptians out of Syria, took Acre, and forced the pasha back to a nominal dependence upon his former master. Yet the allegiance is little more than nominal: *there too the Euphrates flood is fast drying up.*

But there were other causes of the waning of the Turkman empire, and which marked the judgment as from God himself. *Earthquake, pestilence, and famine*, even more than the wars we have mentioned, served to *depopulate* the empire. *Conflagrations*, too, did their part. One writes from Bagdad, "Surely every principle of desolation is operating." Another, the chaplain of the British Embassy, says, "Within twenty years Constantinople has lost more than half its inhabitants." On every side the process of internal decay goes on. What may yet remain to be accomplished before the Turkish nation be wholly *dried up* and annihilated, is only known to Him "who doeth as he will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth." For the present, her only support is the favor of the princes of Christendom. A selfish policy on *their* part is *her* safety.

Who "the kings of *or* from the East" may prove, whose way is to be prepared by this drying up of the symbolic Euphrates, whether, as some believe, the Jews, upon the fall of the Turkish empire; or, as others affirm, the Gentile nations, which it is promised "shall come and worship Christ" – "kings of Sheba and Seba," who, like the wise men from the East, shall offer gifts; or whether the way made easy for communication with the great empire of India, is a consideration we must not attempt to solve.

The question, though full of interest at this time, has reference to events still future, and therefore is beyond our limits of *fulfilled prophecy*.

## ***Lecture XXVIII. The Temple Opened, the Everlasting Gospel.***

### **Religious Revival – The Era of Evangelic Missions**

**A.D. 1789 – 1852.**

*Rev. 11:15-19 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. (16) And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, (17) Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. (18) And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. (19) And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

*Rev. 14:6-7 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, (7) Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

**Having finished the account of the six vial-judgments,** let us revert to the two passages, which we had passed over, in which is predicted the position of the true Church of Christ during the period of the French Revolution.

It was to insular England, that living Protestantism seemed almost wholly confined, just before the time of that tremendous political outbreak. We observed also how lamentably, even in this country, religion during the eighteenth century had declined, and that, though still alive, the flame burned but feebly. Was England then to fall under the same righteous retribution as did the other nations? Not so. God in mercy at this very time poured out his Spirit upon our land: a *religious revival* took place, which showed itself in the renewed effort, and that to a large extent, as a missionary nation to hold forth the Gospel, and to take advantage of England's maritime and political ascendancy in order to advance the kingdom of God. Circumstances, providentially ordered, concurred to favor the work. Fit instruments were supplied. Public opinion, public and private liberality, combination of men willing to act in union for benevolent purposes, these all forwarded the movement; and the outburst of missionary

feeling, missionary action, and missionary anticipations is now among the most memorable historic facts of the era. This missionary zeal was mirrored in America during the later 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It was when the infection of French democratic and infidel principles had spread, plague-like, across the Channel, threatening the kingdom with similar revolutionary evils; when the *sea*, with its European Papal colonies, and the rivers and kingdoms of the European continent were dyed with blood, its most ancient *thrones* subverted, and most prominent *lights* in its political heavens eclipsed or darkened; when France, swayed by Napoleon, seemed with gigantic force (like Pharaoh with his Egyptian hosts on Israel's track) ready to concentrate its efforts to overwhelm us; it was when the judgments of God – were so obviously abroad on the earth, imperiling the land, that an eminent prelate<sup>1</sup> of the day exclaimed, “Nothing but the interposition of Heaven can save us;” when her most distinguished statesman declared “the commonwealth to be in extremity, and almost in despair died of a broken heart;”<sup>2</sup> it was even then that, spreading from the middle to the higher classes, amongst both clergy and laity, this wonderful outburst of missionary energy broke forth in our favored land – a land long before mercifully separated from the name, dominion, and connection with the Papal Beast and its idolatry.

Amongst the individuals ordained of God to be the instruments of this religious revival was one whose name will ever be remembered in connection with this interesting period: William Wilberforce. He, too, like Augustine and Luther in former important junctures of the Church's history, was, in a religious point of view, the *man of the age*. It was not so much his quick and varied powers of intellect, his eloquence, conversational charms, affectionate heart, and winning manners, that marked him out as one of more than common influence, and so fitted specially to lead in the work; nor yet his parliamentary elevation, his reputation as a patriot, and his friendship with the Prime Minister of the day. By *themselves alone* these were inadequate to the accomplishment of such an end. It was that he had experienced *real conversion of heart*, such as to lead him to consecrate the whole to God. This was, as he himself was wont to refer to it, the turning point of his life.

So prepared, and viewing on the one hand the high standard marked out in God's Word of what the life and practice of the professed Christian should be, compared with the prevailing ungodliness, worldliness, and infidelity of those around him, and on the other, his own position and capabilities for improving them, he recognized his vocation. “God has set before me as my object the

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<sup>1</sup>Bishop Porteus.

<sup>2</sup>Pitt.

reformation of my country's manners." "Having accepted the commission," says his biographers, "he devoted all his powers to its fulfillment." His private and public life, his winning example, and unceasing efforts in the cause of truth, benevolence, and Evangelical Christianity, his outspoken voice in Parliament, and the more lasting memorial of his opinions – his volume on Practical Christianity (all accompanied by intercessory prayers for his country, prayers full of devotion and humility) – all acted upon society with an influence and effect that can scarcely be overestimated. The faithful ones of Christ – a little body at the time much scattered, for the most part little known, and in general society misunderstood and despised; men such as Newton, Scott, Milner, Cecil, Robinson, Simeon, and others, members of the mystical 144,000, the "called, and chosen, and faithful;" who were all in their several spheres of duty busily taking part in the promotion of the same blessed work, hailed with delight the influence of Wilberforce as a gift from God.

The revival of the Anglo-Irish Church also may be dated about the same time; while the efforts of John Wesley, Whitfield, and other eminent Dissenters, co-operated materially with the spiritual and enlightened of the Established Church in forwarding the cause of true religion. Higher views opened of Christian usefulness. The desire increased for united exertion toward extending the blessings now appreciated in our country. The old and waning Missionary Associations, which had feebly struggled for existence during the progress of the last century, were now revived; while new societies appeared, one after another, in quick succession, like the Swiss Alpine peaks at day-dawn, catching and reflecting on a benighted world the rays of heavenly light. The missionary angel, who at the time of the Reformation had received his commission, might now be said to "fly through the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation on the earth."

It would far exceed our limits were we to enter into the origin and proceedings of these various societies which became the agents in the great work of evangelizing. The *Christian Knowledge*, the *Gospel Propagation*, and the *Moravian* had been long in the field. At the close of the eighteenth century arose the *Baptist*, the *London Missionary*, the *Wesleyan*, and the *Church Missionary*. Then came that which was akin to all the rest, the British and Foreign Bible Society. By these the Word of life has, in every quarter of the world, been diffused and preached in the several native languages. Associations having similar but special local objects, such as the *Irish Society*, for bringing the Scriptures to that people in their own tongue, multiplied on every side. Powerfully did these combine in carrying forth to other lands the truth of Christianity; reacting again in their influence upon religion at home. And whether we consider the spirit that animated or the results that followed them, truly we must believe the judgment of Heaven to have favorably rested on their labors.

It was coincidentally with the rise of these societies that Wilberforce obtained from Parliament a sanction for the missionary work of evangelizing India. The position of England at this period was far in the ascendant above other powers, whether by sea or land. Every ocean and clime was open to her ships and her commerce. The East Indian Empire, founded by Clive and Hastings, and then under Lord Wellesley's government, opened wide fields for the missionary enterprise of British Christians; while the increase of her wealth, as well as the progress of science, concurred to facilitate its execution. Never, in fact, since the apostolic era had there been such a spirit and such an opportunity for the work. The famous Romish missions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Eastern and Western hemispheres, albeit carried on with zeal and devoted self-denial, had but spread *Popery* – not the *Gospel*; the *decrees* of the *Council of Trent* – not the *Bible*; the supremacy of *Antichrist* – not of *Christ*. But now, in every quarter of the world: in the East Indies and West Indies, in South Africa. and West Africa., in New South Wales and New Zealand, in the South Sea Islands and in Madagascar, in Persia and Burmah, and early in China, in the polar regions of Greenland and North America; everywhere the Gospel was preached, the Scriptures circulated, schools instituted, churches opened for the heathen, and Christian lives offered in willing sacrifice to the work.

At the same time the Almighty Spirit, who had sent forth his angel to call the world to “fear God and give glory to him,” excited amongst the heathen the desire for instruction.

“From Greenland's icy mountains,  
From India's coral strand,  
Where Afric's sunny fountains  
Roll down their golden sand:”

In these, in every country where a mission was attempted, the cry was heard, “Come over and help us.” The *Jews*, God's ancient people, were not forgotten. A society for promoting Christianity amongst them was founded in 1809, and with considerable success. It is a remarkable fact that amongst the clergy of our English Church we number at one time no less than fifty Christian Israelites. The Church of England, too, had been extended by means of missionary labors, and has its bishops and regular ecclesiastical organization in India, Australia, and other colonies.

From the commencement of the terrific struggle on the Continent the faithful of the Church in England still cherished the belief that our country, with all her sins, had yet the “*ark*” of Christ's true evangelical Church within it, and so would be preserved. As sign after sign appeared of the revival of religion, and specially as the Bible and Missionary Societies progressed in the fulfillment of their high commission, whereby the ark-bearing “temple,” with the Gospel, its sacred deposit, was more and more “opened” to the world – they still with stronger hope rested on the assurance that The Almighty was for and among

them. So eventually it proved. Napoleon Bonaparte was stayed in the might of his career; a general peace was proclaimed; and from every quarter arose the sounds of a nation's adoration and praise.

But chiefly did the faithful Church joy in the anticipation of a yet wider spread of Gospel light and truth, and, touching the "sweet harp of prophecy," hail the time as not far off when the promises of the latter day should be accomplished, the everlasting Gospel fulfill its commission, and all nations come and worship before God That blessed time when it shall be said,

"One song employs all nations:  
and all cry, Worthy the Lamb,  
for he was slain for us."<sup>1</sup>

But was the Dragon to be thus cast down from his dominion, or the Beast from the throne of Anti-Christendom, without a fresh Satanic effort to uphold them? We have in this lecture seen the position which England held. We shall in the next have to consider present danger; and so shall we have an answer to this question.

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<sup>1</sup>Cowper's *Winter Walk at Noon*.



## ***Lecture XXIX. The Three Frogs Era.***

### **Three Spirits Organizing the Wicked for the Final Battle.**

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Century – Consummation.**

*And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. (14) For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. (Rev. 16:13-14)*

After the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, we see the *three unclean spirits* come forth as another effect of the sixth vial: to *gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*. These spirits working together, and only increasing in their affect, to spread and accentuate the evils of these spirits and to expose those of *the whole world* who are opposed to the King of Kings, His Gospel and Righteous judgment, His judgment being their unexpected end upon His arrival when those whom they persecuted return with Him.

1. The *Dragon* being representative of *that old serpent, called the Devil*<sup>1</sup>, who *persecuted of woman*<sup>2</sup> and *which gave power unto the beast*<sup>3</sup> (the source of our next frog like spirit): In this spirit we look for the continued and pervasive influence of religious pagan idolatry and rising in the world at large and even gaining a foothold in the visible church. We may also anticipate the final rise of persecution and eventual wave of martyrdom again emanating from every quarter of Draconic influence: hedonism and the acceptance of every perversion accompanied with the destruction of the biblical family and government models; the rise of witchcraft as well as false religions and cults; and also from the great apostate Antichristian church, all primarily directed at the true Bible believing elect of God as were the Inquisitions of the past.

2. The *Beast* which gets its power from the Dragon, we recognize as the Roman Empire which morphs through history from the solid legs of iron in the Daniel chapter two image to the feet and ten toes mingled with clay when it is struck by the stone cut out without hands and desolated so that no place is found for it any more. We recognize this desolation as the same event described in Revelation as the fall of Mystery Babylon. The spirit coming from the mouth of this beast will result in the atheistic idolatry of the State as those who bowed

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. 12:9

<sup>2</sup> Rev. 12:13

<sup>3</sup> Rev. 13:4

before the Mystery Babylon Image of Nebuchadnezzar and a combination of Church-State-ism as practiced during the Temporal Reign of the biblical and historical Anti-Christ during his famed 1260 year reign. They will put the State in the place of God, man's law in the place of God's Law *and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*<sup>1</sup>

3. The *False Prophet*: As Jesus was the Great Prophet awaited by Israel<sup>2</sup>, the True Prophet and *seed of the woman*<sup>3</sup> – the Messiah, and His disciples were His witnesses to the whole world: So we liken the Antichrist, the ultimate *False Prophet* and his disciples, or priesthood the propagators of his false doctrine and prophecy to the entire world by way of the greatest apostasy ever to rise in the world, numbering near two billion adherents by this 21<sup>st</sup> century. This False Prophet, or *man of sin*, and *whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.*<sup>4</sup> This spirit, whose essential characteristic is to arrogate to its own order the exclusive dignity of being the earthly mediator between God and man; and necessary for the effective averting of his wrath, and communication of his favor and salvation.

The *false prophet* from the G5578 is everywhere else in the bible translated as plural (*false prophets*), only in the Revelation is it translated singular. Here it may also be taken as plural (*they are the spirits of devils*) and should be even if in any instance it may refer to a singular individual, as should *the man of god*, or even *the man of sin* may refer to a singular Pope or the whole line. The Spirit of Prophecy being described as the testimony of Jesus<sup>5</sup>, the *false prophet* or spirit of false prophecy, may also refer the abundance of false gospels and the inundation of false prophecy and interpretation to deceive even the elect (*if it were possible*) as disseminated by this evil spirit in the final epoch leading up to the return of our Lord, especially through his subordinate counter-reformation army of the Jesuits by the loquacity of their covert prominence in secular public and religious seminary instruction.

The Secret Rapture Doctrine is one of the most prevalent doctrines from this false prophet spirit resulting in a corruption at the very heart of Reformed Protestantism itself. How is it a secret doctrine? The only reason it can be a *secret* is because God did not put it in His Word! This fact alone we find very troubling, but God first revealed it to a Church of Scotland minister, named Edward Irving, who was the first to preach the “rapture gospel” about 1830. One of his church

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. 13:15

<sup>2</sup> Deu. 18:15

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 3:15

<sup>4</sup> II Thes. 2:3, 2:9

<sup>5</sup> Rev. 19:10

members, Margaret MacDonald consequently had a vision from which the pre-tribulation rapture sprang. This “secret rapture” was promoted by Irving claiming, he too, had heard a “voice” from heaven commanding him to teach it. Some modern researchers submit that Irving’s speculations of “...the rapture were influenced by the Spanish Jesuit Priest Lacunza, whose book Irving had translated in 1827 under the title, *The coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty.*”

Today Rapture Eschatology is a purely Protestant and Evangelical held doctrine. Official Catholic doctrine holds anyone who believes in a literal-physical return of Christ and a thousand year reign to be heretics according to Mark Mallet the Modern Catholic Evangelist and Prophet. So the question arises: Why are Protestants using a Latin word like rapture instead of English or at least the Greek from which our Protestant Bibles are translated? Perhaps the speculation which has scrutinized Irving’s work as springing from the influence of the Jesuit Priest Lacunza should be seriously considered. Especially in light of the fact that the highly debated three raptures are anchored upon a false interpretation of Daniels 70th week and the counter-reformation end-time Anti-Christ eschatology of another Jesuit Priest, 16th century Francisco Ribera.

The conclusion? *Rapture* is an imported Latin cult word which Protestants should not, but do use to displace the biblical word, *Resurrection* - this as a result of the successful infiltration of counter-reformation end time Antichrist indoctrination.

However this may be, the time is critical, and calls aloud on all for self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer. The very fact that so many spirits of delusion are thus abroad should stir us to seek strength against them. While the thought of the place which these occupy in the course of time, as marked in the sure word of prophecy, warns us with much distinctness of sound that the *night is far spent*, and that *the day* – the day of Christ’s coming – is at hand. If ever the solemn warning was suited to the Church, it is *now*, when we would seem to have arrived at the exact time and crisis where the next text follows: – “*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*”

## ***Lecture XXX. Concluding Visions.***

### **The Future – Our Duty.**

*(Read here: Revelation ch.18-22. KJV)*

**Having brought down our remarks** to that point of the Apocalyptic Visions which would seem to indicate the present position of the European nations in relation to the Church, we must pass over the remaining chapters of the Revelation of St. John as being beyond the scope of *historical* adaptation. Deeply interesting indeed would it be to the inquiring and hopeful Christian to search into the pages of *yet unfulfilled* prophecy, and, following up the principles of interpretation by which we have been enabled so accurately to trace down the course of events to this day, to investigate those speedy coming changes which would appear to arise out of the things that mark the times we live in.

Having observed, by the light of God's Word, the evil agencies now at work, and specially how they would seem but preparatory to the great political "earthquake" predicted in Rev. 16:18, we feel almost tempted to venture further, and inquire whether the "angel's pouring out his *seventh vial* into the *air*," with the consequent "thunderings, lightnings, and voices," may not denote the wider spread of *the moral pestilence*, and the renewal to a yet greater extent of those civil commotions which of late years have led to "rumors of wars," to "mens hearts failing them for fear," and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth?

Again, having before us the gradual wasting away of the Turkish strength, we would seem naturally led to the next inquiry: For *whom* is the way being thus prepared? The vast increase of commercial power and of political influence on the part of the great Protestant nations, Great Britain and the United States of America, tending to the extension of Christian truth; the advancement of science and of intellectual research and invention on the one hand, and the no less active and restless exertions of the emissaries of evil on the other, suggest the accomplishment of the prediction indicative of the time of the end: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

And thus, as we proceed with the seventeenth chapter, we think that we see the several portions of the Christian Church *uniting in opinion* as to Rome being the "mystery of iniquity" and "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth:" for so St. John, *in his representative character*, is described as seeing her, and as having at this juncture the mystery unfolded to him by the angel.

The eighteenth chapter reveals the approaching destruction of the symbolic Babylon by fire, *i.e.*, of the *Papal ecclesiastical state*, previous to which a remarkable warning is given: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." From which we are led to expect a diffusion of great religious light, and the sounding forth throughout the world of strong *appeals on the character and imminent doom* of Rome and the Popedom, a cry which as yet seems not to have been generally recognized or uttered, notwithstanding the decided exodus from Popery which is proceeding at this moment (early to mid-1800s) in Great Britain and Ireland, in Tuscany, and many parts of France.

The first verse of the nineteenth chapter makes mention of a loud and joyous sound being heard, in which for the first time in this book is used the Hebrew word, Alleluia, perhaps intimating that the *Jews, as a people*, swell the chorus – uniting with the Church in singing praise to Jesus. But though we earnestly mark the progress of the Jewish mind, and hail the frequent conversions from amongst that people to Christianity, we are left in ignorance as to an immediate instrumentality which is to act upon Israel as a body if it be anything other than the Gospel itself.

Still further would we reach, though in perspective, and strive to fix before our view those pictures of light and glory which, like beautiful dissolving views, rise before us, and then lose themselves in others still: more exquisite, wherein is pictured the Church adorned as a bride, and, clothed with spotless righteousness, awaiting the coming of her Lord; wherein is the glorious appearing of the King Of Kings And Lord Of Lords, amid *hosts* of his redeemed, going forth to the final battle and victory, and to the utter destruction of Antichrist and his adherents; and then the New Jerusalem, the abode of the blessed and risen saints, where all is union, peace, and love – no root of bitterness or discord, no cloud of sorrow, but all holy and beautiful, and bright and pure.

But into these scenes of transcendent glory, "surpassing fable and yet true," it is not for us to look, save "through a glass darkly," certainly not with the degree of confidence which we have derived in the foregoing lectures from – having had the support of historical evidence. While we read the concluding chapters of the sacred volume, it is however our privilege, as believers, to anticipate and appropriate all in hope; and moreover, to take comfort in the assurance that "yet a little while, and our Lord himself will come, and will not tarry." It is also our wisdom, seeing that all shall be fulfilled and speedily, to lay to heart the thought, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" or if a time of conflict must needs first come, "Who shall be found on the Lord's side?"

When one of our most distinguished warriors would inspire his men with courage and confidence for action, he gave the word, "England expects every

man to do his duty." The gallant *Nelson* lived just long enough to know that the victory was won; but he left it to *another* to illustrate, on the battlefield, in the senate, and through a lengthened course of life, the sentiment he so well expressed. *Wellington* also, now sleeps in the grave; but the saying, while England lasts, will survive. Let *Duty* be the Christian's watchword.

What then, viewing our present circumstances by the light of fulfilled revelation, may we regard as our *duty*, – as a Nation, as a Church, and as individuals?

*Nationally*, we find ourselves raised to an exaltation of power, possessions, and influence, which we can only account for as being designed, in God's providence, to be the means of promulgating throughout the world the Protestant evangelic faith. Let us beware of being again seduced by any spirit of mistaken expediency, false liberalism, or religious indifference, lest, in our efforts to soothe party faction, we identify ourselves with Popery, or further its views, or foster its Antichristian tenets, either at home or in our colonies. Surely we have gone far enough already in this direction. The utmost toleration, consistent with our safety as a Protestant state, has been extended. Let us take care lest, in the vain hope of thoroughly conciliating her priesthood (a matter shown by reason and history to be impossible), we abandon our distinctive *Protestant* character, and therewith forfeit the protection of Heaven in the great coming struggle. And as regards our children, too, we must take heed of yielding up the principle of Scriptural education. It is alike their birthright and our policy. While we sleep the enemy sows tares.

*As a Church*, now that we are threatened with divisions, owing to the subtle influence of Ecumenism, is it not our duty, before all things, to hold fast by the pure Scriptural doctrines of the Reformation, and to repudiate every modification of that system which would make religion an *ecclesiastical* rather than a *personal* and *spiritual* matter; which would interpose the church, with its priesthood, services, and sacraments, *between* the soul and Christ, instead of asserting their right use, and using them as the great instruments for directing the soul *to* Christ? We must firmly hold to the Scriptural doctrine of our Articles and Liturgies, the main features of which are justification by faith in Christ's atoning blood, and sanctification by the Spirit given from God, with a constant and steady adherence to his written Word as our rule of faith. This will expel and keep away the most specious heresies; and at the last day, when God shall make up his jewels, the eulogy given of Zion may be pronounced of our beloved Church, "that many were born in her, and the Most High did establish her."

Should it be that these pages ever meet the eyes of a Roman Catholic, may they bring a lesson in the way of duty to him also. If what has been put forth in these lectures be a correct and sound exposition of the inspired Word, how awful is the position of the members of that apostate Church! "*If any man*

*worship the beast. and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb."* We rather turn again and urge the invitation of God himself: "*Come out of her, my people* (for doubtless there are some *in her communion* who know not the sin, and are not of her), *come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sin, and that ye receive not of her plagues."*

But that which we have most need to press is the *duty of each individual*. The smallest aid can make a movement stronger either for good or evil. Let not the ill-directed though well-meant zeal of those who are in error put us to shame. It is not enough that we belong to the most orthodox Church, profess the most Scriptural faith, and even be warm in its defense and in opposition to the errors of the day. The question will still remain: Are we, as individuals of Christ's little flock, his true, faithful, obedient followers, to whom the kingdom is promised? Have we the evidence of belonging to it? Have we received of God's Spirit to the sanctifying our hearts, and the infusing into them the love of God and of our brethren, and the inward life, light, and spirit of holiness and adoption, which he alone can give? Is our faith fixed upon Christ as the Lord of our righteousness?

Do we hold to the Word of God in life as well as in doctrine? Do we witness for Christ in an ungodly world; and seek in the spirit of holy self-denial, spiritual-mindedness, and patient perseverance in well doing, to follow the example of our Lord and Savior, who pleased not himself, but went about doing good? Are we improving our talents, be they great or small, as those that must give account to God? Is the thought of Christ's coming precious to us? Do we look for him, and long for our final union with him? Doubtless many can answer with assured comfort and hope to these and such like questions. But who can doubt that there is much lukewarm, and much of false profession, even in what is called *the religious world*; – those having a name to live, but being in reality dead?

With all of us there is, in regarding *the coming future*, much cause for holy fear, humiliation, and repentance. Blessed be God, though the acceptable time remaining be short, it is not ended. Though the Master seem about to appear in the clouds, he has not – the door is not yet shut. The period of evil is still permitted: so is the period for good. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." But the voice of mercy and love is still heard inviting sinners to salvation: "Let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

So may it be that, when in answer to the waiting Church's often repeated supplication "that the Lord would shortly accomplish the number of his elect and hasten his kingdom," the Savior's voice would seem to be heard, "Surely

I come quickly” – we may be able each one to respond with the inmost soul's welcome, “Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”



## **APPENDIX I.**

### **Preface to the Third Edition of the Abridgment (1871)**

THE Fifth Edition of the *Horae Apocalypticae* being long completed, it has been suggested that now is a proper time to send out a Third Edition of the Abridgment.

It has no merit as to originality or research, being only intended to bring before those persons who have not access to the larger work the views which it contains in a simple form. Omitting the learned and elaborate arguments, the writer has kept almost verbatim to the text in Mr. Elliott's work. Not many months before his lamented death he looked over the little book, and expressed an approval of it similar to that in his preface to the Second Edition, which is subjoined.

It was his express wish that the views he held as to future events should be but briefly touched on in the Abridgment. For references and authorities the reader must be referred generally to the *Horae Apocalypticae* itself, no fact being stated in the smaller book which is not fully verified there.

The Postscript – giving his latest thoughts on the unfulfilled portion of the prophecy – is placed at the end of the volume. It expresses his views as to how the events then passing verified his historical explanation of the Revelation, and furnished a key to the meaning of those prophecies yet unfulfilled.

To James Bateman, Esq., the writer is indebted for an interesting paper in the Appendix; and to the Rev. Christopher Bowen, late Rector of St. Thomas, Winchester, for having kindly edited this Abridgment; which – if it shall please God to bless to the directing to further inquiry into prophetic truth, and the fuller study of those portions of His Holy Writ – the purpose designed by its publication will have been attained.

**H. E. E.**

### **Postscript to Preface of Fifth Edition of the *Horae Apocalypticae*; – On the Expiration of the 1260 Predicted Years of Papal Temporal Dominance in the Kingdoms of Western Christendom.**

The year 1867 having passed, it seems fit that a postscript should be added to this book, in reference to any light that may have been reflected at its close on my exposition of that part of the Apocalyptic prophecy which suppose refers to the present time; whether as confirmatory, or the contrary.

Very naturally there was kept watch both by men who felt reverentially about divine prophecy, and by others who thought of it only with contempt, to see if the years 1866, 1867, which had been so long looked forward to as

years of crisis to the Papacy by Protestant prophetic expositors of the old school (this being the supposed later ending epoch of the great prophetic period of the 1260 years from Phocas), should really develop any such events of crisis. What then has occurred to justify such view?

It was in July 1868 that there was issued the Pope's Bull for the Convocation of an Ecumenical Council to assemble at Rome in the December of next year. And in the terms of its address there appeared on one point a most remarkable variation from the terms of address which had been used in all former Bulls of the same character. The difference was this, that whereas in those former Bulls the secular princes of Western Christendom were always summoned to attend, either in person or by deputy, as well as Roman Catholic bishops and certain other high ecclesiastics of that Church, in the present Bull it was Papal ecclesiastics alone.

The omission was too remarkable to escape notice. It was remarked on, for example, by the editor<sup>1</sup> of a well – known Popish journal at Paris, *L'Univers*, in the passage following: “The Bull does not invite *sovereigns* to sit in the Council. The omission is remarkable. It implies that there are no longer *Catholic* crowns; that is to say, that the order in which society has lived for the last 1000 years no longer exists. What has been called the Middle Age has come to an end. The date of the Bull is the date of its death, its last sigh. Another era begins. The Church [*Romish* Church] and State [that is, of Roman Catholic kingdoms] are *separated*.”

There are some little inexactness in this passage; for he speaks of the regime of Roman Catholic crowns spiritually subject to the Pope as if begun only 1000 years ago, whereas it had existed above 1200 or 1300 years. Nor, again, does he refer to the temporary interruption of that regime which was suddenly and violently introduced by the French Revolution; an event, I am persuaded, not unnoticed in the Apocalyptic prophecy. But the main fact that he refers to is justly observed on by him as a very remarkable sign of the times, remarkable, as holding out before the world, under the Pope's own sign manual, an admission of the *full ending of the predicted period of the kings of Western Christendom spiritually subjecting the power of their kingdoms to him*; that is, of the completed ending of the 1260 years. For thus it had been declared in the Divine prophecy, Apoc. 17:17: “God hath put into the hearts of the ten kings to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the Beast, *until the words of God shall be fulfilled*.” in other words (compare Dan. 7:25-26), until the end of God's appointed period of the 1260 years.

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<sup>1</sup>M. Veuillot.

When was it that this period may be considered as begun? What the *terminus a quo* from which it is to be measured? It was during the course of the sixth century, as I have shown from history, that the then newly established Romano-Gothic kings of Western Christendom, one after another, recognized the Roman Pope as *Christ's Vicar* on earth, and so subjected their kingdoms, in matters of religion, to him; the three last, the Anglo-Saxons, Lombards, and Bavarians, so doing near about or soon after 600 A.D.<sup>1</sup> And if, following the precedent of the Old Testament prophecies respecting Judah's seventy years captivity in Babylon, and consequent return,<sup>2</sup> we suppose (as I have done in the *Horae Apocalypticae*) a *primary imperfect commencing epoch, with a correspondingly primary imperfect ending epoch, and a secondary and more perfect epoch of commencement*, with its own correspondent and more perfect epoch of ending – and, moreover, that royal decrees (like those of Cyrus and Darius, Ezra 1:1, 6:1) may have been had respect to by the Holy Spirit as epochal signs in his predictions respecting the great New Testament prophetic period of the 1260 years – then we have, for our *primary* solution of this period, the 1260 years from Justinian's Pope recognizing decree, about A.D. 530, to the French Revolution, about A.D. 1790; and for our secondary solution the 1260 years from Phocas' decree, A.D. 606, according to the best modern chronologists, A.D. 607, to A.D. 1867. (editors note: It is apparent that the later date is only an admission of the reality consequent of the earlier date which corresponds with the Vatican beast receiving the Napoleonic “wound by a sword”<sup>3</sup>, the sword being a symbol of military conquest.)

After the ending of the great revolutionary and Napoleonic war at the Peace of Paris, there had been a return on the part of certain of the kingdoms of Western Christendom to their old spiritual allegiance to the Pope, *e.g.*, of the Italian kingdoms of Sardinia and Naples, those of Spain, Portugal, Bavaria, Austria, and indeed *partially* that too of France. This allegiance involved to a considerable extent the same intolerance of Protestantism, designated as heresy, and enforcement by the arm of secular power of the Pope's decrees and laws of the Romish Church especially with regard to Divine worship, marriage, education, and freedom of conscience and of the press.<sup>4</sup> All, as had more fully characterized all the kingdoms of Western Christendom, excepting North Germany and England, in the times previous to the

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<sup>1</sup>Horae Apocalypticae, V. iii.

<sup>2</sup>ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. 13:14

<sup>4</sup>ibid.

great French Revolution in those earlier times, in fulfillment of the obligations to which the kings had subscribed by their deputies in the great Papal Ecumenical Councils.<sup>1</sup>

But within the last few years the *Sardinian* kingdom (not to speak of others of the re-Papalized States), after absorbing into itself Lombardy, Tuscany, Naples, Sicily, the larger part of the Pope's own territorial domain (called Patrimony of St. Peter), and, finally, Venetia, and having so become the *kingdom of Italy*, dissolved everywhere the old ties that had bound those several polities in religious subjection to the enforcement of the decrees of the Papacy. Then (the war which ended in the battle of Sadowa having, in 1866, prepared the way), *Austria*, so long the Pope's main prop, found itself forced, in 1867, to renounce its Concordat with the Papacy, and to establish throughout its dominions religious liberty.

Afterwards, in *Spain*, during the autumn of 1867, there had been unsuccessfully made the first attempt at overthrowing the *Bourbon Queen and dynasty*, and therewith the *Papal all domineering religious power* – the attempt was renewed, and with entire success, in this present year 1868. Neither the Queen's Ministry nor the Pope were ignorant of the impending revolutionary storm, and, consequently, that Spain was no more to be reckoned on when the Bull of Convocation was issued than the other kingdoms of Western Christendom. Hence the Bull's omission of the Spanish Queen as well as other sovereigns. As the editor expresses it, "There are now no longer Catholic crowns in Christendom." God's appointed period for this having been fulfilled, the kings no longer give the power of their kingdoms to the Beast. The Pope's own published Bull testifies to that effect, and therewith to the fact of the *completed* expiration of the 1260 years.

E. B. Elliot queries: What remains between us and the consummation but the supplemental period of the seventy-five years of Dan. 7? Our present position is at the close of the sixth vial – a vial of which the fitting to our own times has been so strikingly marked, both politically by the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates, or decay of the Turkish and Mohammedan powers, and religiously by the outgoing over England and the world of the three predicted deluding spirits of Infidelity, Popery, and Priest-craft, united in the one object of acting against the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ – I say, our present era being thus marked as at the close of the sixth vial, or commencement of the seventh, with its vial outpouring into the aerial atmosphere, significant, I conceive, of the vitiation of the very elements of thought and principle, religious, moral, and political, what remains for fulfillment under this Vial, and during the course of Daniel's seventy-five years of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. on this, my chapter, in vol iii., on the Image of the Beast.

“time of the end,” but the progress of the last great predicted war of Armageddon? Hence politically a revolution is indicated as ere long to follow, more mighty than any that has occurred since the first establishment of the Romano-Gothic kingdoms of the Papal Western Europe, and resulting in their tripartition: the Gospel voice meantime sounding forth everywhere throughout the world antagonistically to the everywhere sped forth spirits of Antichristian delusion (Apoc. 14:6-10); and so both the gathering out of God's election of grace from every people and kindred and tongue and nation, as ordained under the present dispensation, and preparation too of the Jews for their predicted national restoration and conversion;<sup>1</sup> after which is to follow the fall of the seven-hilled Babylon; and thereupon Christ's glorious establishment of his kingdom. “Blessed is he that cometh to *the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days*,” or years. (editors note: Having passed the additional 75 day/years now twice (2015) it is evident that the Dan 12:11-13 prophecy is not a part or addition to the 1260 year reign of the Man of Sin. In the alternative consider:

“The immediate continuation of the animal sacrifice in the temple as a standing practice was The Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet and Jesus. It was an unacceptable or wrong sacrifice in the holy place. The Religious Establishment and National leaders rejected God's final provided sacrifice, the blood of the Messiah.

*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. (Daniel 12:11-12)*

What happened a thousand two hundred and ninety days later? Three and a half years later the Seventy weeks of Daniel comes to its end. The extra 30 days are an indication that one of the last three and a half years had an extra month, a *second Adar* which was inserted seven of nineteen years as instructed at the Exodus.

In Daniel there is also pronounced a blessing on those that come to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days: I believe this is a reference to the Holy Spirit Falling on the Gentiles making of one the entire Ecclesia, Spiritual Israel, a Holy Nation by the seed of faith, the blood of the Messiah, apart from National Israel of the flesh whose determined days as an exclusive set apart nation had reached its end (Dan 9:24).”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Matt. 24. 14; Acts 15. 14; Luke 21. 24; Rom. 11. 5, 25, 26; Rev. 7. 9-14.

<sup>2</sup> The Rapture Will Be Canceled, Nicklas Arthur.

Two final observations:

1. Let me observe that, though the kings may not give their kingdom to the Beast anymore, this does not imply their rejection of Popery. At the moment before its sudden fall, Babylon is represented in the Revelation as exulting, "I shall not be a widow, or see loss of children;" and, moreover, the kings of the earth are depicted as contemplating her fall with something of sympathy as well as awe. A prediction this very agreeable with what we now see of the state of Western Christendom, and what we might thence bode as to the probable future.

2. Let me also observe, with reference to the remarkable fact of the *interval* between the primary and secondary ending of the 1260 years being very nearly seventy-five years (from about 1790 to 1866-67), the same length as Daniel's *time of the end* – that this may have been ordered by the Omniscient Spirit with a view to keeping alive throughout that interval the expectation of the Lord's coming as imminent at the end of it. Similarly, when Christ's first coming was drawing near, I conceive that the accomplished ending of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 (490 years), about B.C. 46, if dated (as was natural) from Cyrus' decree, instead of from Artaxerxes' eighty years later, may have thenceforward served to excite and keep up that lively expectation of his coming as near at hand which we know from that time did prevail among the Jews. *Sept., 1868* (see previous editors note p.215; our author also fails to take into consideration The Beast's head wound being healed<sup>1</sup> (which he did not live to see nor could have guessed the circumstance) as this did not occur until February 1929 when the Vatican regained its Sovereign Status among the nations. Certainly we can understand that if the coming of Christ is believed imminent, then all – even that yet future – must be found fulfilled in the past.

It seems almost needless to suggest how confirmatory of what was above written have been the extraordinary events that have since occurred on the theater of the European world: – France, "the eldest daughter of the Papal Church," and chief final support of the Pope's temporal power, humbled to the dust; its military supremacy transferred to Prussia, the great Protestant Continental power; the withdrawal of all the other secular European powers from support of the Papacy continued and confirmed; Rome itself ravished from the Pope by the King of Italy; yet the words of the Papal "great mouth" still boastful and blasphemous as ever! Advance seems surely to be making towards the predicted tripartition of the kingdoms of the old Papal European Christendom under the seventh Apocalyptic vial, and the mighty concurrent

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. 13:3

revolution; also to the final and most awful destruction of the Papal Anti-christ “by the brightness of the Lord's coming,” after having been previously “consumed and wasted by the breath of His mouth.”

E. B. E.

*May, 1871.*

## APPENDIX II.

THE following paper by Mr. Bateman, affording a very striking post-humous corroboration of the truth of Mr. Elliott's system, appeared (in the Rock, January 7, 1876) within six months of Mr. Elliot's death:

### Scorpion – Men.

In his great work on the Revelation my lamented friend the Rev. E. B. Elliott thus explains the two principles on which his interpretation of that holy prophecy mainly depends: "In the divine fore-showing of its great subject I have felt," he says, "persuaded, and have carried out my exposition on the persuasion, that the two following rules must have been observed: *First*, that the *epochs* & *events*, selected for prefiguration must have been such as are confessedly the most important and eventful; *secondly*, that the *figuring emblems* must have been, in some approved consistent sense, *characteristic and distinctive*."

And there are few who will not agree with Mr. Elliott that "The direct evidence of truth hence arising will at once be felt by the intelligent reader, more especially when fixed by *some local or geographical peculiarity* strongly marked in the prefiguration." The latter principle may be illustrated from the Old Testament prophets, who borrowed the emblems under which Judah is represented, *e.g.*, lion, vine, olive tree, fig tree, etc., from the plants or animals indigenous to the country in which he dwelt. According to the same rule, Pharaoh is likened to a dragon, Nebuchadnezzar to an eagle, "the Assyrian" to "a cedar in Lebanon," etc., etc. But in the Revelation the local propriety of the symbols is still more striking. For not merely the animals, but the heraldic devices on the coins and other national monuments of the countries which fall within the scope of the prophecy, are all found to be marvelously appropriate, both in respect of time and place. The Roman "horse" of the first four seals, each with its peculiar badge; the Pagan "dragon" (12:13); Mahomet's "key" (9:1); the Waldensian "candlestick" (11:4); the Roman harlot holding out the "cup" of her apostasy (17:4), or sitting on the seven hills (v. 9). These are but a few of the multitude of objects which are figured in Mr. Elliott's work, where they furnish characteristic vouchers for the truth of a system which they at once illustrate and confirm.

But amidst all this wealth of evidence one link was still missing. Like nearly all other commentators of repute, Mr. Elliott interpreted the "woe" of the fifth trumpet as that great irruption of Saracen hordes into some of the fairest parts of Christendom which formed the burden of the seventh century. They came from Arabia, and are therefore with strict propriety symbolized by swarms of "locusts," which are bred in the countries watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. Here is the description of them as seen in vision by St. John:



*And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. (Rev. 9:7-10)*



Original Exhibit 1876

We must bear in mind that in this graphic picture of the strange battalions which appeared upon the Apocalyptic scene the symbol is a composite one, like the Nineveh man-headed lions and bulls now in the British Museum, and which accord so exactly with Daniel's description (7:4) of the "great beast" under which the Assyrian empire is prefigured. But the Apocalyptic emblem is more complex, for it includes a general resemblance to "locusts," combined with certain other peculiarities, animal and human. The locusts in the vision were "like unto horses," they had the "teeth of lions," the "tails of scorpions," the "hair of women," and the "faces of men;" they had also "iron breastplates" and "golden crowns" (or helmets), while the whir of their "wings" was as the sound of battle hurtling in the air. But while there was an obvious general agreement between the chief features of the Saracen invasion and the emblems selected by the Holy Spirit to depict it, Mr. Elliott, unable to adduce any *specific* evidence in elucidation of the fact, was compelled to resort to what he styles (i. 432) "a sketch from imagination" to explain the possible combination of details in the Apocalyptic symbol. Judge, there fore, of my surprise and delight when in looking over the illustrations in Mr. L. Smith's admirable volume (published shortly after Mr. E.'s death), "The Chaldean Account of Genesis," I found the accompanying plate,

described among the "List of Illustrations" as "Composite figures (scorpion-men) taken from an Assyrian cylinder!" Here was the Apocalyptic emblem with marvelous exactitude! The wings and general form were those of the "locust" – itself likened by Joel (11:4), as by St. John, to the "war-horse."<sup>1</sup> In the figures – especially if examined with a magnifying glass – the long "hair of women" is no less conspicuous than the "faces of men." Still more extraordinary are the "scorpion-tails," never before seen, I believe, in any similar configuration. The creatures have helmets,<sup>2</sup> probably of gold, "on their heads," while something like an iron girdle or steel breastplate appears on their chests. The "teeth of lions" are, it is true, not recognizable in the figure, but the "lion" element is represented in the legs and feet. With this slight modification the identification is perfect. And the "local appropriateness" or geographical propriety of the emblem is equally unmistakable. For in the famous "Legends of Izdubar" (Nimrod) that hero gives an account of his meeting with the "scorpion-men" in the desert of "Mas,"<sup>3</sup> which stretches – at the foot of the mountain chain of that name – from the Tigris to the Euphrates.<sup>4</sup>

THE END.

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<sup>1</sup>The Italians call the locust "Cavaletta." Ray says of the insect, "Caput oblongum *equi instar*." Dr. Pusey, in his introduction to "Joel," maintains that the prophet, under the figure of locusts, "fore told a judgment far greater, an enemy far mightier, than the locust, namely, the Assyrian invasion of Palestine."

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Elliott supposed that by the "crowns" (στέφανος) of the figures in the vision fillets or turbans were intended. Such certainly is the more usual meaning of the word, though not the universal, as is shown by the following extract: – "Στεφᾶνῃ idem quod Στεφανος, corona, sertum, etc., Dicitur galæ species quaedam eminentias habentis, teste Hesych" (*Scapulae Lexicom*). Now a "helmet with eminences" exactly describes those worn by the "scorpion-men," as also what we often find on the heads of kings in the Assyrian sculptures.

<sup>3</sup>This is the *Mons Masius* of classical geography and of Strabo and Ptolemy. This mountain chain forms the northern boundary (lat. 37° – 38°) of Mesopotamia, extending nearly east and west – the direction taken by the locusts, whether literal or symbolical.

<sup>4</sup>For description of the "scorpion-men" see Smith, *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, pp. 248, 249.

## Suggested Reading



The RAPTURE will be CANCELED. Exposing the Left Behind Rapture Deception: Some may even regard as conspiratorial, the mainstream re-release of the Left Behind Movie with Actor Nicholas Cage portraying the main character as an attempt to further reinforce in the minds of all, this perception of biblical prophecy in order to condition the masses for the play about to begin...

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..Most of the Evangelical and Christian world today believes that the Coming of Christ is imminent and that they will be Raptured away before all of the calamity of the entire Book of Revelation ensues during the very last seven or three and a half years of this era, a period of Great Tribulation unlike any other in the History of the World.

..As the world around us shapes to confirm that we are indeed in the time of the very end, many are beginning to look deeper into the Bible and more specifically the prophetic passages of Jesus, the epistles and the Revelation. This has caused many to lay down the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Doctrine because of the shaky ground on which it is founded. What I found out is that the error and deception goes much deeper than one would think upon entering this sojourn.

..So please take a break, let go and seriously consider the things that I expose in this continued investigation into the false as well as the unknown or forgotten interpretations of Bible prophecy. This book is by no means a complete expose of Bible Prophecy, but merely a teaser, an appetizer, to induce you to look where the mainstream Christian world is not looking. May The Almighty bless you as you seek a Holy Spirit interpretation of His prophetic passages.



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